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Child Protection at

Nanjing International School

Dear Parents,

Nanjing International School, in keeping with the NIS mission, is committed to Child Protection. As such, procedures have been developed to guide our staff and families in matters related to the health, safety and care of children in attendance at our school. It is with the support of our School Board that I send this letter to parents at the beginning of each school year, reminding our community about this critical issue. The NIS Child Protection procedures are based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which China is a signatory.

We want to draw your attention to two key articles:

Article 19 - Protection from abuse and neglect. "...protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.

Article 34 - Sexual exploitation. "...shall undertake to protect children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse."

By enrolling your child at NIS, you agree to work in partnership with the school and abide by the procedures adopted by NIS. We genuinely value our partnership with you in providing for the safety and care of your children. As part of our overall educational programs and specific to our shared responsibility to educate children, to protect them, and to learn and grow in a safe environment, NIS approaches Child Protection in the following ways:

- Prevention
 - Police checks of all employees, contractors, and volunteers
 - Code of Conduct signed by all employees, contractors, and volunteers
 - Guide faculty to recognise and report issues of abuse and neglect
 - Age-appropriate education in regards to child protection
- Operational
 - NIS community members to wear their NIS identification cards
 - All visitors to sign-in and display the visitor badge
- Strategic
 - Put in place a Child Protection Team and a Child Response Team

I thank you for your support of our efforts and invite you to contact your school Counselor, the relevant Head of School, or myself with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Arden Tyoschin
Director

November 2016

What does Child Protection mean for the NIS community?

NIS is defining a standard for the treatment of all children and youth — that they be treated with respect and dignity at all times. NIS endorses the Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which the host country, China, is a signatory. As such, NIS 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 of the services needed to remedy any situation that constitutes child abuse or neglect. Child protection standards defined by NIS encompass all cultures and international law. When given reasonable cause to believe that these rights are violated, NIS will seek all available resources to restore those rights.

Definitions:

Physical abuse is defined as “any non-accidental physical injury to the child” and can include, but are not limited to, striking, kicking, burning, or biting the child.

Neglect is the persistent failure of a parent or other person with responsibility to meet a child’s basic physical, physiological, and/or safety needs that may result in serious impairment to the child’s health or development.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (i.e. rape) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production or viewing of pornographic material or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Emotional abuse is the persistent ill treatment of a child as to cause severe and adverse effects on a child’s emotional development.

Teams

The Child Protection Team meets twice annually. This team is made up of: Counsellors, the Deputy Director – Learning, the Nurse, a teacher from Primary, a teacher from Secondary. This team focuses on prevention, staff training, and student education.

The Child Response Team comes together when there is reasonable cause to follow up on a disclosure. This team is made up of: the School Director, the Deputy Director – Learning, the relevant Section Head, the relevant counsellor. Additional members may include the Deputy Director – Finance and Operations, Homeroom or Advisory teacher, the Nurse, the IT Director, and/or any other teachers deemed essential to support the response to the situation.

Reporting Procedures

All staff employed at NIS must report suspected incidences of child abuse or neglect to the Counselor and to the relevant Head of Section within 48 hours. In all cases, the school Director will be notified. Reporting and follow up of all suspected incidences of child abuse or neglect will proceed in accordance with NIS protocols. Furthermore, cases of suspected child abuse or neglect may be reported to the appropriate employer, to the respective consulate in Shanghai, to the appropriate child protection agency in the home country, and/or to local authorities.

Step 1

When a child reports abuse or there is reasonable cause to believe that abuse is occurring, the teacher will seek advice from the relevant Counselor within 48 hours. The Counselor will take initial steps to gather information regarding the reported incident. Should there be reasonable cause, the Director will move to form a school-based response team as needed to address the report. In all cases, follow-up activities will be conducted in a manner that ensures that information is documented factually and that strict confidentiality is maintained.

Step 2

Based on acquired information, a plan of action will be developed to assist the child and family.

The following actions that may take place are:

- Discussions between the child and Counselor in order to gain more information.
- In-class observations of the child by the Teacher, Counselor, or Administrator.
- Meetings with the family to present the school's concerns.
- Referral of the student and family to external professional counseling.
- Notification to the sponsoring employer of the child/family.
- Consultation with the consulate of the country of the involved family.
- Consultation with the school's, or another, attorney.
- Consultation with local authorities.

Step 3

Subsequent to a reported and/or substantiated case of child abuse or neglect the following actions may take place:

- The Counselor will provide support and guidance as appropriate to the child and family
- The Counselor will provide the child's teachers with ongoing support.
- The Counselor will provide resource materials and strategies for teacher use.
- The Counselor will maintain contact with outside therapists regarding support for the child.

See flowchart on Page 4.

All documentation of the investigation will be kept in the child's school confidential records file in school. Records sent to schools to which their student may transfer will be flagged to let the receiving school know there is a confidential file for the child. NIS will make every attempt to share this information in a way that will protect the child.

In the event that the abuse or neglect allegation involves a staff or faculty member of NIS, the Director and Board Chair will follow Board policy pursuant to ethical professional behavior.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Nanjing International School Code of Conduct.

Flowchart:



In developing this document, Nanjing International School thanks:
Douglas Walker, CIS Affiliated Consultant (NIS Professional Development September 16, 2016)
Association of International Schools in Africa (AISA) Child Protection Handbook (May 2014)
Shanghai American School's Child Protection Policy (2016)