H·I·S
HARARE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

66 Pendennis Rd, Harare, Zimbawe

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Board Policy:

D. Well-Being and Safe-Guarding

We provide a safe, supportive and healthy learning environment, which promotes well-being and maintains appropriate safe-guarding procedures.

1. Require all staff to adhere to HIS child protection guidelines and procedures, supported by relevant and regular professional development.

What does Child Protection mean for the HIS community?

HIS is defining a standard for the treatment of all children and youth — that they be treated with respect and dignity at all times. HIS endorses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which the host country, Zimbabwe, is a signatory. As such, at HIS we 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 HIS encompass all cultures and international law. When given reasonable cause to believe that these rights are violated, HIS will seek all available resources to restore those rights.

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

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.

Sexual Exploitation refers to the transactional nature of some forms of abuse. It is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online.

Online Sexual abuse and Exploitation is the sexual abuse of children using digital technology. This commonly includes grooming children with a sexual motive, creating, viewing and distributing child sexual abuse material (child pornography and self-produced sexual images or 'sexts') and coercing and blackmailing children for sexual purposes. This abuse may be perpetrated by individuals or gangs, young people or adults and may include in person contact or only online contact. As technology advances, new forms of this crime are emerging.

The Role of the Child Protection Officer

The Child Protection Officer (CPO) is the first point of contact for all reports of child protection concerns. The CPO is responsible for hearing child-abuse concerns and dealing with concerns by informing the Director and by conducting an initial inquiry. The CPO is also a member of the Child Protection Team, maintains a central database of police checks, code of conduct and staff training. The CPO reviews and updates school Child Protection procedures, with the support of the CP Team, annually, guides staff training and supports community awareness. Additional responsibilities include: gathering and maintaining records regarding safeguarding incidents, managing the referral process, keeping parents informed, informing the Director, maintaining training of themselves and implementing procedures.

Teams

The Child Protection Team meets twice annually. This team is made up of: the Child Protection Officer, Counsellors, the School Director, the Nurse, the Principals, an Elementary School teacher, a Middle or High School teacher. 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 relevant Principal(s), Child Protection Officer, the relevant counsellor(s). Additional members may include, Homeroom or Advisory teacher, the Nurse, the IT Director, the Business Manager, the HR Manager and/or any other teachers deemed essential to support the response to the situation.

Reporting Procedures

All staff employed at HIS must report suspected incidences of child abuse or neglect to the Child Protection Officer as soon as possible within 24 hours, who will notify the Director. This includes **any** concern, inside or outside of the school environment, no matter how insignificant, that may cast doubt that the action or behaviour could place a child at risk.

Reporting and follow up of all suspected incidences of child abuse or neglect will proceed in accordance with HIS protocols. Furthermore, cases of suspected child abuse or neglect may be reported to the appropriate employer, to the respective Embassy, to the appropriate child protection agency in the home country, and/or to local authorities.(See flowchart on Page 3.)

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 Child Protection Officer as soon as possible within 24 hours.

The Child Protection Officer, in consultation with the Director, will take initial steps to gather information regarding the reported incident. These may include:

- Discussions between the child and Counselor in order to gain more information
- In-class observations of the child by the Teacher, Counselor, or Leadership Team
- A record of physical evidence
- Discussion with the parents

Step 2

Should there be reasonable cause, the Child Protection Officer the Director will move to form a school-based response team as needed to address the report, and a plan of action will be developed to assist the child and family. The following actions that may take place are:

- Meetings with the family to present the school's concerns
- Referral of the student and family to external professional counselling

Step 3

Subsequent to a reported and/or substantiated case of child abuse, the following actions may take place: •
Provide in-school structures and guidance as appropriate to the child and family

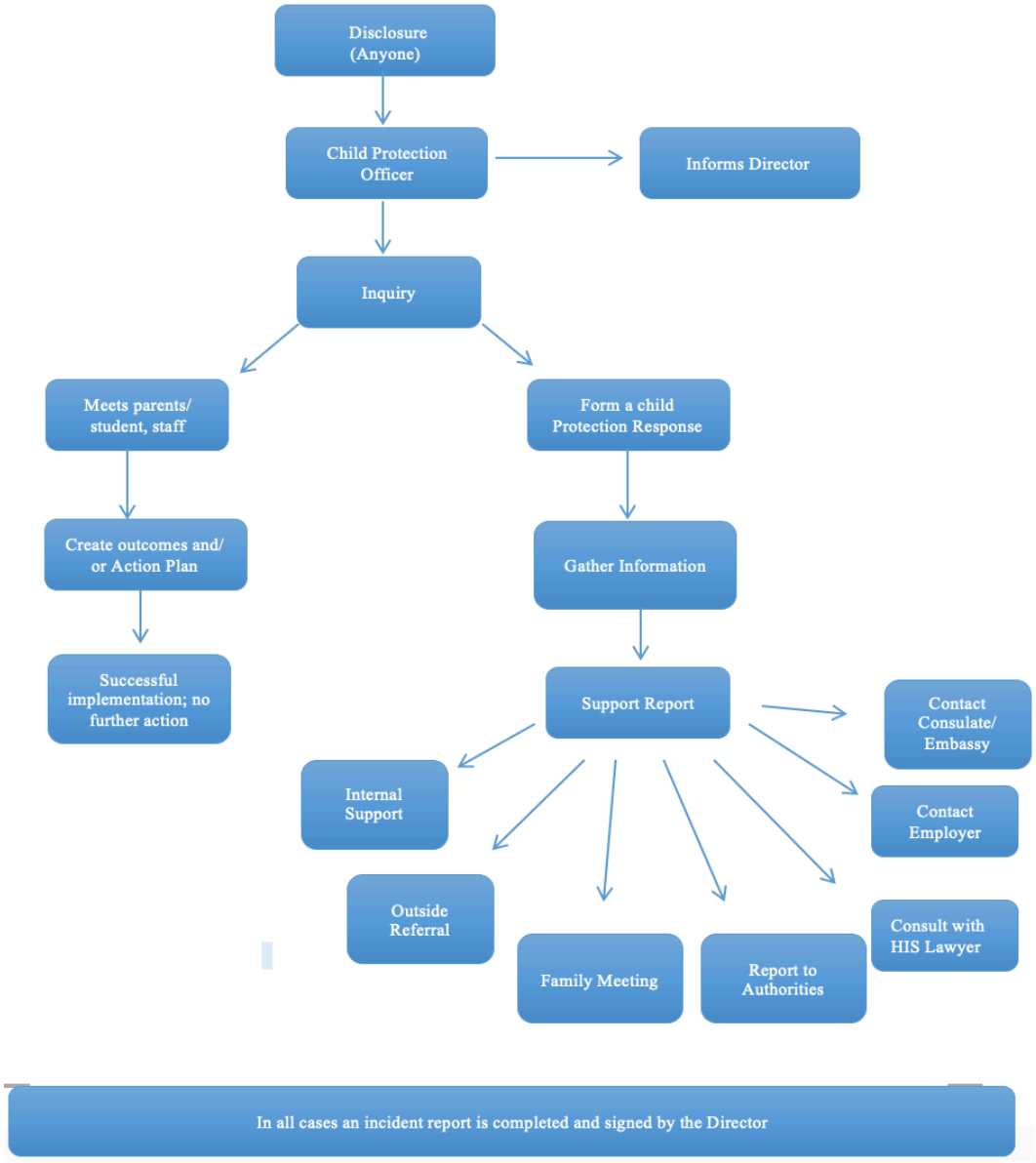
- Provide the child's teachers with ongoing support
- Provide resource materials and strategies for teacher use
- Maintain contact with outside therapists regarding support for the child

Should any form of the abuse continue, the following actions may be taken

- Notification to the sponsoring employer of the family.
- Consultation with the consulate of the country of the involved family.
- Consultation with the school's attorney.
- Consultation with local authorities.

In all cases, steps taken will be conducted in a manner that ensures that information is documented factually and that strict confidentiality is maintained.

Flowchart:



All documentation of the investigation will be kept confidential and locked records on file in school. Records sent to school to which their student may transfer will be flagged to let the receiving school know there is a confidential file for the child. HIS 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 HIS, the Director will follow relevant HR procedures. In the event that it involves the Director, the HR Manager and Board Chair would follow procedures pursuant to ethical professional behaviour.

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In developing this document, Harare International School thanks:

- *Association of International Schools in Africa (AISA) Child Protection Handbook (May 2014)*
- *CIS Child Protection Workshop, Singapore (April 2017)*
- *Douglas Walker, CIS Affiliated Consultant (Professional Development: September 16, 2016)*
- *Nanjing International School (2018)*
- *Shanghai American School's Child Protection Policy (2016)*