

AISA Safe Schools Self-Audit Tool

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3rd Edition

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About AISA

The Association of International Schools in Africa (AISA), established in 1969, is a non-profit education association supporting the professional learning and school improvement strategies of international schools on the continent of Africa. Based in Nairobi, Kenya, AISA offers a professional learning programme specifically designed to meet the unique needs of our diverse member school community. AISA also offers a number of supplementary programmes, scholarships and facilitates collaboration among member schools to advance school effectiveness and improve student learning.

Why Undertake an Annual Audit

Schools have a duty of care to protect children and prevent them from harm, and act with a sense of urgency if a child is at risk of harm, no matter how minor the risk may appear.

The International Task Force on Child Protection have identified the following expectations as being the minimum requirement of schools to provide safeguarding and child protection for its students:

- All children have equal rights to be protected from harm and abuse.
- Everybody has a responsibility to support the protection of children.
- All schools have a duty of care to children enrolled in the school and those who are affected by the operations of the school.
- All actions on child protection are taken with the best interests of the child, which are paramount.

Undertaking an annual audit will help your school:

1. **Protect children:** While child protection policies alone cannot guarantee the protection of all children, undertaking this audit will help your school review how closely your school policies align to model practice, and how well your policies are being implemented, thereby ensuring your school is doing all it can to minimise harm to children.
2. **Protect school staff and volunteers:** Your school child protection policies will offer clear guidelines on how your school expects its staff to behave with children and keep them safe. This audit will help you identify gaps and omissions in your policies and procedures.
3. **Protect you school reputation:** Your school child protection policies offer your school community, as well as the broader community, a clear indication of your commitment to protect children. Undertaking an annual audit is a further assurance that your school is upholding this commitment to provide a school that is safe and nurturing for children.

This annual audit tool has been developed to provide a model for AISA member schools to use and adapt to their school context. The self-assessment can be used by leadership and staff to determine if child protection and safeguarding policies are being followed as well as to help determine where there might be a need for policy revisions, procedural changes or more training in the implementation of the policy's requirements.

This tool has been developed using the Final Report and Recommendations of the School Evaluation Committee of the International Task Force on Child Protection (2015). To access the report, see the website of the International Centre for Missing and Exploited children (http://www.EdPortal.ICMEC.org).

What's new in this Edition.

The inaugural release of the AISA Safe School's Audit occurred in 2018. Since then, AISA's Child Protection and Wellbeing Programme has undergone significant development, adopting a more comprehensive perspective on child protection that encompasses safeguarding, mental health, and overall wellbeing. Our efforts in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) have underscored the detrimental impact of identity-based harm, emphasizing the need for corresponding updates in our schools' child protection policies and procedures.

Thus, this 3rd edition of the AISA Safe Schools Audit has undergone some significant changes:

1. **Revised Structure:** If you have used this tool in the past, you will notice that the structure of this tool has been modified. Governance and Accountability now feature in section 1, reflecting the need for child protection and safeguarding to be prioritised at the highest level of school leadership and governance structures. And Policies and Procedures now feature in the same sections as they are so interrelated.

2. **Keeping Children Safe in and Out of School** – is a new section, reflecting a contextual safeguarding approach to child protection and the role that schools can and must play in supporting students to stay safe in school and the community.

3. **Broader focus:** this edition includes new metrics that include how school can support the emotional safety, mental health and wellbeing of students. It also includes new metrics that are DEIJ focused, including measures to address identity-based harm.

4. **For Action:** New For Action section at the end of each section to help you develop an action plan for your school Child Protection team to strengthen your child protection policies and programme.

How to Use this Tool

This guide should be read in conjunction with the AISA Child Protection Handbook which is freely available on the AISA website: www.aisa.or.ke or on the ICMEC website which includes extensive child protection guidance (http://www.EdPortal.ICMEC.org).

This self-audit should be undertaken regularly by the Child Protection Team as well as staff from different areas of the school, students, and the parent community, and submitted to the school leadership for their review. Details of each statement should be complete and thorough, allowing for an external party to have a full and complete understanding of the school's undertakings on each point. Recommendations should be provided where changes are necessary.

The AISA Child Protection Audit tool is divided into six key sections:

1. **Governance & Accountability:** this section will review how well your school's child protection programme is embedded in the highest level of your school's leadership and governance structure.

2. **Child Protection Leadership & Team:** this section is focused on the leadership of your school child protection programme and the role of the child protection team.

3. **Child Protection Policies & Procedures**: this section will help you review your school's Child Protection Policy and indicate what supplemental policies your school might want to develop. It also covers procedures related to responding to harm and allegations of abuse and record keeping.
4. **Keeping Children Safe in and Out of School:** a new section that highlights the measures schools take to keep children safe at all times.
5. Whole School Community **Training & Awareness Raising**: this section is related to student, staff and parent training.
6. **HR & Safe Recruitment:** this section is focused on model practice for safe recruitment.

Safe Schools Annual Audit

Name of School:	
Location/School Campus	
Head of School:	
Child Protection Officer:	
Date of Audit:	
Audit Team: *(Name, Role)*	
Summary of Key Recommendations:	
Date of next audit:	

1 Governance & Accountability

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
1.1	The school's commitment to child protection is reflected in all school procedures and systems (eg. strategic planning, budgeting, recruitment, performance management, partner agreements, risk management, etc.)				
1.2	All board members/trustees have a responsibility to child protection & safeguarding, but the school has identified a board member(s), governor(s) or trustee(s) for CP who is named in the CP Policy, along with contact details. Their role and responsibilities in relation to CP are clearly established in school policies. They have undergone Level 1 or Foundation level training at a minimum.				
1.3	Adequate human and financial resources have been allocated by the school to support and promote child protection.				
1.4	The Head of school has a clear understanding of their child protection role and responsibilities. The Head of School has undergone Level 1 or Foundation Level child protection training at a minimum and regularly attends further training.				
1.5	All reports of suspected or disclosed abuse, including actions taken, are reported to the Head of School in a timely manner.				
1.6	The school has systems in place to regularly monitor compliance to its CP policies and procedures.				

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
1.7	The school is deliberate about reviewing all child protection cases or incidences to see what lessons can be learned and if any revisions to policies or procedures are needed.				
1.8	The Head of School regularly reviews all CP incidence reports and low-level concerns and tracks their cases.				
1.9	The Board receives regular CP updates and an annual report summarising incidents, training's, learning's, and recommendations.				
1.10	Child protection & safeguarding are regular agenda items in Board meetings.				
1.11	The school Risk Register includes child protection & safeguarding risks and measures to monitor and mitigate risks are reviewed by the Board.				
1.12	School facilities are designed and utilised in a way that promotes child safety and protection. *An annual audit of school facilities is recommended.*				
	Total score out of 24				

For Action

Task: What needs to happen?	**Who** Who is responsible	**Resources Needed** Are any financial or other resources needed?	**Timeline** When will this be done by?

2 Child Protection Leadership & Team

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
2.1	The school has a designated leader for CP, i.e. the Child Protection Officer (CPO) or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Their role and responsibilities are included in their job description and addressed in performance appraisals. Sufficient time and budget are allocated to the CP role. The CPO/DSL is a senior member of staff. Their role and responsibilities are articulated in the CP policy and made known to all staff.				
2.2	The CPO or DSL meets regularly with applicable Principals or Division Heads and the Head of School to review all concerns, including low-level concerns.				
2.3	The CP lead is supported by a deputy, or deputies.				
2.4	A school counsellor/pastoral care staff member is part of the CP team and is available to provide support to students in response to a CP issue or concern.				
2.5	The CPO/DSL is supported by a CP team that includes a broad representation of staff that considers cultural, language, gender, age, and role diversity.				

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
	They are all listed in the CP policy with their contact details.				
2.6	The CPO/DSL, deputy and CP team have all undergone CP training; Level 1 or Foundation training at a minimum.				
2.7	Where the school has multiple campuses or divisions, the school has a dedicated CP lead for each.				
2.8	The CP team, including members from other school divisions if applicable, meet regularly (eg. weekly/fortnightly) to plan and review the CP prevention programme.				
2.9	A process is in place to cover the CP lead when they are absent from school. All staff are kept informed who the CPO/DSL is at all times.				
2.10	The CP or safeguarding lead provide an annual report for the Board which they present in person.				
2.11	The school establishes a multidisciplinary team (MDT) of external partners (e.g. local child protection agencies) to support child safety efforts and to advice on cases.				
2.12	The school participates in a network with other local international schools or inter-agency government and non-government partners to support best practice child protection across the school network.				

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
	Total out of 24				

For Action

Task: What needs to happen?	**Who** Who is responsible	**Resources Needed** Are any financial or other resources needed?	**Timeline** When will this be done by?

3. Child Protection Policies & Procedures

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
ild Protection Policy framework					
3.1	The school has a written Child Protection (henceforth CP) policy, developed with broad consultation from students, parents and the community, that is approved by the Head of School and the Board. The policy states the contact details of the child protection or safeguarding lead and other team members, as well as the name of the board representative.				
3.2	The CP policy includes a values statement about the rights of each child that aligns with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the African Charter on the Rights & Welfare of the Child.				
3.3	CP policies describe your school's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion by recognizing and respecting the unique needs, backgrounds, and identities of all children and their families.				
3.4	School norms and values reflected in the school's CP policies and procedures uphold children's rights as stated in the UNCRC. Where cultural practices cause harm to children and violate their rights under the UNCRC (e.g. FGM) the CP policy includes a clear position statement; this may be within the CP policy or supplemental to the CP policy.				

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
3.5	The country's legal, cultural, social welfare and CP statutory guidance (including legal age of criminal responsibility, age of consent and mandatory reporting requirements) are reflected in the CP policy with clear guidance on when and how concerns and allegations will be reported externally.				
3.6	The CP policy appropriately defines child abuse, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, neglect and commercial exploitation and inappropriate behaviour of children towards other children.				
3.7	The CP policy clearly states that discrimination and harassment based on a child's race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, abilities or other aspects of their identity is harmful and may be abusive. Harm may be caused by, but is not limited to; microaggressions, hate speech, bullying, harassment (including online bullying or harassment), sexually derogatory name calling, physical violence, groping and other unwanted touching, social exclusion, teasing, or stereotyping.				
3.8	The CP Policy includes a managing allegations policy, this may be either within the policy or included as a supplemental policy. This policy clearly outlines procedures for reporting suspected or disclosed abuse.				

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
3.9	The CP policy includes a statement affirming that all non-recent CP concerns or allegations will be taken seriously.				
3.10	The CP Policy is available on the school website. *State the URL* The CP Policy is promoted and publicly available to all school personnel, parents, external partners and prospective employees and school families.				
3.11	The school has a child friendly version of the CP policy that is written in clear, easy to understand language and is available to all students.				
3.12	The CP policy has been translated into the local language(s) and any common community languages.				
3.13	All school Board members, administration, teachers, and ancillary staff are aware of the school CP policy, procedures and their responsibilities under the policy as evidenced by a signed acknowledgement form in each staff member's file.				
3.14	Partner organisations are made aware of the school CP policies and must comply with all policies and procedures.				
3.15	The CP policy is subject to an annual, scheduled review and revision. *State the date of the last review/revision.*				

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
3.16	The child protection policy, or supplemental policies may also cover: • Confidentiality • Safer Hiring Procedures • Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs) • Communications & Social Media Use • Child on Child Abuse • Intimate Care • Field Trips, Travel & Homestay • Remote Learning • Risk Assessment/Safety Planning This is not an exhaustive list.				
3.17	The school has a Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers that outlines behavioural expectations for adults. This is read and reviewed each year by all staff.				
3.18	The school has a low-level concern policy &/or procedures for staff to report concerns regarding adults' behaviour towards children.				
3.19	The school has a policy and procedures for taking, storing, and sharing photographs of students.				
3.20	The school has a policy in place to guide the storage, transference, and destruction of student records?				
Reporting and record keeping procedures					
3.21	The school has a clear reporting pathway for staff to report any suspicion, concern (including low-level				

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
	concern), disclosure, or allegation of abuse. This procedure may include multiple reporting pathways to encourage reporting. **ALL** concerns must ultimately be reported to the CPO/DSL.				
3.22	The school has a form to record and report a concern (including low-level concern) or allegation. This record should be made immediately a concern is identified or an allegation is received. Procedures for reporting concerns should include that verbal communication is promptly recorded, and continuity of record is ensured by signing and dating. The record should also include any follow-up action needed and who is accountable.				
3.23	The school has a Central Record that is held securely with access limited to a small number of staff. Child Protection records are kept separately from student and personnel records, but cross referenced in student and staff files.				
3.24	The CPO/DSL regularly reviews all reports in the Central Record to identify any potential patterns of concerning behaviour.				
3.25	The school allocates a single location or email for the delivery of CP incident forms or low-level				

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
	concerns and a clear method of alerting the CPO/DSL of all concerns or suspicions.				
Responding to concerns					
3.26	The school has clear written procedures for how it will respond to child protection concerns.				
3.27	All staff and volunteers know how to respond to a direct and indirect disclosure of harm and abuse.				
3.28	The school has written guidance for when it will report a concern to external parties.				
3.29	The school offers trauma-informed support to children who experience harm (including identity-based harm) abuse, or trauma, and ensures that they have access to appropriate services and resources.				
3.30	The school employs restorative justice practices to address harmful behaviour, including conflict and identity-based harm.				
3.31	The school actively engages with parents and carers as soon as a CP concern arises (prioritising the best interest of the child) and ensures they have access to appropriate services and resources.				
3.32	The school has developed a procedure for suspected or disclosed abuse when the claim is made against				

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
	the CPO/DSL or the Head of School. This is included in the CP Policy.				
	Total score out of 64				

For Action

Task: What needs to happen?	**Who** Who is responsible	**Resources Needed** Are any financial or other resources needed?	**Timeline** When will this be done by?

4. Keeping Children Safe in and Out of School

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
4.1	The school takes appropriate measures to keep all children safe throughout the school day, including when not in lessons.				
4.2	The school acknowledges the unique challenges faced by marginalised and underrepresented children, including children from racial and ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ children, and children with disabilities. At-risk children are identified, and the school takes measures to provide support and ensure the safety of such students.				
4.3	The school takes a contextual approach to child protection and safeguarding and is committed to responding to child protection incidents that happen outside of school hours *or* outside of school grounds.				
4.4	The school takes appropriate steps to keep children safe online.				
4.5	The schools actively promotes mental health and wellbeing, encouraging and normalising help seeking behaviour.				
4.6	The school has an accessible counselling or pastoral care service that is available for all students to access.				

	Students are encouraged to talk to a counsellor or trusted adult if they experience or witness harmful behaviour that is causing distress.				
4.7	The school has mechanisms in place (e.g. survey's, focus groups) for students to provide feedback to the school on wellbeing and child protection issues.				
4.8	The school has a supported the student led development of a Student Code of Conduct.				
4.9	Parents and carers are viewed as valued and vital partners in supporting the school in its duty to keep children safe. The school proactively engages with parents as demonstrated by: ● Providing parent training ● Informing parents on how to report a concern ● Regular communications about CP and safeguarding ● Inviting parent input and feedback on CP and safeguarding measures				
	Total score out of 18				

For Action

Task: What needs to happen?	**Who** Who is responsible	**Resources Needed** Are any financial or other resources needed?	**Timeline** When will this be done by?

5. Training & Awareness Raising

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
5.1	The school has a scheduled programme of regular, systematic professional training for: ● Board members ● School leaders ● Co-professionals ● Teaching Staff ● Ancillary staff (eg. drivers, security, gardeners, cooks, etc.) ● Volunteers ● Contractors ● Parents & carers on CP including child abuse prevention, recognition, victim behaviour (disclosure) and reporting. All school Board members, administration, teachers, ancillary staff and volunteers know when and how to respond appropriately if children are harmed or if allegations of harm to children are made. All staff understand their role as mandatory reporters and are clear on how to internally report a concern, suspicion, or allegation. All staff review the Code of Conduct annually. *Cite and track the date of training for each of the above groups.* *A school CP training register provides evidence of training for each member of staff (incl. date and curriculum details).*				

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
5.2	Staff training includes guidance about how children's diverse circumstances can increase a child's vulnerability to harm and that identify-based harm should be responded to in accordance with your school's guidance on how to respond to harm and abuse.				
5.3	Staff training includes how to identify and respond to concerns about student mental health and wellbeing.				
5.4	Staff training stresses the value of fostering positive relationships with students, and modelling action, as an influencing factor in promoting disclosures of harm and abuse.				
5.5	The school has in place age-appropriate education programmes for *all* students on how and to whom to disclose abuse or neglect. This includes how to identify trusted adults and how to access outside support.				
5.6	The school educates children, in an age-appropriate way, on how to seek help if they or someone they know are experiencing harm, this includes online harm.				
5.7	Students are made aware of how to seek help if they find inappropriate or harmful content on a school computer or device.				
5.8	The school has in place formal, age appropriate education programmes for *all* students that are inclusive of, but not limited to, the following areas: ● Personal safety and healthy touch ● Staying safe away from school & home				

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
	• Bullying & peer pressure • Physical abuse, neglect & negligent behaviour • Identity-based harm • Grooming • Online safety • Healthy relationships • Healthy sexual behaviour • Consent and do no harm orientation • Sexual harassment • Mental health and wellbeing • Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)				
5.9	Student curriculum addresses harmful norms that may be associated with discrimination and sexual harassment amongst students. i.e. explores how behaviour cause harm, even when harm is not intended.				
5.10	The school invites students input on all child protection curriculum, policies, school awareness campaigns and how students can report concerns.				
5.11	Parent information session(s) and other communication is provided regarding the school's child protection and safety education programme. Their feedback is sought and parents know who to contact in the school if there are any child protection/safety concerns.				
5.12	Education programmes are regularly monitored and evaluated by the school.				

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
	Total score out of 14				

For Action

Task: What needs to happen?	**Who** Who is responsible	**Resources Needed** Are any financial or other resources needed?	**Timeline** When will this be done by?

6. Human Resources & Safe Recruitment

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
6.1	The HR team have undergone safe recruitment training and are aware and able to implement safe recruitment practices.				
6.2	The school follows recommended recruitment policies and procedures that ensure all employees and volunteers are of sound moral character and are suitable people to work with children and young adults. (See ICMEC Education Portal: https://www.icmec.org/education-portal/#section-4)				
6.3	School recruitment procedures include: ● A statement about the school CP policies in vacancy announcements. ● Applicants must complete the school application form (ie. cannot only submit their CV) ● Interview procedures include experiential scenario questions(s) to all candidates on CP ● At least two references are contacted prior to the interview ● Background and criminal records checks are conducted as a precondition of employment ● Internet checks are undertaken as a precondition of employment ● The school conducts checks of available sex offender registries as a precondition of employment				

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
	• Safer recruitment checklists are maintained in all staff files				
6.4	Original identity documents & qualifications are examined and photocopied (this may occur once the staff member is in country) prior to unsupervised contact with children.				
6.5	The school leadership ensures that background evaluations are conducted on *all* paid staff *and* volunteers.				
6.6	If the school cannot undertake background and criminal history checks for contractors, vendors, consultants and others who provide goods and services to the school or who bring minors onto school property, supervision is required.				
6.7	The school has developed and adopted a Code of Conduct and written guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate behaviour of adults toward children and children towards other children.				
6.8	Copies of the Code of Conduct are made available to all personnel, volunteers, parents and the broader school community.				
6.9	The school has developed and adopted a Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure to foster a culture of disclosure without any fear of reprisal or victimisation.				
6.10	All new employees receive training on the school CP Policy and Code of Conduct as part of the school induction process.				

	Statement	In Place 2	Working Toward 1	Not in Place 0	Rationale for score
	Signed copies are included in each member of staff's file.				
6.11	All staff job descriptions include a statement about their child protection responsibilities.				
	Total score out of 22				

For Action

Task: What needs to happen?	**Who** Who is responsible	**Resources Needed** Are any financial or other resources needed?	**Timeline** When will this be done by?

Acknowledgements

This Audit Tool was adapted from the *AISA Sample Safe Environment Compliance Audit* found in Edition 1 of the AISA Child Protection Handbook (2016).

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Also referenced was *The Child Safeguarding Standards and How to Implement Them* by Keeping Children Safe.

www.keepingsafe.org.uk

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