

QSI International School of Dili  
2019-2020

---

# Child Safeguarding and Protection Handbook

Guidelines and Protocol for Fostering a Safe School  
Environment for Children and Youth



# Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1: Background Information for Child Safeguarding and Protection Procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
Definitions of Abuse and Neglect	
Context of the School Community	
Myths and Facts about Child Abuse and Neglect	
<b>Chapter 2: QSI Policies</b>	<b>10</b>
QSI Policies Related to Child Safeguarding and Protection	
<b>Chapter 3: Prevention</b>	<b>14</b>
Child Protection Team Roles and Responsibilities	
Recruiting and Hiring	
Reporting Requirements	
Training	
Avoiding Behaviors that Lead to Allegations	
Excursions, School Events, and Student Travel	
Child Safeguarding and Protection Curriculum	
<b>Chapter 4: Disclosure and Follow-Up</b>	<b>28</b>
Principles and Guidelines for Disclosure, Reporting, and Follow-Up	
Response to Disclosure or Report Flowchart	
Guidelines for Disclosure or Report Follow-Up	
Documentation of Disclosed or Reported Cases of Abuse	
Confidentiality in Communication in Case of Abuse or Emergency	
<b>Chapter 5: School-Specific Documents</b>	<b>37</b>
Child Safeguarding and Protection Statement	
Local Laws Related to Child Safeguarding and Protection	
Local Authorities and Services Working on Child Safeguarding and Protection	
Local Counseling and Treatment Resources	
<b>Chapter 6: Document Examples and Templates</b>	<b>47</b>
Code of Conduct	
Introductory Letter to School Community	
Child Protection Reporting Form	

**Special thanks to our sources:**

- Association of International Schools in Africa (AISA) Child Protection Program Guide.
- International Schools Services (ISS).
- The work of International Task Force on Child Protection (ITFCP)\* and accreditation agencies in in the recommendation of child and youth protection standards.
- International Task Force on Child Protection (ITFCP) recruitment committee recommended screening practices & other recommendations.
- International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (ICMEC) education portal's checklists and summary resources (<http://www.icmec.org/education-portal/>).
- Central and Eastern European Schools Association (CEESA).
- Tirana International School.

*\*The work of the International Task Force on Child Protection (ITFCP) has been undertaken by a coalition of 90+ volunteers, leaders of international education organizations, school leaders, counsellors, business and security managers and teachers, school accreditation, inspection and recruitment professionals, working collaboratively across professions with dedicated law enforcement officials and the medical community. It is this broad collaboration and diverse perspective from a variety of roles which has enriched their discussion and results. From its origin in May of 2014, its charter has been to apply its collective resources, expertise, and partnerships to help international school communities address child and youth protection challenges.*

# Chapter 1

## Background Information for Child Safeguarding and Protection Procedures

---

### Definitions of Abuse and Neglect

Definitions of abuse are complex and based in various cultures, child-rearing behaviors, and gender role expectations. The primary determination of **abuse** is that it is dependent on some form of a relationship that is used to meet the need of the more powerful person, either a member of the family, a teacher, or a friend. Research guides the definitions, and the understanding of the impact of certain behaviors.

#### Important Notes:

- Behavioral indicators in and of themselves do not constitute abuse or neglect; the presence of indicators does not necessarily mean that abuse or neglect is present.
  - The behavioral indicators could be rooted in other issues, or may represent normal developmental phases experienced by a child.
  - Troubling student behavior should be addressed in a constructive way, regardless of the cause.
  - Use common sense and consider other indicators, such as culture and family dynamics, when deciding if a referral is warranted.
  - If in doubt, ask for help from the school Counselor or Director.
- Possible indicators of abuse or neglect may be the same across multiple types of abuse.
- Indicators may be entirely absent in a child who is a victim of abuse.
- The most powerful evidence of abuse is self-reporting. If a child reports abuse, a referral must be made, whether indicators are present or not.

#### Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is defined as a parent or caregiver deliberately inflicting pain or injuries to the child, or allowing another person to inflict pain or injuries to the child.

#### Possible indicators of physical abuse include:

- Bruises, burns, sprains, dislocations, bites, cuts.
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries.

- Injuries which have not received medical attention.
- Injuries that occur to the body in places that are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains.
- Refusal to discuss injuries.
- Withdrawal from physical contact.
- Self-destructive tendencies, including cutting or suicidal ideation.
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather.
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted.
- Showing wariness or distrust of adults.
- Being aggressive toward others.
- Being very passive and compliant.
- Chronic running away.

## **Neglect**

Neglect is defined as a parent or caregiver intentionally denying a child access to things that support healthy development, including adequate food, clothing, shelter, sleep, supervision, medical treatment and education.

### **Possible Indicators of Neglect include:**

- Basic needs not met.
  - Inadequate supervision, nutrition, hygiene, or clothing.
  - Medical needs unattended.
- Fatigue or listlessness.
- Extreme loneliness.
- Hunger.
- Self-destructive tendencies, including cutting or suicidal ideation.
- Reluctance to go home.
- Low self-esteem.
- Poor social relationships.
- Compulsive stealing.
- Alcohol or drug abuse.
- Frequent lateness or low attendance.
- Child is left for extended periods of time without parents or a guardian.
- Parents cannot be reached in the case of emergency.

## **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is defined as a parent or caregiver persistently mistreating a child emotionally, often causing severe and adverse effects on a child's emotional well-being or development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, but it may also occur alone. It includes:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved.
- Conveying to children that they are inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- Imposing inappropriate age or developmental expectations on children.
- Exposing children to domestic violence.
- Causing children frequently to feel frightened.
- Exploiting or corrupting children.

## **Possible indicators of emotional abuse include:**

- Delayed physical, mental, or emotional development.
- High anxiety.
- Delayed speech or sudden appearance of a speech disorder.
- Fear of new situations.
- Low self-esteem.
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations.
- Extremes of passivity or aggression.
- Alcohol or drug abuse.
- Chronic running away.
- Compulsive stealing.
- Obsessions or phobias.
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- Attention-seeking behavior.
- Persistent tiredness.
- Lying.

## **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse is committing, or allowing others to commit, any sexual offense against a child, regardless of whether the child is aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse has some unique characteristics that warrant special attention. While physical abuse may be the unplanned result of immediate stress, sexual abuse requires planning with results that are more insidious. The planning, referred to as "grooming," often results in victims accepting the blame, responsibility, guilt, and shame for the sexual behavior of the offender.

Sexual abuse requires more secrecy than other forms of child abuse, so is more difficult to report. Some victims, through the process of grooming, are taught that sexual activity is a form of love, so may be protective of their abusers because of their perception of being loved. Any disclosure of sexual abuse must be taken seriously, regardless of the signs that are present or absent. The offender must be removed from the school setting as quickly as possible. School counselors can't work to treat sexual offenders; out-sourced professional assistance should be consulted as necessary.

Sexual abuse may include:

- Intentionally touching, either directly or through clothing, the genitals, anus, or chest area/breasts of a child for other than hygiene or child care purposes.
- Engaging in sexualized non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production or viewing of pornographic material or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- Involving children in commercial sex work. These children are victims of sexual abuse, whether they perceive themselves as victims or not.

**Possible Indicators of Sexual Abuse:**

- Age-inappropriate sexual knowledge, language, or provocative behavior.
- Withdrawn or aggressive behavior.
- Unusual interpersonal relationship patterns.
- Mention of special treatment from an adult, or a new "secret" friendship with an adult or younger person.
- Venereal disease, unusual vaginal or penile discharge, or difficulty urinating.
- Physical trauma or bleeding to the oral, genital, or anal areas.
- Difficulty in walking or sitting.
- Regressive behavior, like bedwetting or stranger anxiety.
- Refusal to change into PE clothes.
- Fear of people or places.
- Running away from home without a specific complaint.
- Pregnancy, especially at a young age.
- Unusually protective parents.

**Possible signs of sexual offenders:**

In addition to knowing the signs of victimization, below are some early warning signs to look out for in potential sexual offenders.

**Signs of student offenders:**

- Unusual interest in sex, sexualizing inanimate objects and activities.
- Continuation of sexual misbehavior when told to stop.
- Use of force and coercion in social situations.
- Unusual intensity when discussing sex and sexuality.
- Socialization with much younger children.
- Gifts.
- Requiring secrecy in relationships.

**Signs of adult offenders:**

- Identification of “favorite” student or child.
- Attempts to find ways to be alone with children.
- Inappropriate language, jokes and discussions about students/children.
- Sexualized talk in the presence of students/children.
- Private gifts or private chats, in person or online.

**Child Exploitation**

(The following is taken entirely from Save the Children’s Resource Center, <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/keyword/commercial-exploitation>)

Child exploitation refers to the use of children for someone else’s advantage, gratification or profit often resulting in unjust, cruel and harmful treatment of the child. These activities are to the detriment of the child’s physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It covers situations of manipulation, misuse, abuse, victimization, oppression or ill-treatment.

There are two main forms of child exploitation that are recognized:

- Sexual exploitation: the abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes; this includes profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the exploitation of another as well as personal sexual gratification.

Examples: Child prostitution, trafficking of children for sexual abuse and exploitation, child pornography, sexual slavery.

- Economic exploitation of a child: the use of the child in work or other activities for the benefit of others. This includes, but is not limited to, child labor. Economic exploitation implies the idea of a certain gain or profit through the production, distribution and

consumption of goods and services. This material interest has an impact on the economy of a certain unit, be it the State, the community or the family.

Examples: Child domestic work, child soldiers and the recruitment and involvement of children in armed conflict, child bondage, the use of children from criminal activities including the sale and distribution of narcotics, the involvement of children in any harmful or hazardous work.

## **Bullying**

The following definition of bullying was taken directly from

<https://www.stopbullying.gov/what-is-bullying/definition/index.html>:

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both children who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Children who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

There are three types of bullying. Verbal and social bullying may be carried out in person, on paper, or through cyber-bullying (via phone, text, video, online, or other electronic means).

- Verbal bullying is saying or writing mean things. Verbal bullying includes:
  - Teasing.
  - Name-calling.
  - Inappropriate sexual comments.
  - Taunting.
  - Threatening to cause harm.
- Social bullying, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. Social bullying includes:
  - Excluding someone on purpose.

- Telling other children not to be friends with someone.
- Spreading rumors about someone.
- Embarrassing someone in public.
- Physical bullying involves hurting or threatening a person's body or possessions.  
Physical bullying includes:
  - Hitting/kicking/pinching.
  - Spitting.
  - Tripping/pushing.
  - Taking or breaking someone's things.
  - Making mean or rude hand gestures.

### **Context of the School Community**

One of the essential roles and characteristics of the international school is that the school becomes the conduit for the social life in which expatriate families engage. Thus, international schools have a responsibility to literally fill the child safeguarding and protection gap in helping to connect these families to the necessary services. When the family reports that this is a safe and nurturing environment, the school can rest assured that it has fulfilled a critical service.

To clarify our task and its context within the community, it is important for school personnel to understand and be cognizant of the experience of the students we serve. Following are some of the characteristics and attributes of international school communities that should be taken in account when considering the context of our child safeguarding and protection guidelines.

#### **Characteristics and attributes of international school children:**

- Transience and mobility impact development of identity and relationships, especially for support in times of need.
- Children may demonstrate early maturity and sophistication in some areas, but naivety and immaturity in other areas.
- Separation from extended families, working and traveling parents, and interrupted long-term friendships and relationships may contribute to attachment issues, and support during times of crisis or need may be minimal or non-existent.
- Being lost between multiple and sometimes conflicting cultures and value systems results in confusion of behavioral expectations.
- High expectations are placed on students to achieve academically.
- Children have access to paid help in the home.

- Children may attend private international schools abroad and public schools in their home countries.

**Characteristics of international school families:**

- Isolation from extended family, previous community creates a lack of support.
- Power differential in marriage (who has the work permit) creates vulnerability.
- Absentee parents impact family functioning.
- Expatriates may have a challenging or superficial relationship with the host country.
- Expatriates may experience a lack of control over critical life decisions; the employer may decide where, when, and how the family moves, creating a lack of stability.

**Characteristics of international school communities:**

- School takes on sole role as center of family life and often provides superficial relationships that cannot meet mental health needs.
- Power influence: A family's political position in the community can inhibit a school from taking action.
- Sense of being lost in diversity of community can cause further isolation.

**Cultural dynamics of international school communities:**

- Multiple norms rooted in different cultural traditions can cause confusion involving religious values, values of parenting, discipline, care-giving, sexuality, gender roles and responsibilities.
- Impact of rapidly changing "pop culture" from developed nations affects student behavior.
- Varying degrees of openness rooted in cultural traditions affects students' relationships with their families and peers.
- Varying cultural attitudes toward gender issues and child development, including different concepts of developmental needs through childhood, affect the families' views of different situations.

International school communities are vulnerable to abuse because abusers capitalize on secrecy, insularity, isolation, and limited access to support resources. International schools must respond to the reality that these characteristics are exactly the characteristics that perpetrators will use to their advantage in abusing children.

## **Myths and Facts about Child Abuse and Neglect**

Myth: Child abuse is carried out by strangers.

Fact: Research indicates that 90% of abuse is domestic and committed by individuals known to the child. International school communities tend to have families that move often and are separated from their extended families. When abuse is within the family, the transient lifestyle increases the risk to international school students who tend not to have access to outside resources and therefore can't get help.

Myth: Abuse is a matter of culture; physical or sexual abuse falls within the norms of some cultures and is acceptable.

Fact: The reality is that there is no excuse for child abuse. No culture supports harming children.

Myth: Child abuse is a result of poverty and happens in low socioeconomic circumstances.

Fact: Research indicates that child abuse occurs in all racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and cultural sectors of society. A common characteristic of an abusive family is isolation, such as that commonly found in international families who move often and are separated from their extended families.

Myth: International schools do not have to report abuse to local authorities.

Fact: International schools are bound by the laws of their host countries and must be knowledgeable and compliant with the child protection laws of their location. Furthermore, international schools are legally and ethically liable for any violation of existing laws related to reporting of cases of abuse or neglect; there are cases now pending in which schools are facing legal action regarding non-compliance.

# Chapter 2

## QSI Policies

---

### **QSI Policies Related to Child Safeguarding and Protection**

The following components of QSI policies are in place to support child safeguarding and protection, as well as the well-being, health, and safety of students, families, and staff.

#### **I.A.2.a Core Beliefs of the QSI Educational Model**

It is the responsibility of the school to provide the conditions for success.

- QSI believes that more learning will occur if students have a desire to learn, have positive feelings concerning the school environment, and have success in their work. A comfortable atmosphere of caring and acceptance is considered important to QSI. Possibility for success increases when students work at the appropriate level of difficulty and sense positive expectations from well-qualified, experienced, and caring educators.

To achieve these Core Beliefs, QSI takes on the responsibilities:

- To provide educators who have a love for children, who have positive expectations of children, and who are willing to expend the time and energy necessary to meet the success of individual students.
- To employ educators who maintain core values and who believe their lifestyle should be a positive influence on their students.

#### **I.A.2.c Philosophy**

Social Behavior

- For a useful and meaningful life, we encourage the development of personal qualities leading to acceptable values and harmonious relationships.

#### **I.A.2.d Objectives**

Functions of the Administration:

- To recruit teachers who have a love for children, who have positive expectations of children, and who are willing to give the time and energy necessary to meet the needs of individual students.
- To employ teachers who have acceptable values and who believe that their lifestyle should be a positive influence on their students.

Functions of teaching staff:

- To inspire students to help them see what they can be and what they can accomplish with a view to excellence and creativity.
- To provide a positive school atmosphere by working with a cooperative spirit, giving support to one another, and encouraging a high morale and efficiency within the staff.

#### Social Behavior

- To encourage an understanding of one's self with a view to developing acceptable values such as patience, kindness, unselfishness, honesty, and consideration for others.
- To provide a positive and secure atmosphere, treating the students honestly and fairly.
- To encourage each student to feel good about himself and to help him promote similar feelings in fellow students.
- To provide guidance in problem-solving and decision-making situations.
- To develop a sense of responsibility and to encourage leadership.

#### **I.C.2.a.i Success Orientations**

##### Trustworthiness

The Student Will demonstrate honesty by:

- habitually telling the truth and avoiding deception.
- telling the truth when negative consequences may follow.
- bringing lost items or money to the teacher or the office.
- being a person who does not cheat on tests.
- being a person who is not involved in theft.

TSW demonstrate trustworthiness by:

- following a commitment with the appropriate action.
- promptly accomplishing an errand when requested by a teacher.
- displaying acceptable behavior when not under teacher supervision.
- being a person who is not involved in vandalism.

##### Concern for Others

TSW demonstrate tolerance for those of other nationalities, races, religions, cultures, ages, and mental and physical abilities by:

- being a person who does not make disparaging remarks concerning those different from themselves.
- joining in group activities with those different from themselves.
- having friendly associations with those different from themselves.

TSW demonstrate acceptance of others, particularly newcomers, by:

- including them in informal social groups.
- being a person who does not actively exclude individuals from group activities.
- approaching newcomers with a view to making them feel welcome.

TSW demonstrate concern for others by:

- avoiding actions or words which hurt another person.
- actions and/or words of support and/or sympathy for those who are unhappy or sad.
- helping others to be successful in their schoolwork, activities, and play.
- displaying unselfish behavior.

Kindness/Politeness

TSW demonstrate kindness by:

- being a person who does not make remarks which put down another.
- being a person who does not physically abuse others.
- displaying acts of kindness (sympathy, encouragement, helpfulness, patience, etc.) toward others, particularly fellow students.
- giving time and resources to help another in need.

TSW demonstrate politeness by:

- being a person who does not exhibit rudeness.
- using socially acceptable language.
- displaying acts of courtesy toward others.

Group Interaction

TSW demonstrate group involvement by actively participating in activities.

TSW demonstrate support of leadership by:

- displaying words and actions which encourage responsible behavior by others.
- displaying words and actions which promote learning in a classroom by others.
- being a person who does not discourage responsible behavior or learning by others.
- assisting the leadership of others by cooperating and being good followers.

TSW demonstrate support of group activities by:

- contributing ideas which are related to the goals of the group.
- being a person who does not make negative comments which are not constructive.
- controlling emotions when discussing different points of view.
- displaying kindness when expressing an opinion.
- displaying a cooperative attitude.

## **II.G.2.a General School Safety**

Stranger Safety

Teachers should instruct students to:

- Look for identification Tags/Badges, or Police or Fire personnel identification.
- Speak only to those wearing identification.

- Go directly to the classroom or teacher from your location.
- Move quickly between locations, but do NOT RUN.
- INFORM A STAFF MEMBER OR PARENT OF ANY UNSAFE SITUATION IMMEDIATELY!

*Teachers should frequently remind, monitor, and reinforce/recognize the above behaviors to their students.*

#### **I.C.4 Standards of Behavior**

The primary goal relating to student behavior is to develop a sense of responsibility such that the student develops an internal desire to observe acceptable behavior patterns. The responsibility of obtaining this objective rests first and foremost at home. The school also has a responsibility to work in every possible way toward this goal. The home and school, working as a team, should coordinate efforts. We hope this results in positive attitudes toward the school and country.

##### **Standards of Behavior:**

Students are expected to be kind to others and should consider the feelings of others. Verbal unkindness and physical abuse are not accepted.

#### **II.D.3 Guidelines for Teachers**

Teacher expectations for students:

- Expecting children to be kind to others and to respect the rights of others.
- Expecting children to respect authority and to feel that teachers' actions and decisions are intended to make the school a better place and therefore a more enjoyable place for all concerned.
- By teacher actions, make the children to feel that the teachers have a positive attitude toward them. This includes praise of children when an opportunity arises and general comments which lead the children to believe that they are important and liked by the teacher.

# Chapter 3

## Prevention

---

### Child Protection Team Roles and Responsibilities

The school's Child Safeguarding and Protection Plan includes the operation of the Child Protection Team. This team will plan and implement protocols, monitor interventions, and carry out follow-up activities.

The Child Protection Team consists of:

- School Director.
- Teacher representatives from each level in the school (preschool, lower elementary, upper elementary, secondary).
- External resource potential: (e.g. community child protection worker, U.S. Embassy RSO, Advisory Board Member, etc.).

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

- Develop and monitor the guidelines and protocol from the Child Safeguarding and Protection Handbook.
- Research local laws related to child safeguarding and protection.
- Create a directory of local resources related to child safeguarding and protection.
- Finalize, translate, and distribute the Introductory Letter to School Community.
- Personalize and make a plan for distributing and collecting signed copies of the Code of Conduct.
- Ensure that school-based hiring practices are aligned with those outlined in the "Recruiting and Hiring" section of this handbook.
- Organize child safeguarding and protection training for all staff and community members.
- Create a plan for documenting, storing, and sharing any disclosures of abuse.
- Create guidelines for field trips, events, off-campus events, and student travel that are aligned with the Code of Conduct.

- Ensure the implementation of child safeguarding and protection curriculum in all homerooms.
- Respond to any reports of abuse.
- Appoint a spokesperson to communicate with members of the school community in the case that an allegation is made.
- Create a plan for updating this handbook annually.

The Child Protection Team will meet at least three times annually. A general schedule of activities is below.

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>August</b>	Inform Advisory Board, staff, students, and parents about the school Child Safeguarding and Protection Handbook and associated protocols.	Director
	Inform new families of school Child Safeguarding and Protection Handbook and associated protocols. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update, translate as necessary, and share the Introductory Letter to School Community in this handbook.</li> <li>• Make a plan for distributing the letter and communicating policies to new families throughout the year.</li> </ul>	Director
	Convene Child Protection Team, appoint chair, orient new members.	Director
	Review data from previous school year, revise and update the Child Safeguarding and Protection Handbook accordingly, and develop implementation plans for current year.	Child Protection Team
<b>September</b>	Implement annual plan.	Child Protection Team
	Train all staff on child safeguarding and protection.	Director
	Organize parent training(s) on child safeguarding and protection.	Director
	Ensure all staff, parents, volunteers, contracted service providers, coaches, after-school activity helpers, and everyone else who interacts with students through the school signs the Code of Conduct.	Director
<b>October</b>	Complete trainings for parents and staff, if necessary.	Director

<b>November</b>	Convene Child Protection Team to review implementation and progress of plans.	Director
	Review local hiring practices to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background screening.</li> <li>• Criminal history check.</li> <li>• Reference check includes discussion of child protection history.</li> <li>• Code of Conduct signed upon hiring.</li> </ul>	Director
<b>January</b>	Inform new families of Child Safeguarding and Protection Handbook and associated protocols	Director
	Convene Child Protection Team to update and review activities of first term and recommend areas of further action.	Director
<b>As needed</b>	Convene Child Protection Team.	Director
	Revise and Update Child Safeguarding and Protection Handbook as necessary, at least annually.	Director

## **Recruiting and Hiring**

QSI strives for certainty in hiring people who are well-suited to work with children. The following recruiting and hiring protocols are in place to ensure:

- Candidates with a tendency toward child abuse are deterred from applying to QSI.
- Candidates who have a criminal record, or about whom concerns have been raised regarding their suitability to work with children, are not offered a position.
- Successful candidates fully understand their responsibilities in safeguarding children while employed by QSI.
- QSI maintains appropriate records that might be required in a possible future investigation or inquiry.
  - QSI works with recruitment agencies such as ISS and Search to ensure that the reference checks and background screening undertaken by such agencies complements QSI's own recruitment protocols for QSI-contracted teachers.
  - Government-issued background check certifications will be performed for all staff employed at each QSI school.

### **Employment Records**

The following records will be maintained for each employee:

- A QSI application or local application, whether electronic or hard-copy format.
- Government-issued background check certifications.
- Copies of educational certifications, university degrees, and other teacher certification documents.
- Signed Code of Conduct, stated in the QSI Employee Terms of Contract Booklet.
- Record of child safeguarding and protection training.

### **Recruitment and Hiring Process**

Please note:

- QSI follows procedures and maintains records to ensure compliance with respect to the following for every QSI employee.
- QSI School Directors are responsible for following procedures and maintaining records to ensure compliance in respect to the following for every school-contracted employee.

Application:

- QSI candidates are required to complete a check-box indicating that the information in the application is accurate and true, and that QSI can contact references.
- QSI candidates respond "yes" or "no" to questions about their personal conduct regarding:

- Having an education license revoked.
- Having been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor.
- Having been discharged from a previous position.
- Having been denied professional credentials.
- The QSI Personnel Office screens applications prior to assigning a candidate to a recruiter.

Screening:

- Job offers will be made conditionally upon:
  - Satisfactory references from at least two previous employers or teachers.
  - Public records screening.
  - Government-issued background check certificate from candidate's passport country.

Interview:

- A QSI recruiter holds a personal interview with each QSI candidate.
- QSI recruiters are aware of the QSI child safeguarding and protection protocols.
- QSI recruiters are tasked with asking candidates about child safeguarding and protection experience.

Contract:

- Employees will be required to:
  - Sign the Code of Conduct with each contract renewal.
  - Undergo child safeguarding and protection training as part of their orientation, and any time the training is offered at the school.

## Reporting Requirements

QSI International School of Dili aims to ensure that all students are given a safe learning environment by maintaining appropriate practices and supervision in the school.

Reporting of suspected child abuse, whether it occurred in or out of school, is the responsibility of any employee who suspects that a student may have been abused. Self-reporting of abuse by students must always be reported to the Director. The school will investigate all reports and will take appropriate action to ensure the safety of the student in accordance with Timor Leste law.

QSI International School of Dili endorses the Convention on the Rights of the Child\* of which the host country for the School, [name host country], is a signatory, and seeks to be a safe haven for students who may be experiencing abuse or neglect in any aspect of their lives. QSI International School of Dili will distribute this policy annually to all parents and applicants, will communicate this policy annually to students, will provide annual training for all staff, and will make every effort to implement hiring practices to ensure the safety of children. In the case of a staff member reported as an alleged offender, QSI International School of Dili will conduct a full investigation following the course of due process.

This requirement is endorsed by Quality Schools International.

(\*Sources: Amnesty International Unofficial Summary of the UN Rights of the Child: <http://www.amnestyusa.org/our-work/issues/children-s-rights/convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child>; and Convention on the Rights of the Child: <http://www.crin.org/docs/resources/treaties/uncrc.asp#Nineteen>).

## Training

Training on child safeguarding and protection is required annually for all school staff (instructional and support), volunteers, coaches, and anyone else who works with students. A good time for the initial training is the teacher orientation days before school starts. Follow-up trainings may be part of staff meetings or held in other settings throughout the year.

Training topics for all staff must include:

- Definitions of abuse, neglect, and bullying.
- Possible indicators of abuse, neglect, and bullying.
- Statistics of prevalence of abuse and neglect, as closely related to the school's population and location as possible.
- Myths and facts about child abuse and neglect, especially as related to international school communities (see "Myths and Facts about Child Abuse and Neglect" in this handbook).
- Vulnerabilities of international school children (see "Context of the School Community" in this handbook).
- Preventative measures to safeguard children.
- Measures to avoid allegations against school community members.
- Procedures for handling disclosure.
- The roles and responsibilities of the administration, faculty, and staff to report and react to suspected, observed, or disclosed abuse.
- A timeline for response.
- Procedures for investigating the suspected, observed, or disclosed abuse.
- Possible actions that will address confirmed cases of abuse.
- A flow chart for steps to be followed after disclosure.
  - Communication with children, families, staff, authorities and the media regarding child safeguarding and protection and related issues. Generally, this involves complete confidentiality, except in communicating the report to the Director/Counselor and, if necessary, involved legal authorities. Only the Director or appointed spokesperson speaks with the community and media.
- Identification and functions of Child Protection Team members.
- Code of Conduct.

### **Differentiated Training for Different Staff Members**

Advisory Board Members:

- School guidelines and procedures.

- Implementation of Child Safeguarding and Protection Plan.
- Content of parent trainings.

#### Administrators:

- Administrative responsibilities in implementation of guidelines, procedures, and Child Safeguarding and Protection Plan.
- Code of Conduct development.
- Accountability.
- Case management. How to handle:
  - Uncertainty of reporter.
  - Direct disclosure.
  - Working with personnel involved in the case.
  - Any questions the administrators have about issues that may arise.
- Specific reporting of concerns.
- Case studies.
- Due diligence when a teacher is implicated.
- Hiring practices.

#### Support staff and After-School Activity coaches, volunteers, and helpers:

- Content of staff training.
- Code of Conduct.
- How to avoid allegations of abuse.
- How to access help.

### **Parent Training**

Before beginning any information or training sessions, the school needs to work to promote parent support and buy-in. This can be achieved through several methods:

- Annually distributing a parent-student handbook that highlights child safeguarding and protection plans, and providing this handbook to all new families during the admissions process.
- Meeting with parents and encouraging them to participate in their children's education by reading school newsletters, classroom newsletters, emails, and other forms of written communication from the school. These meetings might take place during:
  - Morning coffees.
  - Formal parent education classes.
  - Evening meetings with parents.
  - All-school events, like assemblies.

- When speaking to parents about the child safeguarding and protection plan, emphasize that it is **preventative**.

In the fall, after preparing parents to learn more about the plans for child safeguarding and protection, schedule a training session (or multiple training sessions as needed) to reach the most parents possible. Provide translation as needed. The following concepts should be included in the training:

- Understanding of the specific guidelines, protocol, and regulations of the school, including the response of the school in the case of a report of abuse.
- Awareness of:
  - Signs and symptoms of child abuse.
  - Statistics of incidence and prevalence.
  - Awareness of risks to which students are exposed, globally and locally.
  - Vulnerabilities of international school students in international school communities.
  - Talking with children; prevention and empowerment strategies.
  - Handling disclosure and reporting as a parent.
- Community resources available, especially to help with domestic violence and child abuse.
- Pointers for keeping safe and keeping children safe.

### **Responsibility for Trainings**

School Director:

- Ensures trainings take place and adequate resources are available to support them.
- Publicly advocates for the Child Safeguarding and Protection Plan and its implementation, and endorses personnel in their roles.
- Either leads trainings or supports Counselor, Director of Instruction, or school medical office staff in leading the trainings.
- Provides School Nurse or Doctor with the highest level of training so that person can help with all other trainings, and can be a first responder if an allegation is made.
- Brings in an outside consultant to facilitate trainings, if possible. Options include:
  - A School Counselor from another QSI school.
  - Online training or consulting.
  - Consultants who are recommended by CEESA or AAIE.

## **Avoiding Behaviors that Lead to Allegations**

- Avoid situations in which you are alone with a child. This includes not transporting youngsters alone in your car. When it is necessary to speak privately with a child, find a space out of earshot, but within sight of others for your conference.
- The privacy of children in situations such as toileting, showering, and changing clothes should be respected. When it is necessary to supervise children in these situations, at least two adults should be present and intrude only to the extent that the health and safety of the children require. Adult volunteers should preserve their own privacy in these situations also.
- Avoid touching areas that are normally covered by swimming suits; breasts, buttocks, and groin. When hugging is appropriate, hug from the side over the shoulders, not from the front.
- Sexual jokes, comments of a sexual nature, kissing, sensual massages, or sexual gestures are not appropriate behavior for an adult staff member or volunteer at the school or in the presence of students.
- When volunteering to supervise overnight activities, adults should not share sleeping quarters with children other than their own.
- Revealing personal information about one's sex life by an adult volunteer or staff member is never appropriate.
- Do not use corporal punishment in any form.
- It is the adult's responsibility to set and respect boundaries. When a child attempts to involve an adult in inappropriate behavior, the adult must reject the overture and inform the director of the exchange.

## **Excursions, School Events, and Student Travel**

The school must have guidelines, to be agreed upon by all involved parties, that outline staff and chaperon responsibilities and expected student behavior for excursions, school events, and student travel. In creating such guidelines, make sure that they are:

- Aligned with the Code of Conduct.
- Aligned with reporting protocols in this handbook.

## **Guidelines for Excursions, School Events, and Student Travel**

Regarding school-related student travel, the following, taken from the *Central and Eastern European Schools Association (CEESA) Athletics Activities Handbook September 2016*.

It is important for the success, child safeguarding and protection, and risk management plan of all events that staff, parents, volunteers, and host families be consistent regarding the rules for student participation. Host schools should assure that host families understand their role and what is expected of them and the visiting students, especially concerning curfews and a controlled environment. The following will apply to all school-sponsored events:

- The student participant curfew is 22:00 for all nights of school-sponsored events.
- Students in the 13-year-old class and below are not allowed to be unsupervised. They should be under the direct supervision of their respective coaches, chaperons, or host parents throughout the trip.
- Secondary students may visit host cities but should always be with a student or adult from the host school, or a chaperon from their own school. Students (visiting and host family) must always inform the chaperon or host family parents of their intentions and location when leaving the hotel or host family home.
- The school requires that chaperon do a room check or call their respective students' host families at curfew time on each night of an event and speak with the parents and students. If parents do not receive a call by 22:30, they are instructed to call the event organizer and inform him/her.
- Any violation of the housing regulations by any participant will result in those involved being immediately removed from housing with host families. The student will either be placed in the care of the coach/advisor for the duration of the event or will be sent home.
- Students are prohibited from using tobacco products, alcohol, or drugs at any school-sponsored event. Students will abide by the policies of both their home and host schools.
- The following items are not rules but best practices that can aid in the protection of our students participating in events:
  - Students should be seated in groups when traveling by train, bus or plane.
  - Students should be supervised on transportation (buses, mini vans, taxis, etc.) while visiting a host city.
  - When host schools receive dietary/medical information from visiting schools they should involve their nurse with any noted students.
  - A preseason coaches' meeting should be scheduled as it is an important way to share information and guidelines.
  - A pre-travel parent and student meeting should be scheduled as it is a good way to share the guidelines and collect travel documents.
  - Schools should consider making it mandatory for coaches to have some sort of coaching certification or, at minimum, first aid certification.

- Chaperons, coaches, and host families should have each other's phone numbers programmed in their phones in case of emergency.
- Upon arrival at a school, chaperons should be shown the school's emergency protocols.
- Host schools should consider using their school security guards, or hiring outside guards, when tournaments are located off-campus. Sites do not need to be locked down (as some campus are) but there should be a security presence circulating the event location, looking for possible non-community members (Tallinn 2016).

### **Regulations for Host Parents**

The following rules are intended for the use of all respective parents who host students as part of a school-sponsored event:

For the duration of the event you stand in place of the visiting student's parents. Please exercise all supervision and care that you should normally exercise with your own children and observe all school rules below.

- Please see the regulations for student behavior (below). The student(s) you are hosting has/have already agreed to observe these regulations.
- Please report immediately any violation of these regulations by the student(s) you host to the responsible official designated by your school (Event Director, Athletic Director, Activity Coordinator, etc.).
- Neither host families nor students may negotiate changes to the regulations for students with respect to curfew, housing arrangements, the use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs, or any other rules set forth by the host school.
- Please contact the student(s) you are hosting at the time designated by the host school.
- Please arrange for suitable transport if necessary. Normally this is expected to be a private car to and from the event.
- Please provide the student(s) with a suitable meal at whatever times may be necessary because of the scheduling of the event.
- Please provide a "bag lunch" for the student(s) during the competition and for the return journey to their home city. You may give the student(s) money to purchase a meal if provided by the host school.
- The school requires that coaches/sponsors call their respective students host family at curfew time on each night of an event. They are required to speak with both a parent and the students. If you do not receive a call by 22:30 please call the event organizer and inform him/her.

## **Regulations for Students**

These regulations shall be followed by students participating in all events (whether athletic, academic, cultural, etc.) organized and sponsored by the school. Any student who participates in a school event agrees, by signing below, to obey all regulations.

- Students shall obey all instructions given them by their chaperons, coaches, or host parents. This applies to all activities, irrespective of location, undertaken during the period of the school-sponsored event.
- When in host families' homes, students should be responsible for maintaining their sleeping space and other in-house facilities in orderly and organized condition. This applies to making beds, organizing clothes and toiletries, and putting away trash. No cleaning services will be available during the stay.
- Any use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs is not permitted. Students involved with school activities may not go to bars or nightclubs.
- Housing arrangements made by the chaperons or responsible official of the home or host school may not be changed.
- Student curfew for all school-sponsored events is 22:00. Students must be in their rooms or in the home of the host parent by this time. Students in 13-year-old class and below are not allowed out of the chaperon's supervision unless chaperoned by a host parent and/or an event sponsor. Schools and families may set earlier curfew times. Families MAY NOT extend curfew times.
- Secondary students may go out independently, with permission from chaperons, but should always be with a chaperon, student, or adult from the host school.
- Students (visiting and host family) must always inform the chaperon or host family parents of their intentions and location when leaving the hotel or host family home.
- Neither host families nor students may negotiate changes to the regulations for students with respect to curfew, housing arrangements, the use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs, or any other rules or provisions set forth by the host school.
- These regulations apply to all students-- those from the host school and those visiting-- throughout the event's duration and, for visiting students, apply also during the journey to and from the site of the event.
- Students must display appropriate respectful behavior at all times to: their peers, event officials, event sponsors, chaperons, coaches, and all members of the school and host community.

Violation of these regulations will be reported to the responsible school official and to the student's chaperon or coach.

## Child Safeguarding and Protection Curriculum

There are many opportunities for children to learn about safeguarding and protection throughout the school day, and any opportunities to further discussions about relevant topics should be taken. However, to best protect students, the school must designate a time to teach several lessons on child safeguarding and protection to each class in the school, throughout the school year.

The Association of International Schools in Africa (AISA) developed a child protection curriculum guide, which outlines curriculum to be taught at each grade level. It should be used by teachers as a resource in lesson planning. The guide is available here:

[https://www.aisa.or.ke/images/CP\\_Handbook\\_Curriculum\\_Guidance\\_7July2016.pdf](https://www.aisa.or.ke/images/CP_Handbook_Curriculum_Guidance_7July2016.pdf)

In addition to using this curriculum guide, the iSafe curriculum that is already in use by QSI schools covers cyber-safety.

If the school has a counselor, the counselor may support teachers in implementing child protection lessons in their classrooms. However, the counselor should not be the sole person responsible for teaching the curriculum. Homeroom teachers must be involved. Required topics and teaching suggestions are in the table below.

Topic	Teaching Suggestions
Anti-Bullying	Anti-bullying can be taught in conjunction with the Success Orientations of Concern for Others and Kindness and Politeness.
Abuse and Safety	Lessons on abuse and safety can be linked to the Success Orientations of Trustworthiness, Responsibility, and Kindness and Politeness, and may also be covered in conjunction with health topics.
Cyber-Safety	Cyber-safety is covered in the QSI technology curriculum through the iSafe program ( <a href="http://www.isafe.org">www.isafe.org</a> ). Each QSI school has a subscription to this program, and it is a required component of the technology curriculum.
Rights of Children and Youth	Lessons on children's rights can be linked to Group Interaction, or taught as a separate topic during the homeroom/advisory period.
Identification of Protective Supports	Lessons on identifying people to turn to for help and support may be linked to Group Interaction, or taught as a separate topic during the homeroom/advisory period.
Consent	The meaning and significance of consent may be linked to Trustworthiness and Responsibility, or covered in conjunction with health topics.

# Chapter 4

## Disclosure and Follow-Up

---

### Principles and Guidelines for Disclosure, Reporting, and Follow-Up

#### General Principles

The following principles are considered when implementing procedures for disclosure, reporting, and further action:

- **The child's readiness and privacy must be respected. The child will disclose whenever he or she is ready. Therefore, do not push for any information other than that which the child volunteers.**
- We operate in a country that may offer limited internal and external support services.
- We should recognize the limitations of expertise in child safeguarding and protection. For example, teachers are not trained investigators or therapists. Therefore, our international school must make use of any local community partnerships, and engage consultants with particular expertise in child safeguarding and protection services, whenever needed.
- We must assess the skills of our staff in an environment that has relatively few professional mental health resources and determine boundaries for which cases the school can handle and which cases can be referred out.
- Laws vary from country to country, and we must act according to local regulations and international conventions to which the host country is a signatory.
- The cases of alleged abuse need to be considered both from the perspective of the alleged victim and the alleged child abuser, establishing the need for due process.
- It is important to minimize the number of times the child engages in disclosing.

#### What to do if a Child Discloses Abuse

Please note: Teachers and school staff are not investigators. Your role is to listen and respond to disclosures in order to determine the next step for students to get the help they need. When appropriate, a request for an investigation must be completed.

- Do not let a child swear you to secrecy before telling you something. You may need to report, which the child will view as breaking your trust with them.
- Listen without judgment, and without asking leading questions. Do not ask for a great amount of detail.

- Respond calmly and matter-of-factly. Even if the story the child tells is difficult to hear, it is important not to register disgust or alarm. Do not make judgmental or disparaging comments about the abuser; it is often someone whom the child loves or with whom the child has a close relationship.
- Do not confront the abuser.
- Reassure the student that:
  - You believe the student, and the student did the right thing by telling you.
  - You are sorry that someone hurt the student.
  - No one deserves to be abused.
  - It was not the student's fault, no matter what the student did or did not do.
  - You will do everything you can to help to make the abuse stop, which may involve getting the help of someone the student trusts at school.
- Concentrate on the immediate needs of the student; ask what the student needs or wants right now.
- If the child does not want to go home, this should be considered an emergency. Report it and handle it immediately by contacting the school's Child Protection Team. The team should decide on an appropriate plan for the child. DO NOT take the child home with you!
- In other cases, empower the student by asking if he or she feels comfortable reporting the abuse to the Director and if it would help if you were present.
  - If the student agrees, accompany the student to the Director's office.
- If the student does not want to report to anyone other than you, inform the student that you must inform the Director.
- Be honest with the student, and don't make promises you can't keep.
- Document the disclosure in writing, with date, time, and your signature.
- Keep the disclosure confidential, other than reporting to school administration and, if appropriate, to local authorities.
- Work with the school administration and the student to create a safety plan for the student.

### **Guidelines for Reporting and Action**

It is obligatory for faculty, staff, and administrators to report incidents of physical or psychological violence, aggression, harassment, neglect, and physical or sexual abuse to the Director immediately. If there is reasonable cause to believe that child abuse occurred, the Director must document all aspects of the investigation and resulting actions. Actions must be considered for appropriateness based on specific details of each situation. After consultation

with the QSI legal team, and according to the “Response to Disclosure or Report Flowchart”, the following actions may be taken:

- Conference with involved students.
- Meet with parents.
- Meet with others pertinent to the case, including alleged perpetrator(s).
- Refer the child for a psychological assessment.
- Assign mandatory counseling sessions.
- Refer the case to the Child Protection Team.
- Report to local authorities, including local child protection services if available.
- Report to an embassy.
- Pursue legal action.

Certain details lead to different actions. For example:

- If a Director is accused of abuse, then the person who received the allegation should report it directly to the Regional Supervisor.
- If the child is in preschool or the 5-year-old-class, then identify someone who is familiar with child development and can interact appropriately with the child, and include that person in conversations with the child.
- If the child has difficulty communicating in a language that is not understood by trained staff members, then identify a translator who is not involved in the situation and include that person in conversations with the child.
- If the child has other challenges that make communication difficult, then identify a person who is not involved in the situation and who can help the child to tell his/her story in a way that is understood (e.g. someone with a special education background), and include that person in conversations with the child.
- If family members from any embassy are accused of abuse, or a child from an embassy family is a victim of abuse, then the Director must inform the embassy Regional Security Officer (RSO) as soon as possible and work with them to plan the next steps.
- If the child is an expatriate, then in addition to following local guidelines that apply, the school must consult with the QSI legal team and work with the appropriate embassy Regional Security Officer (RSO). If one or both parents are accused of abuse, then in addition to contacting the embassy RSO, the school must contact the parents’ employers.

### **Actions in the Case that the Suspected Offender is a School Employee**

When a child, parent, staff member, or other community member reports inappropriate behavior by a member of the school staff or someone who works with students, the school must

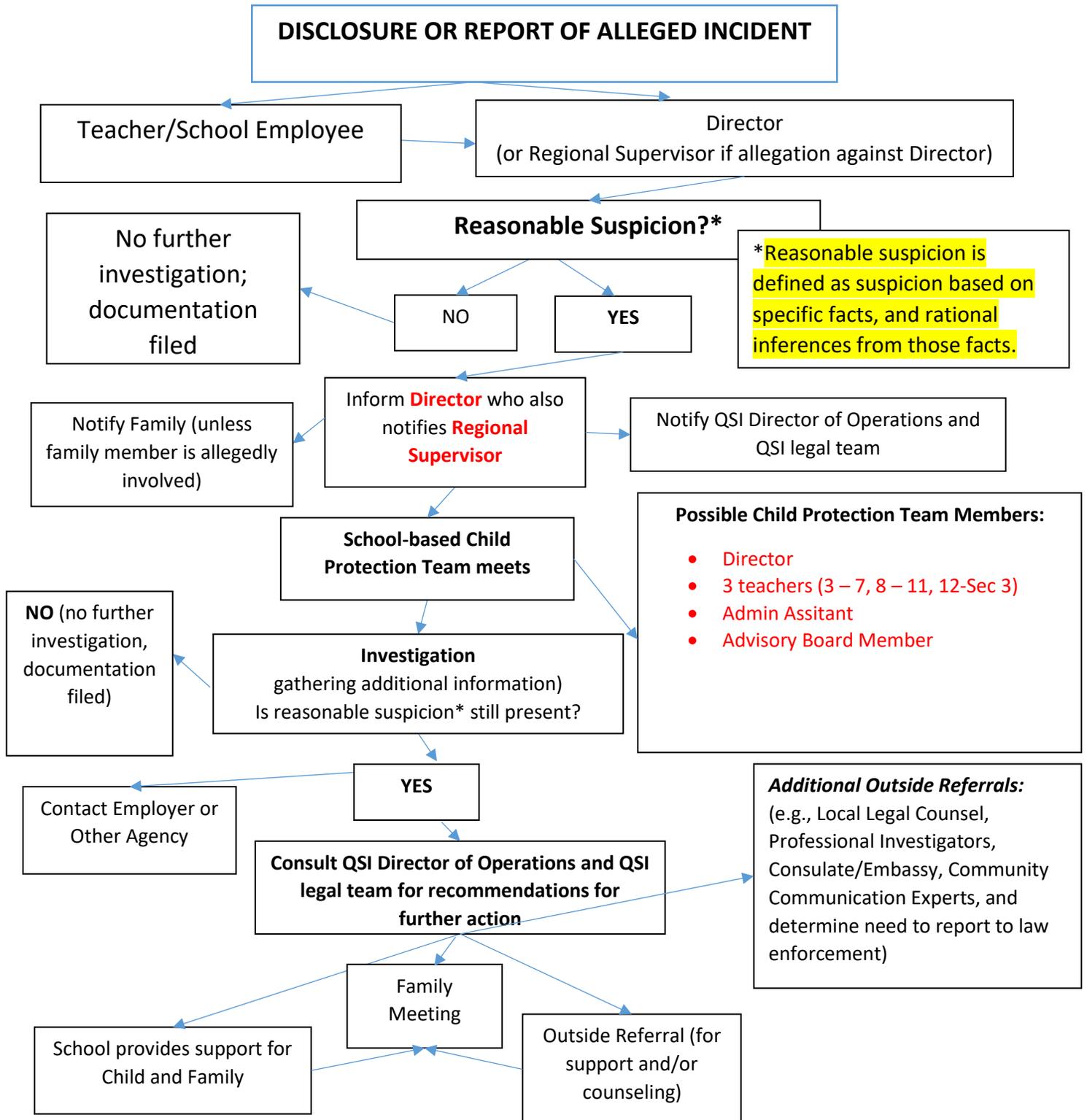
respond immediately. The emotional and physical safety of children is dependent upon a safe school environment; therefore, any disclosure of teacher, staff, or volunteer offenses must be taken seriously and dealt with swiftly. The integrity of a school and a school system is not dependent on whether an offender exists; instead, the integrity of the school or system depends on how the school responds when an alleged offender within the school is reported.

In the case that the reported offense is sexual in nature, appropriate embassies, child protection agencies, and law enforcement must be contacted, and the alleged perpetrator must be prohibited from further contact with any children at the school while an investigation is conducted. In cases of sexual offenses against children, offenders are likely to have multiple victims in the same location.

Immediate responses include:

- Informing and involving the child(ren)'s parent(s).
- Informing the person under investigation of the allegations.
- Depending on the severity of the allegation, placing the accused on forced leave while an investigation is conducted.
- Depending on the severity of the allegation and the laws of the country, determining who will conduct the investigation (Child Protection Team, law enforcement, embassies, etc.).

## Response to Disclosure or Report Flowchart



## **Guidelines for Disclosure or Report Follow-Up**

### **Determine risk for re-offense:**

- What happened? Might it happen again?
- Who was involved? Are they still present?
- When did the offense occur?
- Where did the offense occur?

### **If the offense is ongoing and the child lives with the offender:**

- Will you make a report to the authorities?
- Whom will you bring in to protect the child, such as a non-offending parent?
- What immediate actions can the child take, or might be taken on the part of the child, apart from reporting?

### **When interacting with the child:**

- Listen to the child without pushing for details. Allow the child to tell you as much as he or she wants to share. Give alternatives for continuing conversations, like involving a counselor or others in the child's support network.
- Explore feelings and concerns the child has about the experience, such as guilt, fear, shame, and anger.
- Affirm that the experience was an assault, and the child is never to blame for someone else's actions.
- Affirm each feeling the child shares, while also determining if those feelings are overwhelming to the child. Work to help the child put a healthy limit on the feelings.
- Explore the child's support system to give the child options for others whom they can ask for help, including parents, adult relatives, friends, and other trusted adults.
- Explore the play that the child enjoys and help the child to make plans to do what he or she likes to do, like going to a movie or going to a safe friend's house.
- End the session by making sure the child knows what to do if assault happens again or is attempted again:
  - Say NO!
  - Identify a safe place to which the child can run.
  - Specify people to whom the child can run or call for help.

## **Documentation of Disclosed or Reported Cases of Abuse**

QSI and school policies regarding confidentiality and management of school records applies to all aspects of the documentation of incidents of abuse. The school will be guided by local law, international norms, the advice of the QSI and school legal teams, and local or embassy child protection personnel.

The Child Protection Team will create guidelines that address:

- Confidentiality agreement for all members of the Child Protection Team.
- Minutes of Child Protection Team meetings, including decisions or recommended actions.
- Where records of reports of abuse or bullying are kept.
- Creation of a child protection reporting form (see example in the final chapter of this handbook) that includes:
  - Reporter's relationship to the child/victim.
  - Child's name, gender, age, address.
  - Parents'/Guardians' contact information and other relevant information.
  - Family information, including siblings, nationality, embassy relationships, etc.
  - Name, contact information, relationship to child, and other helpful information about alleged perpetrator.
  - Information about reporter and school.
  - Nature and extent of injuries/mistreatment.
  - Evidence of prior abuse.
  - How reporter was alerted to the abuse/bullying.
  - Description of action taken, or recommended action.
  - Other helpful information.
- Reporting to local authorities and documentation of such a report.

## **Confidentiality in Communication in Case of Abuse or Emergency**

In the case that an allegation of abuse is made, everyone involved with the school will have questions, and the media may approach the school for a statement. When communicating with the community, or if contacted by the media, the integrity of the victim is paramount. It is also critical to maintain the confidentiality of the victim's family, the alleged perpetrator and his/her family, and the reputation of the school. Therefore, the following must be considered when sharing any information with the community or media:

- Designate a spokesperson who will communicate with the school community and the media. In most cases, this should be the Director. Make sure that all staff and others

affiliated with the school know that they should not answer questions or share information; they should refer all questions to the spokesperson.

- If local authorities are investigating, then no statements should be made as they might compromise the investigation. If asked about the situation, the only response by the school's spokesperson should be, "There is an ongoing investigation so we are not at liberty to share any details regarding the alleged incident at this time."
- Less is more. It is not the job of the school to share detailed information of the allegations, to confirm or deny specific allegations, or to share publicly the results of any internal or external investigations. Rather, when there are allegations of abuse/neglect in the school (not within a school family) and the allegations have become public knowledge, a letter should go out to school families that does not share any specific information about the allegation, but includes:
  - Acknowledgment that an incident of alleged misconduct has been brought to the administration's attention.
  - Reassurance that the school is cooperating with the appropriate officials.
  - An explanation of the need for confidentiality, both to protect the child and to avoid compromising the investigation.
  - Reassurance that the highest priority of the school is to provide a quality education that includes a safe environment, and a brief statement of ways the school works to ensure a safe environment.
  - A list of the resources that are available for students and families (e.g. school counselors or QSI regional counselors).
  - Contact information for the designated spokesperson for questions and concerns.
- If you suspect that an alleged incident of misconduct may hit the media, the Child Protection Team should gather to create a media strategy.
  - It is critical that the school identifies one spokesperson who will represent the school in all communication with the media, and that no other staff members speak to the media. Information that is shared must be tightly controlled.
  - Do not allow the media to speak with students on campus.
  - Always maintain confidentiality of the victim, perpetrator, allegations, and investigation outcomes. Do not confirm or deny any information about which the media asks for comments.
  - Prepare a statement before speaking with the media, and if possible run this statement by the school's or QSI's legal team.
  - If possible, ask a reporter for a list of questions ahead of an interview. Prepare written responses to the questions.

- If multiple media outlets are contacting the school, schedule a press conference, prepare talking points, and limit questions at the end.
- Consistency of information shared is key, and should include the same information that is shared above in the letter to school families.
- There is no obligation of the school to talk to the media, but the media is looking for a sensational story and they will share any information they have. Therefore, it helps the school to provide an official statement if the story is publicly escalating.

# **Chapter 5**

## **QSI International School of Dili Documents**

## Child Safeguarding and Protection Statement

# QSI International School of Dili

## QSI Dili Child Safety Protocol Statement

The QSI International School of Dili is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety of all students and expects all staff and volunteers to share this responsibility. We strive to ensure that consistent and effective safeguarding procedures are in place to support families, students and staff at school.

Child abuse and neglect are concerns throughout the world, which can have serious short and long-term psychological and physical implications for victims. 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. The QSI International School of Dili endorses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), of which our host country, Timor Leste, is a signatory.

Schools fill a special institutional role in society as protectors of children. Schools need to ensure that 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 that the child and family avail themselves to the services available to remedy any situation that constitutes child abuse or neglect.

All staff employed at the QSI International School of Dili 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. Reporting and follow up of all suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect 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 child protection agency in the home country, and/or to local authorities.

The QSI International School of Dili seeks to be a safe haven for students who may be experiencing abuse or neglect in any aspect of their lives. As such, QSI Dili will distribute this policy annually to all parents and applicants, will communicate this policy annually to 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, QSI Dili will follow a carefully designed course of due process, including cooperating with authorities and assisting with an investigation as appropriate, while maintaining the safety of the child as the highest priority.

## **Local Laws Related to Child Safeguarding and Protection**

### **Timor Leste Child Protection Laws**

QSI International School of Dili recognizes its obligation to report criminal behavior and cooperate with any civil authority including the police or other bodies responsible for child welfare in the Timor Leste. The school will keep in regular contact with legal and community experts to make sure it acts legally and in the best interests of the children in its care.

### **Relevant Timor Leste Penal Code**

<http://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/tl/tl006en.pdf>

### **Chapter 3, Article 155. Mistreatment of a minor**

**Article 171. Sexual coercion**

**Article 172. Rape**

**Article 173. Aggravation**

### **SECTION III SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

**Article 174. Sexual exploitation of a third party**

**Article 176. Child pornography**

### **SECTION IV SEXUAL ABUSE**

**Article 177. Sexual abuse of a minor**

**Article 178. Sexual acts with an adolescent**

**Article 179. Sexual abuse of a person incapable of resistance**

**Article 180. Sexual fraud**

**Article 181. Sexual exhibitionism**

### **SECTION V COMMON PROVISIONS**

**Article 182. Aggravation**

### **CHAPTER V VIOLATION OF PRIVACY**

**Article 183. Public disclosure of private information**

**Article 184. Breach of secrecy**

## **Local Authorities and Services Working on Child Safeguarding and Protection**

The PNTL (Policia Nacianal Timor Leste) is the route for contacting and starting interaction with local authorities concerning child safety issues. Parents must be contacted before authorities and embassies are contacted. Contact with the PNTL can only be originated by the offended party and or their legal representation. If the school were to be in a position for to contact legal authority it should only be done through school legal counsel to protect against a libel situation. Please note all embassies have expressed concern that they be contacted before an embassy family is involved with the PNTL if possible.

## **Local Counseling and Treatment Resources**

**Due to the changing professional environment in Dili, the school office will keep a current list of counseling and resource options. Quite often options out of the country would be sought.**

# Chapter 6

## Document

---

### Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct must be read and signed by all employees of the school, parents, and anyone who will have contact with students as part of a school program, activity, field trip, or other event. The person's signature indicates understanding and agreement to the Code of Conduct.

### QSI International School of Dili Code of Conduct

QSI International School of Dili is committed to the safety and protection of children. This Code of Conduct applies to all faculty, staff, employees, and volunteers. The public and private conduct of faculty, staff, employees, students, and volunteers acting on behalf of the school can inspire and motivate those with whom they interact, or can cause great harm if inappropriate. We must, at all times, be aware of the responsibilities that accompany our work. Additionally, members of the school community, including parents, must be aware of the parameters of the Code of Conduct and the expectation of adult behavior toward children within the school community.

- We should be aware of our own and other persons' vulnerability, especially when working alone with children and youth, and be particularly aware that we are responsible for maintaining physical, emotional, and sexual boundaries in such interactions. We must not engage in any covert sexual behaviors with those for whom we have responsibility. This includes seductive speech or gestures as well as physical contact that exploits, abuses, or harasses. We are to provide safe environments for children and youth at all school activities, both on and off campus. We ask families to provide safe environments for children at private events as well.
- We must show prudent discretion before touching another person, especially children and youth, and be aware of how physical touch will be perceived or received, and whether it would be an appropriate expression of greeting, care, concern, or celebration. School personnel and volunteers are prohibited from physical discipline of a child. Physical contact with children can be misconstrued both by the recipient and by those who observe it, and should occur only when completely nonsexual and otherwise appropriate, and never in private.
- One-on-one meetings with a child or young person are best held in public area;

in a room where the interaction can be (or is being) observed; or in a room with the door **left open, and another staff member or supervisor is notified about the meeting.**

- We must intervene when there is evidence of, or there is reasonable cause to suspect, that children are being abused in any way. Suspected abuse or neglect must be reported to the school and appropriate local authorities.
- Faculty, staff, employees, and volunteers must refrain from the illegal possession and/or illegal use of drugs and/or alcohol, and from the use of tobacco products, alcohol and/or drugs when working with children. Adults will never buy alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, videos, media, games or reading material that is inappropriate and give it to minors. Staff members should not accept gifts from or give gifts to minors without parents' knowledge
  - Communication with children is governed by the key safety concept of transparency. The following steps will reduce the risk of private or otherwise inappropriate communication between parents, administration, teachers, personnel, volunteers, and minors:
    - Communication between school adults (including volunteers) and minors that is outside the role of the professional or volunteer relationship (teacher, coach, host, etc.) is prohibited.
    - Where possible, email exchanges between a minor and a person acting on behalf of the school are to be made using a school email address and with a "cc:" to parents and or other staff.
    - Faculty, staff, and volunteers who use any form of online or digital communications including social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and text messaging to communicate with minors may only do so for activities involving school business.

#### Statement of Acknowledgement of Code of Conduct for Signature

I promise to follow the rules and guidelines in this Code of Conduct as a condition of my providing services to the children and youth participating in QSI International School of Dili programs.

I will:

- Treat everyone with respect, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Never be alone with children and/or youth at school activities without another adult being notified.
- Use positive reinforcement when working with children and/or youth.

- Maintain appropriate physical boundaries at all times and touch children only in ways that are appropriate, public, and non-sexual.
- Comply with the mandatory reporting regulations of the school by reporting any suspected child abuse or neglect by completing the Child Protection Reporting Form to the Child Protection Officer or Deputy Officer.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse or neglect of children and/or youth.
- Protect the child and the child’s family by maintaining confidentiality in the case of a report of misconduct, and refusing to share any details about the report with anyone outside of the school’s Child Protection Team and relevant authorities.

I will not:

- Touch or speak to a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Inflict any physical or emotional abuse such as striking, spanking, shaking, slapping, humiliating, ridiculing, threatening, or degrading children and/or youth.
- Smoke or use tobacco products, or possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while working with children and/or youth.
- Give a child who is not my own a ride alone in a car, without explicit permission from the child’s parent/guardian.
- Accept gifts from or give gifts to children or youth, without the knowledge of their parents or guardians.
- Engage in private communications with children via text messaging, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. (social media).
- Discuss the details of any allegations with anyone outside of the Child Protection Team.

Staff, volunteers, and others who work with students:

I understand that as a person working with and/or providing services to children and youth under the auspices of QSI International School of Dili, I am subject to a criminal record background check. My signature confirms that I have read this Code of Conduct and that as a person working with children and youth, I agree to follow these standards. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from the school and reporting to the appropriate authorities. If a report is made against me, and the allegations are confirmed, the school is bound to share the findings with anyone who inquires for a reference about me.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Introductory Child Protection Letter to School Community

Dear Parents,

QSI International School of Dili strives to provide your children with positive educational experiences that are characterized by caring, supportive relationships and free from neglect or abuse of any kind. We are committed to working with you to ensure that the school maintains this type of environment.

In keeping with current international school practices, Quality Schools International (QSI) has developed a Child Safeguarding and Protection Handbook, which has been adapted to and adopted by this school. As a member of QSI International School of Dili's community we have an expectation that you work in partnership with the school and you understand and agree to the child protection Code of Conduct. Protocols outlined in the Child Safeguarding and Protection handbook are aligned with the QSI Mission Statement, Exit Outcomes, and Success Orientations, as well as these two articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:

### **Article 19: Protection from abuse and neglect**

*... Shall protect the child from all forms of maltreatment by parents or others responsible for the care of the child and establish appropriate social programs for the prevention of abuse ...*

### **Article 34: Sexual exploitation**

*... Shall protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse, including prostitution and involvement in pornography.*

To help our students learn and grow in a safe environment, the following educational components are included in the school's Child Safeguarding and Protection plan:

- Age-appropriate lesson plans to foster an understanding of personal safety, needs, and rights in each classroom.
- Parent information sessions and resources regarding the school's Child Safeguarding and Protection programs and policies.
- Faculty and staff professional development workshops on Child Safeguarding and Protection.

To access the Child Safeguarding and Protection Handbook in its entirety, please go to <https://www.qsi.org/east-timor/etm/>

Thank you for your support in maintaining a school and community in which students, staff, and parents feel safe and happy. If you have any questions about the Child Safeguarding and Protection plan or any other school policies, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Glenn B. Chapman

Director

### QSI Dili Child Protection Reporting Form (Available on Server and in Office)

Reporter's relationship to the child/victim	
Child's name, gender, age, address	
Parents' or Guardians' contact information and other relevant information	
Family information, including siblings, nationality, embassy relationships, etc.	
Name, contact information, relationship to child, and other helpful information of alleged perpetrator	
Relevant information about reporter and school	
Nature and extent of injuries/mistreatment	
Evidence of prior abuse (if any)	
Way in which reporter was alerted to the abuse/bullying	
Description of action taken, or recommended action	
Any other helpful information	



