



Berlin Metropolitan School - POLICY -

BMS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy	Launch Date	01.08.2019
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We strive for excellence and strength in character to contribute to a more informed, respectful, and diverse world.

Inspire each other – grow together.

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I. Policy Introduction

1.1

Berlin Metropolitan School (BMS) offers a safe and caring environment where students are free to explore and develop to their fullest potential. The BMS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy reflects our commitment to promoting the welfare of children and youth within our school community. The practices and processes outlined within the policy are guided by German Law (Child and Youth Services Act [Book 8 German Social Code – Child and Youth Services \(Sozialgesetzbuch Achtes Buch – Kinder- und Jugendhilfe, SGB VIII\)](#)) and reflect the overall ideals outlined in the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990 as amended by the Children’s Act 2004). We aim to provide an environment where students are respected, heard and valued, which is consistent with the values found within the International Baccalaureate Organization and our school Mission Statement.

1.2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline our commitment to child protection and safeguarding at BMS. It will:

- Provide a transparent overview of processes, procedures, and protocols related to child protection.
- Communicate a comprehensive resource for staff members which includes all necessary definitions, forms, and tools to support child protection.
- Provide all necessary contact information and clear reporting pathways for staff members who have child protection concerns.
- Provide an overview of our commitment to wider safeguarding at BMS and ways in which staff can support this.
- Ensure the highest possible standard of care for our students.

1.3 STATEMENTS OF INTENT AND COMMITMENT

‘All children have equal rights to be protected from harm and abuse. Everyone has a responsibility to support the protection of children.

All schools have a duty of care to children enrolled in the school and those who are affected by the operations of the school.

All actions on child protection are taken with consideration for the best interests of the child, which are paramount.’

The International Task Force on Child Protection Statement of Commitment

Child abuse and neglect are concerns throughout the world. Child abuse and neglect are violations of a child’s human rights and are obstacles to the child’s education as well as to their physical, emotional, and spiritual development. BMS endorses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which Germany, is a signatory. Accordingly, we are committed to protecting our students from any type of abuse regardless of race, color, sex, religion or nationality, providing them with help, giving them a voice about matters that affect them, keeping them informed appropriately, and treating them with dignity.

Schools fulfill a special institutional role in society as protectors of children. Schools need to ensure all children in their care are afforded a safe and secure environment in which to grow and develop, both at school and away. Educators, having the opportunity to observe and interact with children over time, are in a unique position to identify children who are in need of help and protection. As such, educators have a professional and ethical obligation to identify children who are in need of help and protection, and to take



steps to ensure the child and family avail themselves of the services needed to remedy any situation that constitutes child abuse or neglect.

All staff employed at BMS must report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect whenever the staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered or is at significant risk of suffering abuse or neglect. All staff employed at BMS must report lower-level concerns (that may not meet the threshold of child abuse) about any colleague who behaves in a way that is inconsistent with our Code of Conduct (Appendix1). Reporting and follow up of all suspected incidents will proceed in accordance with administrative regulations respective to this policy. Furthermore, cases of suspected child abuse or neglect may be reported to the appropriate employer, to the respective consulate in Berlin or to the appropriate child protection agency and/or to local authorities.

BMS seeks to be a safe haven for students who may be experiencing abuse or neglect in any aspect of their lives. As such, BMS will communicate this policy annually to families and students, will provide training for all staff, will make every effort to implement hiring practices to ensure the safety of children, and will review the policy annually for compliance and effectiveness.

In the case of a staff member reported as an alleged offender, BMS will conduct a full investigation following a carefully designed course of due process, keeping the safety of the child as the highest priority.

Berlin Metropolitan School is committed to:

- Providing an environment where all members of our school community feel safe, secure and are protected from harm.
- Respecting the rights and needs of all students, staff, parents, and families.
- Addressing child protection matters in a professional and sensitive manner.
- Developing and maintaining child protection processes and systems for all members of staff as well as maintaining inter-agency communication.
- Promoting an environment where students feel supported and connected to the school culture.
- Involving parents/caregivers.

The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy applies to: all staff, students, parents, and visitors to our school. All employees must be familiar with, and adhere to, this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the procedures outlined within.

1.4 POLICY CONTEXT

As an international school community, with students and families coming from all over the world, we aim to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all members of our community, and provide the necessary support should this be needed for individual students and their families. With a transient population, our community can also be vulnerable to abuse and therefore we must work to ensure we raise awareness, act to mitigate risks, identify and address any concerns promptly and in an appropriate manner. This policy is designed to provide the necessary information and guidance for our staff members to ensure aligned approaches and practices are implemented to support safeguarding and child protection.

1.5 DEFINITIONS

'Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.'

From UK Government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006)

Safeguarding

We define safeguarding as the way in which we provide a safe environment so that all our students can develop and learn. It is a broad umbrella term used to incorporate policies, procedures, standards, practices, guidelines and philosophies aimed at protecting children from intentional and unintentional harm. It includes measures and steps taken to promote the wellbeing of children as well as those required if a child protection concern is raised.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is intentionally inflicting physical injury on a child. This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or failing to take the necessary steps to prevent such harm being inflicted. This includes situations whereby an adult fabricates or causes the symptoms of illnesses in children.

Emotional or Psychological abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It involves:

- humiliating, putting down or constantly criticizing a child
- shouting at or threatening a child or calling them names
- mocking a child or making them perform degrading acts
- constantly blaming or scapegoating a child for things which are not their fault
- trying to control a child's life and not recognizing their individuality
- not allowing them to have friends or develop socially
- pushing a child too hard or not recognizing their limitations
- manipulating a child
- exposing a child to distressing events or interactions such as drug taking, heavy drinking or domestic abuse
- persistently ignoring them
- being cold and emotionally unavailable during interactions with a child
- never saying anything kind, positive or encouraging to a child and failing to praise their achievements and successes

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse can involve contact and/or non-contact abuse. It includes:

- sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child is wearing clothes or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus
- forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity
- making a child take their clothes off, touch someone else's genitals or masturbate.

Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities. It can happen online or in person and includes:

- encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts
- not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others
- showing pornography to a child
- making, viewing or distributing child abuse images



- allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images

Online sexual abuse includes:

- persuading or forcing a child to send or post sexually explicit images of themselves, this is sometimes referred to as sexting
- persuading or forcing a child to take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone
- having sexual conversations with a child by text or online
- meeting a child following online sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them

Abusers may threaten to send sexually explicit images, video or copies of sexual conversations to the young person's friends and family unless they take part in other sexual activity. Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the abuse has stopped.

Grooming

Abusers will often try to build an emotional connection with a child in order to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse. This is known as grooming and involves befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, and sometimes the family or staff members in the community. This is done in order to lower the community's and a child's inhibitions and to build trust. Often the first people who potential child abusers build trust and relationships with, through a variety of means, are their fellow adults.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. Neglect may involve a parent's or caregiver's failure to:

- provide adequate food, clothing or shelter
- supervise a child (including leaving them with unsuitable caregivers) or keep them safe from harm or danger
- make sure the child receives appropriate health and/or dental care
- make sure the child receives a suitable education meet the child's basic emotional needs – parents may ignore their children when they are distressed or even when they are happy or excited. This is known as emotional neglect

Neglect is the most common type of child abuse. It often happens at the same time as other types of abuse.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 ALL STAFF

We believe that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Everyone in our school who comes into contact with our students and their families has a significant role to play. To do this effectively, all our staff and volunteers must always make sure they consider what is in the best interests of the child.

All staff employed at BMS are responsible for developing and maintaining professional relationships with students, maintaining their best interests at the heart of all that they do, and maintaining appropriately professional boundaries at all times.



All staff must sign and adhere to the Code of Conduct (Appendix 1) and must report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect whenever the staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered or is at significant risk of suffering abuse or neglect.

All staff employed at BMS must also report lower-level concerns (that may not meet the threshold of child abuse) about any colleague who behaves in a way that is inconsistent with our Code of Conduct. To do this, staff should complete this online Form: [Lower Level Concern \(LLC\) about Staff Form](#).

2.2 CHILD PROTECTION TEAM

BMS has a Child Protection Team consisting of the School's Leadership and Child Protection Officers (CPOs). This team provides the oversight and strategic leadership of the child protection provision and safeguarding in the whole school, and reports to the Head of School.

Child Protection Team Lead: Head of School		
Child Protection Officers (CPO)	CPO's cc	School Leadership
CPOs from different sections	Other CPO or Member of Leadership to be in cc of Disclosure emails	ELC, Primary, and Secondary School Principals and Vice Principals

The Child Protection Team is responsible for the continuous monitoring, review, and improvement of child protection provision and safeguarding measures. This includes the following elements:

- revision of current school policies and practices on a regular basis
- attendance at relevant training and conferences to ensure current practices are up to date both locally and internationally
- ensuring child protection training is provided regularly and identifying needs to be addressed within the school community
- ensuring prevention, protection, and risk and safety awareness feature in the school curriculum
- liaising with local Berlin authorities and agencies to ensure best practices
- actively engaging with experts in the wider community to build a network of resources
- reviewing community awareness practices and providing information sessions for the community as required
- providing a forum in which concerns can be addressed in a supportive, sensitive and effective manner
- providing contact information for the community to relevant services out of hours.

The team is also responsible for responding to disclosures from children and staff. This includes:

- being the first point of contact for staff, students, and families who wish to share child protection concerns
- consulting with relevant members of the community regarding the wellbeing of students when there are child protection concerns
- offering support and advice to staff, students, and families regarding child protection
- referring to and consulting with the Jugendamt where applicable



2.3 CHILD PROTECTION OFFICERS

BMS is committed to the ongoing training of staff members as Child Protection Officers (CPO) which takes place in the German language and requires a commitment to regular review of practices and procedures in Germany. The CPOs are responsible for:

- Participating in ongoing child protection training and the facilitation of training for staff members and the community
- Based upon information gathered, identifying cases of child protection to be reviewed by the Child Protection Team
- Providing a safe space for staff to share concerns and offering advice in potential child protection cases
- Presenting local child protection regulations to the school community
- Updating and ensuring compliance with the school procedures for reporting disclosures
- Reporting concerns to the Child Protection Team and Head of School after which an action plan will be developed to ascertain which steps must be taken and if necessary which authorities are to be informed i.e. Schulamt /Jugendamt
- Participating in regular Child Protection Team meetings and providing summary of disclosures/concerns raised

2.4 SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Senior Leadership Team is comprised of the Head of School, Principals, and Vice Principals of each school section. A member of the Senior Leadership Team must be made aware of any child protection concerns, and be actively involved in managing the investigations and inquiries taking place. Safeguarding is a weekly agenda item for SLT meetings so all will be informed of cases.

2.5 SAFEGUARDING TEAM

BMS also has a wider Safeguarding Team consisting of the Child Protection Team plus members of staff who work closely to educate and advise students and staff. The team reports to the Head of School.

Safeguarding Team		
Child Protection Team	Student Support Team	Pastoral Staff
As above	Counsellors, Heads of Student Support	Progress Leaders, DEIJ Chair

The Safeguarding Team is responsible for ensuring preventative measures and education are delivered to staff and students to proactively limit risk. This includes the following elements:

- delivering pastoral support to students
- helping to develop lesson plans and resources that address important safeguarding topics
- helping to source external providers to enhance our curriculum
- sharing knowledge of children with CP Team where relevant
- identifying trends and topics that should be addressed with students and staff, including the identification of and response to any form of prejudice or discrimination
- supporting students to identify and respond appropriately to risk



- giving students a voice about matters that affect them.

2.6 SCHOOL COUNSELORS

BMS employs three full time School Counselors who work to support students and their families from K – 12. The School Counselors play a central role in participating in and advising staff and work in partnership with families as well as external advisors and authorities. The School Counselors are part of the Safeguarding Team and are there to offer support if, and when, needed. They may also be the Child Protection Officer within a Section, though this is not always the case.

2.7 COMMUNITY AWARENESS

The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is published and available to the school community on our school website and the Parent Portal. Our school curriculum provides students with age-appropriate content to support their growth and development in the areas of social emotional learning and Physical Education, and Sex Education. We adhere to the Berliner Rahmenlehrplan, and awareness of topics related to safeguarding and child protection are embedded into our curriculum. Our Code of Conduct, Behavior, and Professional Practice policies, also provide explicit guidance to the community regarding safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Visitors to BMS must report to Reception and sign the Visitors Book. Badges are issued to all authorized visitors, and these should be visible throughout the visit. On the back of the badges is a summary of expectations regarding conduct while on the premises. Staff members should speak with any unknown visitor to the school who is not wearing a badge and escort/arrange for a colleague to escort them back to Reception to get one or leave the site. Students are reminded at regular intervals (for example through assemblies, Tutor Time) that they should alert a member of staff if they see a visitor on site who is not wearing a visitors' badge.

3. Procedures

3.1 DISCLOSURES

A disclosure is defined as the moment another person, child or adult, chooses to share details of an incident or situation that may indicate they are, or have been, the victim of an abusive situation or relationship. This may be described implicitly or explicitly in the person's disclosure. If someone discloses such a situation to you it is because you are a trusted adult for them, and therefore all staff members must be prepared to engage in, and respond to, such a disclosure appropriately. Staff are required to report any incidents, concerns, or disclosures about any type of threat of child endangerment or abuse. All concerns, disclosures, and indications of child endangerment must be taken seriously. It is a legal obligation for faculty, staff, and administrators, either as individuals, or members of the institution, to report incidents of, or concerns about, physical or psychological violence, aggression, harassment, and physical or sexual abuse.

3.2 REPORTING DISCLOSURES:

1. Any disclosure must be reported on the same day via a Disclosure Form (Appendix 3). The form must be emailed to the CPO from the child's section with another CPO or member of leadership in cc to the email. This increases the certainty that it will be seen and acted upon within the day.
2. The CPO gathers further information and assesses the situation, using the Internal Child Protection Record. (Appendix 5)
3. The CPO decides whether further action is needed, often in consultation with others.
4. If the CPO decides a referral to the Jugendamt is required, they discuss this with the Principal of their section and/or the Head of School. (Appendix 6)

Please note: it is good practice for the CPO to consult with a CPO in another section regarding disclosures to reduce the risk of additional information or knowledge of the child or family clouding judgement or impacting decision making.

3.3 STUDENT DISCLOSURES

It is crucial that staff are aware of the practices involved when a student discloses information regarding their safety and welfare. There may be times when a staff member feels a student is building up courage to disclose something to them, or perhaps has concerns about a student's wellbeing, and it is advised that they reach out to the School Counselor or a CPO for advice on how best to manage the specific situation. It is critical to note that staff members must take the role of 'active listener' and should not take on the role of 'investigator'. When a student discloses information, the adult involved has the responsibility to listen, report the disclosure so that appropriate help can be sought out, and ensure next steps are planned to help the student.

The following outlines the **protocols a staff member should follow** when a student discloses information:

- Before a student makes a disclosure of abuse (or as soon as it becomes clear that this is happening), the staff member must make it clear that they will need to share this information with someone who can help if they say anything that suggests they or anyone else is at risk.
- Whenever possible, make sure that any student disclosure happens in a safe, quiet setting.
- Listen to the student in a supportive, sensitive, and non-judgmental manner.
- Stay calm throughout and ensure tone of voice and body language convey that they are being taken seriously.
- Be aware of any language/communication difficulties that the student may be experiencing when trying to express themselves. Give the child time to sort through their thoughts.
- If questions are needed, make sure they are open-ended, not leading, and do not pressurize the child for additional details.
- Let the student know that someone else may need to speak with them and explain why.
- Reassure the student that they have done the right thing by sharing this information.
- Record what was said on the Disclosure Form (Appendix 3) including the date, time, place and context of the disclosure or concern. Record facts only, not assumptions or any interpretations. Write down what the child stated, not an interpretation of this.
- Send the Disclosure Form by email to the CPO and a member of leadership in the child's section.
- Maintain confidentiality and only speak to members of the relevant Child Protection Team about the case.

Practices **staff should avoid** when a child discloses information:

- Asking leading/closed questions about the student's disclosure or probe for specific information. E.g. 'Did mum hit you here, on your arm?'
- Promising that no one else will be told about the disclosure or telling them that their disclosure can be kept secret.
- Reacting emotionally or registering alarm or disgust when the child is disclosing what has happened.
- Confronting the child about the claims or interrogating them.
- Making any judgments or assumptions about what is said.
- Making comments or statements about those involved, making disparaging comments about the 'abuser'.
- Sharing any disclosed information with parties other than those directly involved in maintaining student safety (Child Protection Team).
- Allowing the disclosure to occur in a group setting.

Teaching students about safeguarding and child protection and making oneself a part of their support system invites them to come to us with a problem. School staff must understand and know how to respond



appropriately, knowing that it is often very difficult for children to disclose abuse. Students often find it difficult to talk to us because of the fear of:

- **Memory.** Children often cope with their abuse by pushing it so far back in their minds that they “forget.” To remember means to feel hurt again.
- **Loss of Love.** Children often worry that their family or friends will not love them once they know about their abuse because now they are “dirty.” This is often because children will take responsibility for their abuse. Children also often fear the separation of their family because of the telling. Offenders work hard to reinforce these feelings in order to keep the child silent.
- **Shame & Guilt.** Children either know or can sense that what happened, especially a sexual experience with an adult, is wrong. By telling someone and acknowledging that this happened, they fear the shame of the abuse. They fear they will get into trouble for telling. Older children will experience more of a sense of guilt than younger children, especially in sexual abuse.
- **Blame.** Children fear that they will be blamed for what happened and in the case of sexual abuse that they somehow wanted it. Adults tend to be believed over the child and offenders often state that the child “asked” for the sexual touch or other abuse.
- **Harm.** Offenders often maintain control over their victims by threatening harm to them or their families if they tell. Children are then burdened with the inappropriate responsibility for keeping their families safe.

Understanding these fears of disclosure will help staff to respond appropriately.

3.4 VULNERABLE STUDENTS

There are students in every community who may be more vulnerable than others (such as those with physical disabilities or particular social and emotional needs), and who struggle to manage their behaviors and the manner in which they communicate with others. We must interact with these students with the utmost care and respect. Students can be labelled as ‘attention-seeking’ or ‘troublesome’ or having a tendency to exaggerate or seek out the ‘limelight’. These students must also be listened to and not overlooked, their attention-seeking and disruptive behavior could indeed be a symptom of some sort of abuse or neglect. Each and every student has a right to be heard, and listened to, and sometimes the students who are ‘misbehaving’, constantly challenging adult boundaries and frequently breaking the rules, are of higher risk than their peers to some sort of abuse or being taken advantage of in some manner. It is important to take what every student discloses seriously and address any concerns.

3.5 DISCLOSURES ABOUT STAFF AND STAFF SELF-DISCLOSURES

If an employee makes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer or if a child makes an allegation about a member of staff or volunteer, it is essential for it to be dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the young person, and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation. When an employee witnesses or receives an allegation of abuse by another adult who is working with students (including other employees, volunteers, governors, occasional workers, contractors) they must report the matter immediately to the Principal. In such circumstances, the Principal will also ensure that the Head of School and Human Resources Director are informed of the allegation.

The Principal will:

- Obtain details of the allegation in writing, signed, and dated
- Keep a record of dates, times, location and names of potential witnesses
- Not investigate the allegation, or interview students
- Not discuss the allegation with the member of staff
- Consider whether the allegation requires further investigation and if so by whom
- Inform the Head of School who must ensure that a written record is made of the outcome of any consultation.

The Head of Human Resources will:

- Maintain a list of all concerns raised against professionals, record findings, and any action taken



- Provide advice and guidance on appropriate employment measures to safeguard students and staff in accordance with statutory guidance
- Provide advice and guidance regarding contact with the Police and Jugendamt in accordance with statutory guidance

Staff members may also find themselves in a situation where a colleague discloses information to them in an effort to seek help or advice. All disclosures and concerns must be listened to without judgement and taken seriously. Staff can bring their concerns to members of the Child Protection Team at any time, knowing that all perspectives in any given situation will be investigated sensitively.

The same **protocols should be followed** when a colleague discloses information as when a child does.

A member of staff may have a personal difficulty that impinges on their professional competence. Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so that professional and personal support can be offered. While such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of students.

Staff may seek advice or self-report if they feel compromised as parents of a child in our school in any aspect of safeguarding.

Students may develop an infatuation with an adult. If a staff member suspects this, they must report it to the CPO who will decide on the best way to proceed and give advice accordingly.

3.6 REPORT DOCUMENTATION AND STORAGE

Staff members are required to document all observations, disclosures, and other pertinent information through use of the Disclosure Form (Appendix 3). These forms must be emailed to the CPO and member of Leadership within the child's section. The documents will be saved and stored in a protected shared area on Teams and the Sharepoint. All child protection records are confidential and shared only on a need-to-know basis. The CPO and relevant staff agree upon the next steps to be taken. The Child Protection Concern Flow Chart (Appendix 2) outlines the reporting and decision-making procedure.

3.7 MANAGING CHILD PROTECTION CASES – CHILD PROTECTION TEAM PROCEDURES

In all suspected child protection cases, the school adheres to German law regarding our procedures of reporting and seeking consultation. We have access to a range of consultative organizations including the Jugendamt (Youth Services) and we will always, in the first instance, seek advice and work in consultation with the Jugendamt to address any child protection disclosures. This often involves working in partnership with the Jugendamt and a family to utilize the necessary resources and ensure any additional supports are in place. However, this of course always depends upon the nature of any given disclosure, the extent of concern, and urgency of the case. If a formal report is required and submitted to external authorities, this may lead to investigation by professional social workers and/or the police so that appropriate measures can be put in place.

3.8 CONFIDENTIALITY

Maintaining confidentiality is imperative in the context of child protection and safeguarding issues. This means that in all alleged and suspected cases of child abuse or misconduct, staff must not make use of, or divulge, information which breaches confidentiality. Members of staff are required to share information regarding issues of child protection with the relevant CPO. This is outlined in the Child Protection Concern Flow Chart (Appendix 2).

If staff members have any questions about confidentiality, they are encouraged to seek advice from the CPO, Principal or Counselor. To ensure all information related to child protection incidents/observations remain



confidential, written documents should be avoided and shredded when possible or stored in locked spaces in the CPOs' offices. Instead, documents should be shared via email and the CPO will save them to a protected area. Any breach in confidentiality will be taken seriously and may lead to disciplinary actions.

3.9 LOWER-LEVEL CONCERNS ABOUT STUDENTS AND STAFF

If staff have concerns about the wellbeing of a child but do not have any evidence of a Child Protection issue, they are encouraged to complete a Concern entry in ISAMS. This will alert the relevant staff to the concern and will ensure there is a log of information kept on students in case of further concerns. The ISAMS entry will automatically be sent to the Progress Leader and Leadership in the child's section, ensuring issues can be acted upon quickly.

If staff have concerns about the behaviour of a colleague, they are expected to share these via an online Form that will only go to the Head of School. [Lower Level Concern \(LLC\) about Staff Form](#).

The form should be completed whenever a staff member feels that a colleague's behaviour is inconsistent with the Code of Conduct. While the staff member may not feel the behaviour meets the threshold of a child protection concern/referral, it is important that they share the concern so that the Head of School can have an overview of behaviour. It may be that no further action is taken. It may be that the information this staff member shares adds to other concerns shared previously about this same colleague, in which case action would be taken. At no point will the Head of School use the name of the member of staff with the colleague unless this has been agreed beforehand.

4. Awareness and Prevention

4.1 STAFF TRAINING AND AWARENESS

As a part of our 'Back to School Week', and general onboarding process, all staff are required to attend Child Protection training which familiarizes staff with school policies and procedures. The training outlines the most up-to-date school policy and procedures, as well as giving staff members warning signs to be aware of and watch out for. Online training courses are also available for staff members and ongoing opportunities to discuss issues related to safeguarding and child protection are built into ongoing professional development sessions for staff members. Our Counseling and Child Protection Team members are also available to provide ongoing advice and workshops to staff members.

The designated Child Protection Officers attend off-site professional development sessions regularly to ensure they are up to date on current practices and procedures. This training is held in German and ensures we are informed and work in compliance with all local regulations and protocols.

4.2 STUDENT, PARENT AND COMMUNITY AWARENESS

Working in partnership with our school community is of the utmost importance and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is available via our website and Parent Portal. A commitment to Child Protection and Safeguarding can be found in our student parent handbooks and a summary of information given about counseling services and our Child Protection Officers.

Our student community is also educated in an age-appropriate way throughout our curriculum in aspects of personal safety and wellbeing that support students learning strategies to cope with any difficult situations they may face and an understanding of those adults around them from whom they can seek further support. This forms part of the Social Emotional Learning /Life Skills program and curriculum. External professionals are invited into school to supplement this work, including sexual health advisors, the Police, and online safety experts.



Posters are displayed around the school with photographs of the CP Team and Counsellors so that the community has a clear reminder of who they can approach if they would like to share or discuss a concern.

4.3 BEHAVIOUR AND PRACTICES

We recognize the importance of creating a safe and supportive environment to ensuring children can thrive and be confident their concerns will be listened to and acted upon. A range of policies and practices exist to promote our values and approaches, such as the Behaviour for Learning Policy (including Bullying), Student Leadership opportunities (including buddies, mentors, and student-led clubs), and our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) Committee and actions. All of these raise awareness of our priorities, provide guidance on how to implement best practice, and make clear our expectation that all members of our community have the right to feel valued, recognized, and supported.

We also know that school attendance is crucial for a child's wellbeing and progress and that consistent failure to attend can be a safeguarding and even child protection concern. Therefore, BMS families are expected to send their children to school on a regular basis and to explain any absences, including with medical notes where relevant. It is the responsibility of all BMS staff to monitor the attendance of our students and to alert Progress Leaders and the CPO if significant concerns arise. Please see Attendance Policy.

4.4 RECRUITMENT PRACTICES

BMS is committed to adhering to recruitment practices and procedures that ensure the safe recruitment of all teaching and non-teaching staff members. A commitment to child protection and safeguarding measures will be stated on our school website, in job advertisements, and in documentation for our potential candidates.

Our Human Resources department is responsible for the initial screening of applicants and thorough screening is critical to ensuring potential abusers are prevented from entering our school community. This process of evaluation is regularly revised and amended in order to meet local and international guidelines for recruitment procedures.

All positions at BMS require background screening checks including:

- Police check from all countries where the candidate has been employed and lived
- Three confidential written references from previous employers. Previous employers are always asked if there were any concerns related to child protection and safeguarding raised about the candidate in their previous position.
- A personal interview including questions that relate to safeguarding. Please refer to Appendix 5 Child Protection and Safeguarding Interview Questions
- Teaching permission application with the Berlin Senate (dependent on position)

All hiring practices adhere to German law. A comprehensive overview of our Screening and Recruitment practices can be found in Appendix 6.

As part of new staff orientation all staff, including all interns, volunteers, freelance employees, and externally contracted service providers, are instructed in our BMS Child Protection Policy and guidelines. Further details regarding staff training and ongoing professional learning in the area of Child Protection and Safeguarding can be found in section 4.1.

4.5 EXTERNAL SERVICE PROVISION

Any externally contracted service providers or companies who are working onsite during school hours are not left to supervise BMS students. All external service providers (catering, cleaning, etc.) working at BMS have contractual obligations to provide police clearance checks to their employer.

4.6 FREELANCE INSTRUCTORS, COACHES AND PROFESSIONALS



There are many private instructors and coaches who work with our students, for example, as part of our Vacation and Club Program. The CCEP Coordinator and Student Experience and Community Manager are responsible for the hiring of and communication with these instructors and coaches. Anyone who is working with our students must be trained in, and adhere to, our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy as well as other policies such as our Professional Practice and Social Media Policy. Background checks must be carried out on all instructors and coaches who work with our students.

4.7 FIELD TRIPS AND CAMPS

When students attend overnight camp trips with external companies/organizations, BMS requires police checks from all instructors who are working in direct contact with the student group. Staff members and students find themselves in different circumstances and routines when on field trips and camps and therefore staff members must ensure they adhere to all guidelines set out in our Camp and Field Trip Policy.

4.8 FACILITIES AND SECURITY

Our Business Director, Facility Manager and facility team ensure the school grounds and facilities meet the requirements of all health and safety regulations and in accordance with German law. Regular checks of all facilities are led by our Facility Manager.

Students and families are not permitted in the school building outside of school hours unless this is by invitation to a school event. ELC and Primary students must check out at Reception each day and written permission must be given by parents/guardians for students to leave school independently. Our staff check the school building is empty at the end of each school day to ensure no students are left in the school building. Security staff are onsite each day from 15.00 to 23.00.

Crisis drills are reviewed annually with all employees and drills are conducted with all students and staff on a regular basis.

5. Resources and Links

5.1 APPENDICES

1. Appendix 1: **Code of Conduct**
2. Appendix 2: **Child Protection Concern Flow Chart**
3. Appendix 3: **Disclosure Form**
4. Appendix 4: **Lower Level Concern Form**
5. Appendix 5: **Internal Child Protection Record Form**
6. Appendix 6: **Jugendamt Referral Form**
7. Appendix 7: **Signs of Potential Offenders**
8. Appendix 8: **Screening and Recruitment Practices**
9. Appendix 9: **BMS Staff Guidelines**
10. Appendix 10: **Child Protection and Safeguarding Interview Questions**
11. Appendix 11: **ELC Personal Care and Hygiene Guidelines**

5.2 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS & POLICIES

Social Media Policy
HR Policy
Behavior Policy
Student Support Handbook
Professional Feedback Framework/Professional Standards
Field Trips and Camps Policy
Mapped curriculum for SEL, including Life Skills and Second Step
First Aid and Medication
Attendance Policy



5.3 INFORMATION SOURCES / CREDITS

United Nations Human Rights (1989), Conventions on the Rights of the Child,
<http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>

Council for International Schools – Child Protection and Safeguarding Standards
<https://www.cois.org/about-cis/child-protection/resources>

International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children
<https://www.icmec.org/education-portal/school-policies/>

NSPCC
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/definitions-signs-child-abuse/>

Association of International Schools in Africa: Child Protection Handbook
<https://aisa.or.ke/resources/aisa-child-protection-handbook/>

Senatsverwaltung für Bildung, Jugend und Familie
<https://www.berlin.de/sen/jugend/familie-und-kinder/kinderschutz/#notdienste>

Senatsverwaltung für Bildung, Jugend und Familie – Link to Crisis Plan for Schools
<https://www.berlin.de/sen/bildung/unterstuetzung/gewalt-und-notfaelle/informationen-fuer-schulen/>

International School Hannover Region - Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure 5.40
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0ByDv6SSI3oT0MXJ2UkJDQ3VQYjYzTjJ3XzBJX2k3YjZuYm9j/view>

International School of Paris Child Protection Policy and Procedures
https://www.isparis.edu/uploaded/Documents/policy_documents/Child_Protection_1.2_web.pdf

Supporting your school: A new protocol for managing allegations of child abuse by educators and other adults in international communities
<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1541762398/cis/mhtgsnzclzvvhbgoxuwg/Launching-Protocol.pdf>



Appendix 1

BMS Code of Conduct

The aims of this Code of Conduct are:

- to make clear the expectations for all BMS staff in their work with colleagues and other members of the school community.
- to make clear the expectations for all BMS staff in their work with children and young people.
- to safeguard all students by ensuring adults uphold appropriate relationships with the young people in their care.
- to protect the physical, social, and emotional well-being of all students and staff.

Our practices and processes are guided by German Law (Child and Youth Services Act) and reflect the overall ideals outlined in the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child safeguards the entitlement of all children, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, or nationality to be protected from any type of abuse, to receive help, to have their opinions heard about matters that affect them, to receive information and to be treated with dignity.

I commit to following the guidelines of the BMS Code of Conduct and the [BMS Safeguarding Policy](#) during my employment at BMS.

I will:

- Adhere to the [BMS Guiding Statements](#) and [Professional Standards](#).
- Present as a professional member of BMS as staff and role model at all times.
- Make the safety and well-being of all students my utmost priority.
- Treat every child with respect, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Only meet with students in a professional capacity and, where possible, in view of and/ or with the knowledge of another staff member.
- Consult with a line manager if I am unsure or concerned about meeting with a student.
- Use positive reinforcement and supportive behavior rather than competition, negativity or comparison when working with students.
- Always maintain acceptable physical boundaries and only engage in physical contact that is appropriate, safe, and non-sexual.
- Respect the protection of student data at all times.
- Comply with the mandatory reporting regulations of the BMS Safeguarding Policy.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children or young people.
- Be proactive in communicating concerns to the Child Protection Officer regarding students.
- Be proactive in communicating concerns to leadership regarding colleagues or other members of the community.

I will not:

- Bring the school into disrepute through my words or behavior.
- Touch or speak to a child or young person in a sexual or otherwise inappropriate manner.



- Inflict any physical or emotional harm, including any actions or words that can injure, humiliate, ridicule, threaten or degrade the students.
- Smoke or use tobacco products on the school grounds or at any time while working.
- Be under the influence of alcohol while working.
- Use illegal substances at any time.
- Provide unauthorized personal transportation for a student who is not my child unless instructed to by my employer/ line manager.
- Accept gifts from or give gifts to students without the knowledge of their parents/ guardians.
- Engage in private communication with students via text messaging, email, social media channels or similar.
- Use language that is insulting, profane, discriminatory, or exclusionary.
- Take or share student data, including photographs and videos, without their parents'/ guardians' written consent.

I understand that as an employee of BMS, I am subject to a criminal history background check. My signature confirms that I have never engaged in any action that would qualify as child abuse and that I have read this document and agree to honor these expectations. I understand and accept that any action I take that is inconsistent with the BMS Code of Conduct or if I fail to act mandated by this document may result in disciplinary action up to and including my termination of employment at BMS.

Name: _____

Date/ Signature: _____



Appendix 2

Child Protection Concern Flow Chart

STEP ONE

Concerns raised by member of staff, parents, the child themselves, and/or external professionals regarding child's well-being and safety. CP Disclosure Form completed [CP Disclosure Form](#) and emailed to CPO + cc within child's division [CP and Safeguarding Teams](#).

STEP TWO

CPO confirms receipt of CP Disclosure Form within the day
Note: if confirmation from CPO is not received, member of staff cannot leave school until they have spoken to a member of the CP Team.

STEP THREE

CPO meets with member of staff to gather information and creates internal school support report: [Internal School CP Report](#). CPO consults with other members of CP and/or Safeguarding Team if necessary. CPO makes referral decision.

No referral needed.

Referral needed.

STEP FOUR A

CPO informs relevant team members where necessary - interventions considered, including whether family informed. Situation must continue to be monitored and documented. BMS Disclosure Form filed.

STEP FOUR B

CPO informs Principal. If Referral confirmed, go to Step Five:
If Referral not confirmed, go to Step Four A.

STEP FIVE

Family informed if appropriate/possible.

STEP SIX

[CP Referral Form](#) written by CP Team. Referral sent to Jugendamt via fax and saved to secure area.

STEP SEVEN

CPO informs relevant team members and interventions considered. Staff informed to be vigilant/mindful of concerns.

N.B. At all points along this flow chart, advice will be sought from the Berlin State authorities when applicable with whom the School work closely to support students and their families.



Appendix 3

Child Protection Disclosure Form


Student Name:
Class/Tutor Group:
Date:
Reporting Staff Member:
Observations/Concerns: <i>Please provide a factual account with all dates, times, and locations.</i>
The student knows I am reporting this: Yes / No <i>(delete as appropriate)</i> <i>If the student does not know you are reporting this, please explain why:</i>



Appendix 4

Lower Level Concern Form

Please follow the link to complete form online: [Lower Level Concern About Staff Form](#)



Lower Level Concern (LLC) About Staff Form

BMS Staff Members,

Please complete this Form if you have any concerns about a colleague behaving in a manner that is inconsistent with our Code of Conduct. As much as possible, the information you provide will remain confidential, though some follow-up and further conversations may be needed. The Form will not be shared with HR and the concern will not be added to a staff member's personnel/HR file. Instead, it will go directly to the Head of School who will monitor and possibly investigate the information received. Please remember that by sharing this information, you are focusing on protecting and supporting members of our community, particularly children and young people.

Thank you for your support.

Hi, Vivian. When you submit this form, the owner will see your name and email address.

* Required

1. Privacy Information

The purpose of this Form is to report a concern regarding the behaviour of a staff member. The Form has been created by and will be viewed by the Head of School at Berlin Metropolitan School. The procedure involves answering the questions below and possibly discussing your concerns with the Head of School.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary.

We will keep your information confidential, secure and safe. All data is stored on secure and GDPR compliant Microsoft Cloud Services, hosted in the EU. The Form complies with our data protection guidelines.

If you have any questions about the Form, please contact samantha.hearn@metropolitanschool.com

ELECTRONIC CONSENT:



- I have read the above information
- I voluntarily agree to participate
- I am at least 18 years of age

*

Yes

2. Name of Staff Member you are expressing a concern about: *

Enter your answer

3. Please explain your concerns in as much detail as possible, providing names, dates, times, and locations. Try to state facts where possible and report what was said and/or done that raised concern. *

Enter your answer

Submit

This content is created by the owner of the form. The data you submit will be sent to the form owner. Microsoft is not responsible for the privacy or security practices of its customers, including those of this form owner. Never give out your password.

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Appendix 5

Internal School Child Protection Report

Please follow the link to access complete form: [Internal School CP Report](#)

Anlage 1

1

Dokumentationsbogen zur innerschulischen Einschätzung einer Kindeswohlgefährdung (KWG)

Vor- und Zuname des betroffenen Kindes/Jugendlichen:

Geburtsdatum:

Name/-n der Erziehungsberechtigten:

KWG beobachtet/mitgeteilt durch:

Dokumentiert durch (Name und Funktion):

Dokumentiert am:

**Klassenleitung
informiert am:**

Angaben in Stichpunkten. Ggf. können Ausführungen als Anlage angefügt werden.

Wahrnehmen und Feststellen

siehe Seiten 12–15 des Handlungsleitfadens (Indikatoren und Risikofaktoren)

Beschreibung des beobachteten, gehörten oder in anderer Form übermittelten Ereignisses/Verhaltens, das zum Verdacht einer Kindeswohlgefährdung geführt hat:

Innerschulische Beratungen (4-Augen-Prinzip) und ggf. externe Fachberatung durch beispielsweise eine „Insoweit erfahrene Fachkraft“ im Kinderschutz (IseF)

siehe Seiten 12–15 des Handlungsleitfadens (Indikatoren und Risikofaktoren)

Auf welche konkreten Indikatoren stützt sich die Einschätzung zu einer möglichen oder vorliegenden Kindeswohlgefährdung?

Appendix 6

Jugendamt Referral Form

Please follow the link to complete form online: [Jugendamt Referral Form](#)

Anlage 3

1

Mitteilungsbogen über gewichtige Anhaltspunkte für eine Kindeswohlgefährdung gem. § 8a SGB VIII

im Rahmen der Kooperation zwischen Schule und Jugendamt
Die Weitergabe personenbezogener Schülerdaten von der Schule an das Jugendamt erfolgt gem. § 4 Absatz 3 KKG.
Angaben in Stichpunkten. Ggf. können Ausführungen als Anlage angefügt werden.

Name der Schule:

Adresse:

Telefon:

Fax:

Meldedatum:

Teilnehmende Personen:

Fallnummer:

Die fortlaufende Fallnummer ist auch im Rückmeldebogen einzutragen und besteht aus der Berliner Schulnummer und dem angegebenen Meldedatum (bspw. 08G01-01.08.2019).

Ansprechperson:

Telefon:

E-Mail:

Profession/Funktion:

Schulleitung

Lehrkraft

Erzieherin/Erzieher

Schulsozialarbeiterin/Schulsozialarbeiter

Faxnummer Jugendamt siehe Seite 24 des Handlungsleitfadens - bezirkliche Krisendienste

RSD:

Angaben zur minderjährigen Person

Vorname:

Nachname:

Geschlecht:

Geburtsdatum:

Klasse/Gruppe/Kurs:

Appendix 7

Signs of Potential Offenders

In addition to recognizing potential signs of child endangerment, it is equally important to be aware of some of the early warning signs to look out for in potential offenders:

Student potential offender signs

- unusual interest in sexual activities
- does not stop sexualized behavior when asked to stop
- uses force or coercion in social situations
- displays an unusual intensity when discussing sex and sexuality
- socializes with much younger children
- gives gifts and encourages secrecy in relationships with others

Adult potential offender signs

- has a “favorite” student or child
- attempts to find ways to be alone with children
- uses inappropriate language with/about children
- uses sexualized talk in the presence of children
- gives private gifts and encourages secrecy in chats and dealings with children
- engages with students privately via social media

These definitions and indicators are not meant to be definitive, but only serve as a guide to assist you. It is important too, to remember that many children may exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and that the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring. There may well be other reasons for changes in behavior such as a death or the birth of a new baby in the family or relationship problems between parents/caregivers. In assessing whether indicators are related to abuse or not, the authorities will always want to understand them in relation to the child’s development and context.

Source: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC): Child Protection fact sheet: The definitions and signs of child abuse.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1188/definitions-signs-child-abuse.pdf>

Appendix 8

Screening and Recruitment Practices

This document outlines the BMS screening and recruitment practices as recommended by the [International Task Force on Child Protection \(ITFCP\)](#). This serves as an addendum to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Advertising and Interview Practices

BMS adheres to national and international safeguarding protocols and makes its commitment to child security and wellbeing visible through advertising and interview practices.

BMS Practices	Responsibility	Notes
Interview questions include:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions related to a candidate's motivation to work with children and in the field of education. 	Interview panel	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background profile, history of movement, roles and responsibilities within school settings, motivation to leave schools, including contract renewal, questions related to any complaints filed or arrests. 	Interview panel	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attitudes and behaviors ("How would you respond to...(a specific child protection scenario)?" "How do you maintain boundaries appropriate for your role?" etc. 	Interview panel	
<p>The school includes the following statement on the school website.</p> <p><i>Berlin Metropolitan School (BMS) offers a safe and caring environment where students are free to explore and develop to their fullest potential. BMS staff and community are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and youth within our school community. Our practices and processes are guided by German Law (Child and Youth Services Act) and reflect the overall ideals outlined in the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990).</i></p>	HR Department	
<p>The school includes the following statement on its recruitment pages and in job postings, job advertisements.</p> <p><i>BMS is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children, young people and adults in our community. Candidates for employment at BMS must be willing to undergo child protection screening, including checks with past employers and criminal checks. We adhere to strict protocols as part of our hiring processes which are aligned with the</i></p>	HR Department	



<i>recommendations of the International Task Force on Child.</i>		
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Candidate Data

The school requires a thorough personal and professional profile of each candidate, including the following information.

BMS Practices	Responsibility	Notes
Full Name	HR Department	
Gender	HR Department	
Date of Birth	HR Department	
Citizenship (secondary countries must be included)	HR Department	
Country of residence	HR Department	
Address	HR Department	
Email address	HR Department	
Phone Number	HR Department	Optional according to Data Protection guidelines.
Education (Institution/ degrees/ dates, where relevant)	HR Department	
Certifications held (Country/region/ province/ expiration date)	HR Department	
Total number of years in education	HR Department	
Total number of years living outside your birth country	HR Department	
Curriculum experience or related relevant experience	HR Department	
Work history (Name of school/employer/eligibility for re-employment)	HR Department	
Explanation for any gaps in work history	Interview Panel	
Name and contact details for references (personal and professional)	HR Department	
Criminal history (arrests and convictions)	HR Department	
Candidate declaration of full disclosure and acknowledges that any agreement of employment or subsequent employment may be terminated immediately due to misrepresentation.	HR Department	
Most candidates provide the information requested above in an online application form (Schrole) rather than only in an existing CV or other format.	HR Department	
Candidate applications are reviewed by at least two people during the recruitment process.	HR Department	

Reference Checks

The school has a written statement as part of the BMS Hiring policy which includes information about how references are reviewed and validated.

BMS Practices	Responsibility	Notes
The candidate provides at least three confidential professional references. This may be via the online platform Schrole.	HR Department	
One or more of the references is a direct supervisor of the candidate.	HR Department	

At least two references are from employment from the last 6 years and from a range of the institutions worked in.		HR Department	
At least two supervisory references are contacted via email, phone or face to face.		HR Department/ Interview Panel	
Direct questions asked to a candidate referee include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you have any concerns about the candidate working unsupervised with children? Did any of the candidate's colleagues, students or parents express such concerns? Would you rehire the candidate? (why or why not dependent on the response.) 		Interview Panel	
Recommended additional practice			
The candidate provides one or two confidential personal references to verify background profile and character.		School Principal or Director	

Referee Validation

The school has a written statement as part of the BMS Hiring policy which includes information about how identities of referees are verified.

BMS Practices	Responsibility	Notes
Referees are contacted through business email addresses (if possible, in some cases if retired this is not the case).	School Principal or Director	
Referees are contacted through business telephone numbers or skype video call contacts.	School Principal or Director	

Credential Validation

The school has a clear process and procedure for the review and verification of personal and professional histories and documentation.

BMS Practices	Responsibility	Notes
All required documentation is collated and reviewed before a formal contract offer is made.	HR Department	
Documentation is translated by a certified service as required	HR Department	
All credentials and documentation adhere to Berlin Senat regulations.	HR Department	
Recommended additional practice		
Documents identified as being from an uncertain origin are verified by an authorized agency.	HR Department	



Criminal Background Checks

The school requires criminal background checks from every country in which the candidate has been employed.

BMS Practices		Responsibility	Notes
There is a criminal background check from the candidate's birth country.		HR Department	
There is a criminal background check from every country in which the candidate has been employed.		HR Department	
The candidate obtains a German police check on arrival in Germany.		HR Department	
Recommended additional practice			
The school conducts an internet search of the candidate.		HR Department	
The school reviews the sex offender websites for each of the countries the candidate has previously lived.		HR Department	Currently open database checks can be done for USA: https://www.nsopw.gov

Sources: [Council of International Schools](#), [International Task Force on Child Protection](#) and [International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children](#).

CIS Recruitment and Screening Practices
<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1543573914/cis/antsvzqr0yb8aoclkbj9/Recommended-Recruitment-and-Screening-Practices.pdf>



Appendix 9

BMS Staff Guidelines

Our Professional Practice Policy outlines the professional behavior expected of all staff members in our community. Below you can find some further clarification to this policy particularly in relation to Child Protection and Safeguarding.

Communication and Relationships

- In meetings and conversations with students, staff must be mindful of the setting, context and circumstances.
- Another adult should always be informed of any one-on-one meeting between student and staff members taking place.
- Meetings with students away from the school premises should only be arranged with the approval of the principal (for example: exhibition mentor meetings).
- Communication with students that is beyond the professional role of teacher or volunteer is strictly prohibited.
- Staff must communicate with students only via school email address or a school endorsed learning platform. Staff are not permitted to connect with students via any private personal social media platforms.
- Staff, and volunteers who use any form of online communications including social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and text messaging to communicate with students may only do so for activities involving school business. Please refer to Social Media Policy.
- All staff should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their dealings with students. Intimate and/or sexual relationships between staff and pupils will be regarded as a grave breach of trust. Any sexual activity between a member of staff and a student under 18 years of age is a criminal offence and will be reported to the police.
- Staff should abstain from any conduct towards students that could be considered to be flirtatious, overly-familiar, or generally unprofessional, knowing that such behavior is deemed unacceptable in our school.
- Staff may encounter pupils who display attention-seeking behavior, or profess to be attracted to them. Staff should aim to deal with those situations sensitively and appropriately. In these circumstances, the member of staff must ensure that a senior colleague and the senior leadership team is made aware of the situation.

Supervision

- ELC and Primary School students should not be left alone, without supervision, for any reason.
- Students who are allowed to leave school alone, or with younger siblings, must have written permission from their parents.
- Staff should be particularly careful when supervising students during extracurricular activities, or residential settings such as a ski trip, outdoor education camp, or extended visit away from school. Although this is a more informal setting, the standard of behavior displayed within the school context is expected.

Student Privacy

- Student privacy while using toilets, showers, or changing clothes should be respected. ELC teachers should follow the appropriate guidelines with any students who require additional support in using the toilets, or other facilities. Please refer to the ELC Toilet and Personal Care Guidelines for further information.



Physical Contact

- Any form of physical punishment of students is unlawful and unacceptable, unless it is by way of restraining a student from inflicting injury on themselves or others. It is particularly important that staff understand this, to protect their own position, the wellbeing of our students and the overall reputation of the school. Any physical contact should not be unnecessary or unjustified, particularly with the same student over a period of time.
- There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain a student physically to prevent him/ her from inflicting injury to others or self-injury damaging property, or causing disruption. In such cases only the minimum force necessary may be used and any action taken must be only to restrain the student from causing themselves or others harm.
- Younger students often express affection for the adults around them through hugging or hand holding. In all instances affection should be initiated by the student and a their needs (not our own) should guide us.
- If a child is distressed to comfort them use verbal reassurance and very simple contact, such as hand-holding, a pat on the back or a hug from the side.
- Hand-holding is appropriate when a young student needs to be guided to a new location.
- Very young students may move to sit on your lap. Staff should not actively encourage lap sitting and it should never be used as a consequence. It should always be child initiated and staff should gradually disengage from the physical contact as soon as possible. This is not appropriate for upper primary students.

Reporting Concerns

- Staff are responsible for bringing any concern of student endangerment to the attention of the child protection team, regardless of the possible involvement of another member of staff.
- The Senior Leadership Team should always be informed of any child protection concerns.
- Following any incident where a member of staff feels that their actions have been, or may be, misconstrued, they should discuss the matter with a senior member of staff. The same applies for non-staff members, where they should provide a written report of the incident.

Appendix 10

Child Protection and Safeguarding Sample Interview Questions

As part of the interview process those members of staff involved in interviewing candidates should be aware of asking questions that probe to provide further information regarding a candidate's attitude towards, and awareness of, professional boundaries. These questions should probe to discover a candidate's understanding of appropriate relationships with children and their commitment to, and evidence of, taking action to protect children.

When interviewing a candidate be cognizant of vague and general answers that highlight a lack of awareness and empathy towards student's needs and especially towards those students who are more vulnerable, or who perhaps have a higher level of need. The way in which a candidate talks about students, the language used and their references to boundaries that they have in working with students all can provide insight into their student-teacher relationships. If candidates have periods of absence from employment that are unexplained, gaps in their references or have frequently moved from position to position seek out explanations for these.

Below you can find an overview of sample questions that can support safeguarding as part of the interview process.

Values and philosophy

- What do you believe makes up a safe and supportive School environment?
- Can you share an example of when you have had to deal with bullying behavior? How did you approach this?
- Have you ever had concerns about a colleague with regards to their interactions with children? How did you navigate this?

Attitude and relationships

- Why do you want to work with children/to teach? What do you have to offer?
- Can you share a situation where you have had to face dealing with a difficult relationship in your School experience? What was challenging about the situation? How did you navigate this?
- How have you reacted when your authority was challenged by a student? How did you respond and resolve this situation? What have you learnt from this?

Knowledge and understanding of Child Protection policies/procedures

- Can you share an example of how you dealt with a child protection or safeguarding concern with one of your students? Or How would you deal with a concern if this arose? (Provide a scenario)
- What procedures do you believe need to be in place to protect children?
- Safeguarding children is a crucial aspect of working with children. Can you share some examples of how you would contribute to ensuring our learning environment is safe?

Appendix 11

ELC Personal Care and Hygiene Guidelines

Berlin Metropolitan School is committed to promoting the welfare and safety of all children in our setting. We are responsible for ensuring that all staff members who are responsible for the personal care of children, and for undertaking these duties, do so in a professional manner at all times. Personal care (as used here) includes all tasks associated with bodily functions, body products, and hygienic care requiring any direct or indirect contact with, or exposure to, the genitals. All personal care should be carried out in a manner that allows the child to maintain their dignity and build self-confidence, as well as avoiding distress, embarrassment, or pain*.

Although all ELC students should be toilet trained upon arrival at school, we understand that every child is prepared to independently use the toilets at their own rate. Our parents are informed of our policy regarding pre-entry toilet training during the admissions process. They are also provided with an information letter after their child has been accepted, giving them simple tips for positively supporting their child to become independent toilet users.

Toilet and Personal Care Guidelines:

- On entry to the ELC, students should be independent toilet users. In case a student is not toilet trained, or their ability to use the toilet regresses over the course of the school year, the parents should be immediately informed.
- At the beginning of each new ELC year children should be introduced to the bathrooms. Teachers should go over toilet and hand washing practices and take note of children who are likely to need regular supervision/assistance.
- Teachers should always arrange supervision in the bathrooms (teacher/volunteer/class mate/bathroom monitor).
- When a student requires assistance with their personal hygiene, teachers should be sure that another adult knows that they are assisting the student.
- Teachers (*not* teacher-trainees or social volunteers) should always take over responsibility for assisting students with their personal hygiene needs, as necessary.
- Whenever possible, keep the classroom or toilet doors open when assisting a student with their personal hygiene, while providing them with personal privacy (either while cleaning a child, or helping them to change).
- If a child is struggling to clean themselves after using the toilet, teachers may ask them if they would like assistance. Teachers should encourage students to be independent and to do as much as they can on their own. If a child refuses help (for example, doesn't want to be touched by a teacher), this should be respected. The child's parent or a care-giver should be called if the child is unable to take care of themselves in this situation.
- Teachers should use appropriate names for genitalia, as needed, rather than slang terminology. If students use a particular word to name their genitalia, it is acceptable to repeat the word to the child (i.e. "willy", "fanny") as well as the anatomical term. Sexualized terms are never appropriate, regardless of whether a child initiates the word. Any usage of sexualized terminology should be brought to the attention of the child protection team.
- Be sure to always use protective gloves when cleaning students, or assisting them in changing clothes after an accident, or any other instances when there is the possibility of contact with bodily fluids.
- After assisting students with their personal hygiene, teachers should wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water.