



5.40 Child Safeguarding Policy

Policy Statement

At the International School Hannover Region (ISHR), we believe there is no greater responsibility for a school than providing a safe and healthy environment in which to learn. We know that if a child cannot feel safe then they cannot learn to their full potential. At ISHR, we aim to create and maintain a caring ethos where all children and students feel safe, secure, and valued. Safeguarding the welfare of children and students is everyone's responsibility and so we expect all staff, volunteers, and visitors to share this commitment. Staff will be trained and educated in child protection and safeguarding in accordance with ISHR's Mission statement and German law, to ensure that all safeguarding concerns are promptly reported and appropriately responded to.

Policy Rationale

ISHR's Child Safeguarding Policy is aligned with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the recommendations of the International Task Force on Child Protection that have set the standards for safeguarding in schools worldwide as well as the German Bundeskinderschutzgesetz. ISHR recognises that the welfare of the child is paramount and all children, regardless of age, disability, gender identity, cultural background, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

ISHR expects all individuals and groups affiliated with the school community to act with integrity and to take responsibility for keeping students safe. This policy applies to all who have contact with the school community including staff, service and activity partners, volunteers, associated agencies, interns, contractors, parents, and visitors.

Definitions and Clarifications

Child or Young Person: [German law](#) (Jugendschutzgesetz JuSchug, sentence 1) defines a child as any person under the age of 18 years. This also aligns with [The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) which defines a child as "persons under the age of 18 years". At ISHR, we acknowledge our duty of care to all students regardless of age including ISHR students over the legal age of 18.

Safeguarding: Protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health



or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. At ISHR, safeguarding is the preventive work that is in place to broadly support the safety and wellbeing of our students.

Child Protection: Child Protection is the protection of children from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect in accordance with article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. At ISHR Child Protection refers to the work that we do to keep children and students safe, who might be at risk of harm. The risk of harm may be from a single event, or serious concerns over time. Child protection concerns are reported if they happen in or out of [school, as mandated by German law](#) (Sozialgesetzbuch (SGB) Sentence 8a (4) 3 and Gesetz zur Kooperation und Information im Kinderschutz (KKG) sentence 1).

ISHR Safeguarding Team

Role	Person	Contact
Director of ISHR	John Barker	john-barker@is-hr.de
DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead)	Astrid Scharf	astrid-scharf@is-hr.de
School Psychologist & Secondary School Counsellor	Kristina Schurzig	kristina-schurzig@is-hr.de
Secondary School Counsellor	Stephanie Baublitz	Stephanie-baublitz@is-hr.de



Primary School Counsellor	Almedina Junuzovic	almedina-junuzovic@is-hr.de
Designated Safeguarding Board Member	Erhard Schipporeit	erhard.schipporeit@t-online.de
DDSL (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead)	Julian Parkin-Haig	julian-parkin-haig@is-hr.de

Responsibilities:

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility.

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** ensures that ISHR is in compliance with International Standards for Child Safeguarding and Protection as well as German Law regarding Child Safeguarding. They promote and support the education and training of staff as related to child protection. The DSL identifies operational and instructional opportunities to safeguard children and proactively acts to close gaps in best practice. The DSL must always maintain appropriate confidentiality and work within applicable legal frameworks in all cases involving suspected and actual child abuse and/or neglect.

The **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)**: The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) supports the work of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and takes the lead role should the DSL be off campus. The role of the DDSL creates a team of two who effectively collaborate and communicate to ensure that Safeguarding remains the highest priority at ISHR and that timely, efficient and well-organised systems are in place to support our students. The DDSL will coordinate with the DSL to liaise with external agencies as required.

The **Designated Safeguarding Board Member** ensures the School has policies on appointing and a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL). They ensure that ISHR has a training strategy for all employees, including the Directors, the DSL and



DDSL. The Safeguarding Board Member also ensures that the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures are consistent with German government best practices, reviewed annually and made available to parents and other stakeholders. They deal with concerns made against members of staff including those made against the Directors. The Board Member ensures safer recruitment procedures are in place that include the requirement for appropriate checks in line with German and international guidance.

The **Director** ensures that the safeguarding policy and procedures are implemented, understood and followed by all staff and that ISHR's rigorous commitment to safeguarding is promoted and communicated to all stakeholders. The Director should allocate sufficient time and resources to enable the DSL and DDSL to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of students and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings. They should ensure that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the school's policies and procedures. The Director should ensure that child safety and welfare is addressed throughout the curriculum and to ensure that all safer recruiting practices are followed when recruiting new staff.

Categories of Abuse

A key challenge within any school community is to ensure that there is a shared understanding of what abuse is and how you will deal with it if it takes place in your school. Definitions of child abuse vary significantly across cultures and can be particularly contested in areas where structural inequalities and poverty are considered a much greater risk to children's welfare. It can also be difficult to talk about abuse, even where there is a shared understanding of what it is, and cultural norms can act as a barrier to discussion and disclosure. (Supporting your school: A new protocol for managing allegations of child abuse by educators and other adults in international communities Jane Larsson, Chair, International Task Force on Child Protection; Executive Director, Council of International Schools Sophia Coles, Associate, The Safeguarding Unit, Farrer & Co. Jane Foster, Consultant, The Safeguarding Unit, Farrer & Co. Katie Rigg, International Advisor for Student Well-being, Council of International Schools, 2019).

At ISHR, in order to be successful in safeguarding children and students, we must all adhere to understanding the following definitions of abuse and indicators to ensure a consistent approach. ISHR defines abuse as any situation or pattern of behaviour that is not conducive to the physical and emotional well-being of a child. In its most serious forms, abuse can result in developmental harm or death of a child or student. We recognize that child abuse can be categorised into one of the following main areas, whilst cognisant that it rarely occurs in isolation.



Types of Abuse	Possible Indicators
<p>Child maltreatment is the overarching term for abuse and neglect that occurs to children and young adults. It includes all types of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligence and commercial or other exploitation, which results in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity, in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.</p>	<p>See below</p>
<p>Physical Abuse - Generally refers to the non-accidental use of physical force against a child, by an adult or where there is a power differential, that results in harm to the child. Physically abusive behaviours include, but are not limited to, shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, kicking, biting, burning, strangling and poisoning. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Unexpected bruises and welts on any part of the body → Bruises of different ages (various colours) → Injuries reflecting shape of article used (electronic cord, belt, buckle, table tennis bat, hand, etc.) → Injuries that regularly appear after absence or vacation → Unexplained burns, especially on soles, palms, back or buttocks → Burns with a pattern from an electric burner, iron or cigarette → Rope burns on any part of the body → Injuries inconsistent with information offered by the child or student → Immersion burns with a distinct boundary line → Unexplained laceration, abrasions or fractures
<p>Emotional/Psychological Abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child’s</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Sudden change of behaviour or school performance



<p>emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone. It can also refer to a parent or caregiver's pattern of failure to provide a child with non-physical nurture, emotional support or availability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → child/ student seems not to care about appearance or what happens to them (impulsive behaviour) → child/student is actively trying to make others dislike them (self-isolating behaviour) → child / student shows risk-taking behaviours such as bullying, stealing and/or running away → Self-harming or eating disorders → May lack social skills → Concerning interactions between parents or carers and the child (e.g. overly critical or lack of affection) → Lack of self-confidence or self-esteem → Sudden speech disorders → Self-harm or eating disorders → Lack of empathy shown to others (including cruelty to animals) → Drug, alcohol or other substance misuse → Change of appetite, weight loss/gain → Signs of distress: tearfulness, anger
<p><u>Sexual Abuse</u> - is the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions against children. The activities may involve physical contact or non-penetrative acts. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Sudden change of behaviour or school performance → Sexual knowledge, behaviour or use of language not age-appropriate → Displays of affection that are sexual and/or not age-appropriate → Bed-wetting or incontinence → Venereal diseases (VD) or sexually



<p>inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.</p>	<p>transmitted diseases (STD) in a child of any age</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Evidence of physical trauma or bleeding in oral, genital or anal area → Difficulty in walking or sitting → Alluding to having a secret that cannot be revealed → Reluctance to undress/change clothes in front of others (e.g. PE) → Running away from home with specific complaint → Fear of being alone with an individual → Pregnancy, especially at a young age → Extremely protective parenting → Exposure to pornography
<p>Neglect - Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and the most common form of child abuse. A child might be left hungry or dirty, or without proper clothing, shelter, supervision or health care. This can put children and young people in danger. Furthermore, it can also have long term effects on their physical and mental wellbeing. Neglect can take many forms, which makes it hard to identify.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Poor personal or dental hygiene → Child is hungry → Parents are uninterested in child's academic progress → Parents do not respond to repeated communications from school → child/student does not want to go home → Both parents or legal guardian are absent → Parents cannot be reached in an emergency → Excessive hunger → Inadequate or insufficient clothing → Untreated medical issues → Changes in weight or being excessively under or overweight → Low self-esteem, attachment issues, depression or self-harm → Poor relationships with peers → Self-soothing behaviours that may not be



	<p>age-appropriate (e.g. rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking)</p> <p>→ Changes to school performance or attendance</p>
<p>Child on Child abuse: Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as child on child abuse and can take many forms. It can happen both inside and outside of school/college and online. It is most likely to include, but may not be limited to: bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers; physical abuse; sexual violence, sexual harassment; non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos; causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent; upskirting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.</p>	<p>See sexual abuse, emotional abuse indicators.</p>

[Source](#)

Safeguarding Principles, Record Keeping and Confidentiality

At ISHR, the best interests of the child provide the basis for all decisions and actions taken with regard to safeguarding.

Creating a safe and caring environment: ISHR recognises that safeguarding children and students is the responsibility of all members of our community including staff, parents, students, volunteers, visitors, and partner organisations. Through this shared commitment, ISHR aims to create an environment where everyone feels safe and is able to share concerns related to safeguarding issues.

Recording Student Concerns: All student safeguarding files should be entered and stored on the secure, digital record-keeping system (MyConcern/The Safeguarding Company) provided by the



school. All staff will receive annual training to ensure that they know how to access and use MyConcern.

The Safeguarding Team is responsible for ensuring all documents are complete and factual.

The role of staff is not to investigate or verify a safeguarding concern but rather to report it and set in motion the process of getting help for the child and student. Fill out an [electronic record](#) as soon as possible if you have a concern about a child's well-being based on:

- something the child, another child or adult told you
- something you have noticed about the child's behaviour, health (including mental health) or appearance
- something reported by a parent or visitor

Even if you think your concern is minor, the Safeguarding Team may have more information that, together with what you know, represents a more serious concern about a child or student.

If you need more information about the child you have a concern about, please be careful to use open questions beginning with "how", "where", "when", "what" or "who"? Avoid using the term "why" as it is likely to provoke a defensive response. Refrain from promising to keeping information "a secret" to the child or student. Instead let the child or student know what you plan to do next, for example "I am worried about your bruise and I need to tell Ms/Mr. X, so that they can help us think about how to keep you safe". Regardless of the duty of confidentiality, any member of staff who has reason to believe that a child may be suffering harm, or be at risk of harm, has a duty to forward this information via MyConcern without delay.

If there is an urgent safeguarding concern, please contact the DSL or DDSL directly and then log onto the Safeguarding Company.

Once in MyConcern, you will receive an email with an identification number. Your concern will be reviewed by all members of the Safeguarding Team and they will get back to you to provide feedback if and when possible.

Confidentiality: The purpose of confidentiality is to the benefit of the child. ISHR accepts its duty to manage sensitive information in a manner that is respectful, professional and that complies with the applicable law. Staff must keep all information about any suspected or reported safeguarding incidents strictly confidential. Only the Safeguarding Team, who are directly involved in managing the identified risk to a child or student shall be privy to this information. It is important to recognise that ISHR works within a context of local and international child protection laws and we will share relevant safeguarding concerns with others who need to know.

Recording Concerns involving Staff: Staff who are concerned about a colleague's conduct may



worry that they have misunderstood the situation and whether raising a concern could jeopardise their colleague's career. At ISHR safeguarding children and students is our first priority and no member of staff should feel that they cannot speak up and raise concerns regarding the safety of children and students at ISHR. However, any concerns involving staff should not be recorded on MyConcern. Due to the sensitive nature of these concerns, please use the following guidelines to record your concern.

If you have a concern about:

- a member of staff, report to the Director, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) only.

- the Director, report to the Designated Safeguarding Board Member, the Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) only.

- the DSL or DDSL, report to both the Director and the Designated Safeguarding Board Member.

Related Procedures and Practices

Code of Conduct: In order to safeguard children and students enrolled in our school, all members of the staff are expected to follow the professional expectations of the ISHR Code of Conduct as outlined in the ISHR Staff Handbook as part of their contractual obligations.

Staff Safeguarding Training: The school will ensure that staff induction, education and training programmes are a vital part of our commitment to safeguarding children and students. The school has a scheduled programme of regular, systematic professional safeguarding training for safeguarding leads, school leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, and volunteers.

All new members of staff will receive an induction to Safeguarding, which will give an overview of child abuse as well as explaining the systems for reporting concerns. During induction staff will receive information about where to locate all necessary safeguarding documentation. In addition, all new staff at the school (including cover teachers, part time and full time teaching and administrative staff) will be expected to complete online Child Protection training (ECIS). Advanced child protection training will be provided for DSLs and counsellors.



MyVoice: is an open access reporting system that empowers students to raise safeguarding concerns about themselves or others quickly and easily. We believe that by providing a secure, easily accessible reporting tool, ISHR can carry out early interventions and provide better support for anyone who needs it. MyVoice is accessible through the ISHR website. Any submitted forms will be forwarded to the safeguarding team directly.

Safeguarding Risk Assessments: Staff undertake a safeguarding risk assessment in relation to all ISHR events and activities involving children when filling in the necessary documentation on EVOLVE. A risk assessment takes into consideration the student group profile; the hazards/risks identified; the likelihood of the risk occurring; and the consequences of the risk. This information is used to determine the level of safeguarding measures that are necessary to make the event safe.

Comprehensive Sexual Education: ISHR has a Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE) programme from K1-12 that includes formal teaching and learning opportunities related to child protection such as bullying, personal safety, physical abuse, manipulation, grooming, online safety, healthy sexual behaviour, neglect and negligent behaviour, self-harm, and disclosing abuse. Teachers receive regular training and in-services to support the delivery of these lessons.

Volunteers: Where a parent or other volunteer helps on a one-off basis, they will only work under the direct supervision of a member of staff and at no time have one-to-one contact with children. For further information, please refer to the [7.60 Visitors to Campus Policy.pdf](#)

Digital Safety: ISHR is committed to creating a safe digital learning community through the curriculum, professional development, auditing of systems, working with parents, and developing detailed policies. The IT Department is responsible for monitoring IT usage by both students and staff, and reporting any safeguarding concerns immediately to school Leadership or the Designated Safeguarding Lead. ISHR subscribes to the [National Online Safety](#) website which provides resources for all staff on issues associated with digital and online safety and awareness.

Data Protection ISHR has a [4.90 Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy.pdf](#) that complies with the German and European Data Protection laws and regulations. Staff and children are expected to engage in safe and responsible use of digital communications and social media as per the [5.21 Responsible Technology Use Agreement.pdf](#)

Recruitment and Vetting: ISHR is committed to ensuring that all people who work in our schools are suitable to work with children. The school applies best practice standards in the recruitment, screening and interviewing of prospective staff. All permanent staff members are asked to provide



a Polizeiliches Führungszeugnis (criminal record certificate) every three years.

Related Policies

This policy statement should be read alongside the following policies and procedures, including:

[5.26 Anti Bullying Policy .pdf](#)

[4.52 Healthy Internal Communication.pdf](#)

[4.53 Attendance and Missing Student Policy.pdf](#)

[4.70 Social Media and Email Policy.pdf](#) **NEW!**

[4.24 Intimate Care and Safe Touch.pdf](#)

[DRAFT 1:1 Assistant Policy 2022](#)

[5.90 Fieldtrip Handbook.pdf](#)

[4.90 Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy.pdf](#)

[DSL ISHR February 2022.pdf](#)

[7.60 Visitors to Campus Policy.pdf](#) **NEW!**

Policy Review

It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Deputy Designated Lead, the Director and Heads of School, to ensure this policy is fully implemented. This policy, and all of the related procedures and practices, will be reviewed and updated every two years. The Director will sign a copy of the revised policy and will share it with the School Board for final ratification. For related procedures and practices, please refer to our child safeguarding website.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

This policy was last reviewed in August 2023



<p>Signed:</p> <p>John Barker Director</p>	<p>Signed:.....</p> <p>Erhard Schipporeit Chair of the Supervisory Board Designated Safeguarding Board Member</p>
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