



Bonn International School

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Child Protection Policy

Revised March 2019

Child Protection Policy

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Child Protection Policy

1. Principles for the Protection of a Child's Welfare in School

Every child has a universal right to security, protection, care and support.

The protection of a child's welfare is part of the school's mission and responsibility to help raise, educate and care for each child. The school supports and promotes the further development of the Child Protection Policy (CPP) through education and training of staff, especially in relation to the mission of prevention, as well as how to handle threats to a child's welfare.

Parents, or persons entitled to custody, are seen as partners of the school. If a threat to a child's welfare is observed or disclosed, it will be the normal procedure to identify how and when parents and/or children can participate in the problem solving process, as appropriate. In case of imminent danger to the child's welfare and safety, the school may contact the appropriate authorities without prior parental consultation.

In case of perceived threat to a child's welfare, the school follows a formal differentiated process (see Appendix 4). The procedure of the school is documented continuously and transparently in accordance with federal data protection regulations.

The use of any kind of violence or abuse will be dealt with promptly and appropriately.

a. Purpose and Scope of the Policy

The CPP is part of the whole school policies and procedures. School management and employees of the school agree to adhere to the policy governing in-house organizational processes and measures when they are employed. Furthermore, the school commits itself to provide continuous training in the area of child protection to its staff members.

Bonn International School can provide a variety of support to the school community. Possibilities include consultation with parents, development of action plans with teachers, working directly with a qualified advisor who specializes in child protection, or in consultation with external authorities.

b. Context

This policy has been developed in accordance with sections 8a and 72a of the German Social Code (SGB), Book VIII – Child and Youth Welfare - in October 2005 and the Federal Child Protection Law of 2012.

Child Protection is a fundamental function and responsibility which is undertaken at Bonn International School. All members of staff must comply with the conditions, principles and procedures outlined by the school in the interest of the protection of each child's welfare.

Definitions

BIS defines 'abuse' as any situation or pattern of behaviour that is not conducive to the physical and emotional well-being of the child. Types of abuse include, but are not limited to:

Physical Abuse

Inflicting physical injury on a child by other than accidental means. This may include, but is not limited to physical discipline, hitting, kicking, slapping, burning, bruising, or failing to take reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any of the above.

Sexual Abuse

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 (ie. 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.

This policy also applies to sexual contact between students when one of those involved does not understand, cannot give consent to, and which causes emotional and/or physical harm.

Emotional Abuse

A pattern of verbal aggression, insults, threats, put-downs, or lies that cause distress and seriously impairs cognitive, emotional, psychological and/or social development of the individual.

Neglect

A failure to provide for a child's basic needs within their own environment and may involve physical, medical, educational and/or emotional aspects.

Peer-on-Peer Abuse

Peer-on-peer abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control exercised between children, and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate), friendships, and wider peer associations.

Peer-on-peer abuse can take various forms, including but not limited to: serious bullying (including cyber bullying), relationship abuse, domestic violence and abuse, child sexual exploitation, youth and serious youth violence, harmful sexual behaviour and/or prejudice-based violence, including but not limited to gender-based violence.

Online peer-on-peer abuse is any form of peer-on-peer abuse with a digital element. For example, sexting, online abuse, coercion and exploitation, peer-on-peer grooming, threatening language via online means, the distribution of sexualised content, and harassment.

(Cited from Farrer & Co Peer-on-peer abuse toolkit)

2. Measures of Prevention

It is recognized that all adults, including temporary staff, volunteers and board members, have a full and active part to play in protecting our students from harm, and that the child's welfare is our paramount concern. The school management ensures that the following required preventive measures are integrated as part of the normal workplace procedures:

1. All employees, including new employees are familiar with the CPP and its application within the school as stated in the staff handbook and the appropriate section on the staff portal.
2. When planning for staff training and development, courses about children's welfare are taken into account.
3. The school knows the local support services for parents and children. Parents are informed about the range of services available to them within the community.
4. In staff meetings, parent information sessions, through the admissions process, and via the website, child protection will be introduced, discussed and reflected on periodically. These measures will be monitored by the Counseling Department.
5. Students in both the primary and secondary school receive Comprehensive Sexuality Education, which actively addresses child protection.
6. The school is in contact with external child welfare experts and has other services available to support this process.
7. Prevention measures are reflected in detail in school operating procedures such as field trip guidelines, PE guidelines and after school activities guidelines, among others.

The school will document that all employees were informed about child protection and CPP, and regularly receive updated training (ie. tenured staff every three years, new staff upon arrival).

3. Significant Evidence

If a staff member observes significant evidence of a threat to a child's welfare, or a child discloses abuse, the school estimates the risk of threat in cooperation with several appropriate professionals. The staff member observing a possible threat to a student must inform the respective Child Protection Officer immediately and complete a risk assessment checklist and an incident report (Appendix 1&2).

These two documents serve as both documentation, as well as a foundation for discussion within the Child Protection Team. The Child Protection Team is comprised of the School Director, the two designated and specially trained Child Protection Officers, the Counselors, as well as the school Nurse.

Once the risk of threat is estimated, parents, or those persons entitled to custody, and/or the child are to be involved in the process, as appropriate, as long as the protection of the child is maintained.

In case of an acute threat to a child's welfare, the required actions are to be taken immediately. This may include, but is not limited to reporting the incident to the local Youth Welfare Office or consulting with other outside professionals.

The CPP will focus on children that are registered and looked after in Bonn International School as full time students and their siblings. However, if staff is made aware of possible threats to a child's welfare or have suspicions of such a threat for students not registered at school but visiting, attending external events at school, or via online media, these incidents will be followed up by reporting to the Director and/or contacting the appropriate external agencies.

4. Description of the Process

The description of the process outlines the procedure of Bonn International School in case of suspicion or disclosure of threat to a child's welfare. It is obligatory for school leadership and staff of Bonn International School to follow the procedure outlined. The whole procedure is outlined and documented as a flow chart (see Appendix 4).

The aims of the process are as follows:

1. To outline how the Child Protection Policy is implemented in the school.
2. To ensure that the best possible protection of the children is guaranteed.
3. To ensure all employees of the school are familiar with the procedure and know when to take which actions.

As soon as significant evidence of threat to a child's welfare is observed or disclosed, the process must be adopted and documented immediately.

5. Participation of Parents

The school encourages cooperation with parents, or the persons entitled to custody, as well as appropriate participation of the child. This also applies to situations of problems and conflicts at home. Therefore, when the risk of threat is assessed, the inclusion of the parents and the child in the process is intended to take place as soon as possible and appropriate. The decision about when to involve parents and/or the child will be communicated to all those involved and will be justified in the case documentation.

Discussions with the parents, or the persons entitled to custody, and the child will be documented. Agreements with parents on deadlines and responsibilities are part of this documentation.

During scheduled periodic meetings between school leadership, professionals and parents, the degree to which the suggested help has been utilized and the agreements have been met, will be reviewed. If help is not used and/or the discussions with the school and/or external child welfare experts have no effect, and therefore there is a continued threat to a child's welfare, the Youth Welfare Office will be informed in writing and orally to take over the case. Notification will be sent to the parents, or the persons entitled to custody.

6. Cooperation with External Professionals

When observing significant evidence of a threat to a child's welfare, the Director of the school and the Child Protection Team will be informed immediately by the Counseling Department. The Counseling Department may consult an external child welfare expert ("insoweit erfahrene Fachkraft"), in addition to other specialists who have pedagogical, psychological and legal expert knowledge, as well as knowledge in the handling of a threat to a child's welfare.

a. Cooperation with the Local Youth Welfare Office

The Youth Welfare Office is completely responsible for the case as soon as the school informs the office. If it is the wish of the parents, or the persons entitled to custody, the school will facilitate this process and support the family during this phase.

Cooperation between the school and the Youth Welfare Office is intended so that the responsibilities and mutual expectations are transparent for the parents, or the persons entitled to custody, and the child.

7. Documentation

For the systematic documentation of observations or disclosures of a threat to a child's welfare, the following documents are to be used by BIS staff. These documents are available as attachments of the child protection policy, available to all staff via the website (see Appendices):

1. Risk Assessment Checklist
2. Incident Report Form
3. "Recognizing the signs of abuse" information sheet
4. Flow Chart Child Protection Plan
5. EL Intimate Care Policy
6. BIS Safe Touch Policy
7. Child Protection Procedures
8. Responding to a Disclosure

8. Data Protection

All BIS staff involved in child protection matters must treat all related information as strictly confidential inside and outside of BIS. Particular importance is put on the protection of personal data due to the relevant legal regulations as well as the confidential relation between parents, children and the professionals.

If data is passed on to external professional agencies, it must be communicated in a confidential matter. We ensure all data pertaining to a child protection case follows BIS Data Protection Policy.

9. Personnel Qualifications

The school guarantees a regulated procedure of employment which includes:

- Professional qualifications to carry out the job
- At least three confidential references
- Extended police check (Erweitertes Führungszeugnis) issued within the last six months in the most recent country of residence, at the time of employment
- All tenured staff are required to regularly update professional qualifications and police check

Employees sign the employer's induction in terms of their responsibilities according to §72 a SGB, book VIII as part of the staff induction process.

10. Implementation

a. Policy Responsibility

The Director, in conjunction with the Counseling Department, is responsible for the implementation and development of the school's Child Protection policies.

b. Policy Review

The Child Protection Policy is to be reviewed as needed or every three years.

c. Policy Dates

Policy date of completion of formulation and adoption:	August 2016
Date of effective implementation:	August 2016
Revised and confirmed:	March 2019
Updated:	March 2019
Date of next review:	As needed or March 2022

11. References

German Social Code (SGB), Book VIII – Child and Youth Welfare – 11th September 2012
Federal Child Protection Act 2012

Farrer & Co. Peer-on-peer abuse toolkit: <https://www.farrer.co.uk/globalassets/news-articles/downloads/peer-on-peer-abuse-toolkit-14.pdf>

International School of Hannover Child Protection Policy

12. Appendices

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2. Incident Report Form
3. "Recognizing the signs of abuse" information sheet
4. BIS CP Flow Chart
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