

**British International School and
Montessori Education**

Freetown, Sierra Leone

School Handbook



The British International School and Montessori Education caters for a diverse community of students spanning six continents, with teaching staff sourced both locally and internationally to create a harmony of culturally-blended experience, and a learning environment that fosters global citizenship

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Chapter 1 – General School Information

1.1 Vision, Mission and Philosophy

Vision

The British International School and Montessori Education caters for a diverse community of students spanning 30 countries, with teaching staff sourced both locally and internationally to create a harmony of culturally-blended experience and a learning environment that fosters global citizenship. At the British International School and Montessori Education we believe that a happy child is a successful one. We are committed to providing our students a safe, friendly, positive and stimulating environment where everyone is valued regardless of their abilities. We intend that all students at BIS should enjoy their learning, love what they do, achieve their true potential and become independent life-long learners. We believe that all children should learn in a fully inclusive environment with equal opportunities thereby learning to value and appreciate religious and cultural differences.

As a school we value;

- The wellbeing, happiness of children, families and staff.
- Dedicated and caring staff who respect and know the children well.
- Teamwork, collaboration and co-operation.
- Safe and secure environment where learners can explore, discover and experiment.
- Nature and the preservation of the natural environment.
- The development of self-confidence, self-motivation, innovation, creativity and independence.
- A stimulating yet challenging curriculum tailored to the needs of the learners enabling them to develop intellectually, academically and reach their full potentials across all areas of learning.
- The achievements of every learner through praise and celebrations of their efforts.
- All aspects of tradition and culture; celebrating diversity, differences and core values of our global community.

Mission

Our mission as a school is to “follow the child to greater heights”. We prepare students to become global citizens and to succeed in an ever-changing world. We will ensure that our students understand the impact of being able to contribute positively to society through the provision of a quality and sound education. We will also ensure that our students develop practical skills and theoretical knowledge that are essential for leadership and support them in understanding shifts in our global economy and our world.

Philosophy

The Montessori approach is a unique method of introducing the child to a lifetime of enjoyable learning. Special materials, largely manipulative in nature, help to answer the child’s developmental needs and enable them to experience the excitement of learning by their own choice. The child is helped to develop all their natural skills for learning so that their abilities will be at a maximum in future situations.

1.2 The School Day

BIS is made up of the following age groups. School start and finish times differ with age groups, as do the drop-off and pick-up points. Please familiarize yourself with the following information and adhere to drop-off / pick-up times to ensure your child's experience is as smooth as possible.

Nido	16 months – 2.5 years
Nido learners can be dropped off at 0800-0900 direct to their classrooms or dropped off at the Montessori Garden entrance. School finishes for these learners at 1300 when they should be picked up directly. However, these learners may be picked up from 1400. Learners will be supervised until 1500 for those families who need to collect older siblings at 1500.	
Pre-School	2.5 – 3.5 years
Pre-school learners can be dropped off 0800-0900 direct to their classrooms. School finishes for these learners at 1400 when they should be picked up direct from their classroom. learners will be supervised until 1500 for those families who need to collect older siblings at 1500.	
Lower-Kindergarten	3.5 – 4.5 years
Lower-Kindergarten learners can be dropped off from 0800-0815 at the Montessori Garden entrance. Classes begin at 0815 and school finishes for these learners at 1400. Learners should be picked up from the building entrance 1400-1415. NB: On Wednesdays school finishes at 1300 for all learners.	
Upper-Kindergarten	4.5 – 5.5/6 years
Upper-Kindergarten learners can be dropped off 0800-0815 at the Montessori Garden entrance. Classes begin at 0815 and school finishes for these learners at 1400. Learners should be picked up from the building entrance 1400-1415. NB: On Wednesdays school finishes at 1300 for all learners.	
Key Stage 1-2 / Classes 1-6	6 – 11 years
Primary school learners can be dropped off 0800-0815 at the school entrance. Classes begin at 0815 and school finishes for these learners at 1500. Learners should be picked up from the school entrance 1500-1515. NB ¹ : On Wednesdays school finishes at 1300 for all learners. NB ² : Students who are attending Extended Curriculum Activities (1500-1600) should be picked up at 1610 from the main entrance.	
Key Stage 3-5 / Classes 7-13	11 – 19 years
Secondary school learners can be dropped off 0745-0800 at the school entrance. Classes begin at 0800 and school finishes at 1500. Learners should be picked up from the school entrance between 1500-1515. NB: Learners who are attending Extended Curriculum Activities (1510-1610) should be picked up at 1610 prompt, from the main entrance.	

Late Arrival / Early Dismissal

It is imperative that all learners arrive on time for the start of the school day – for their own learning and that of their classmates. If arriving after class has started, learners should be accompanied to their classroom by their parent / guardian. Learners who arrive more than 15 minutes late will be registered as late. If this occurs more than three times in one term a letter of concern will be issued and recorded.

If for any reason, a learner needs to arrive late or be dismissed early from school, an explanatory letter should be sent by the parent / guardian to the school's Senior Leadership Team in advance.

Late Pick-Ups and After-School Care Program (ASCP)

Learners who are more than 30 minutes late being picked up from school will be placed in the ASCP. Parents / guardians will be charged accordingly for the programme, and a letter of concern will be issued and recorded. If the occurrence is related to picking-up from Extended Curriculum Activities (ECA) it may result in expulsion from the ECA programme.

Absence

If a learner is to be absent, a member of BIS's Senior Leadership Team should be informed by official lines of communication. Reason for absence and anticipated length of absence should be included and updates given as necessary. If the absence is prolonged as a result of medical reasons (three or more days), a medical certificate should be presented.

Families are requested to respect the school's calendar when making travel plans, and schedule doctor, dentist and other appointments outside of school hours whenever possible.

Extended Curriculum Activities

The school provides a range of Extended Curriculum Activities for learners in kindergarten upwards. Information on the selection of activities is sent by email at the beginning of each term.

1.3 School Security Procedures

Access to the BIS Site – Visitors

All visitors to the school are required to report to gate security who will escort them to the school office where they are required to sign in.

Access to the BIS Site – Drop-off / Pick-up

The school gates will open at 0730 each morning. Before this time, there will be no staff on duty and learners will not be allowed on site for safety reasons. It is not permitted to leave learners unattended outside of the school gates. Gates reopen at 1300-1330, 1400-1430 and 1500-1530 for pick-up.

Access to Classrooms

Only parents / guardians of Nursery learners are allowed to accompany their children to the classroom during the first week of school starting school to help them settle in. All other parents / guardians should not enter the classrooms without being explicitly invited by a member of staff and / or having made an appointment.

Use of Cameras

For Safeguarding and Child Protection purposes, the use of photographic and other recording devices is not permitted on site unless authorization has been given by the management or Senior Leadership Team.

Authorized School Pick-up

If a learner is to be picked up by someone other than their parent / guardian; a Pick-up Authorization Form must be completed. Any last-minute changes or in the event that a person who is not named on the Pick-up Authorization Form will be picking up a learner; the Principal or Senior Leadership Team must be informed.

1.4 Snacks and Lunch

All through the day, be it before, during or after school; learners are supervised. This includes break and lunch time. Countless studies have shown that learners learn better when they have had regular opportunities to move freely and have physical exercise, especially outdoors.

Break Time

There is a 15 minute out-of-class (weather permitting), morning break allowing learners to consume a healthy snack and drink, and to use the bathroom. Parents / guardians should provide the healthy snack, daily. We discourage learners from eating part of their main lunch meal as their morning break snack as they will be left with no lunch if they finish all their packed meals.

Lunch Time

Lunch time is 45-60 minutes long, with learners' time being split between the eating areas and the playground (weather permitting). There are no staffed catering / cooking facilities on-site and thus all learners must bring their own ready-to-eat lunch with them daily.

Parents / guardians should ensure lunch boxes are easily identifiable. We encourage our learners to eat healthy and balanced lunches that include fruit and / or vegetables. We discourage lunch boxes that are regularly made up of sweets, chocolate, fizzy drinks, sugary juices and heavily fried food.

Drinks

Given the restricted access to drinking water in Sierra Leone (IE: it doesn't come out of the tap), we urge parents / guardians to ensure all learners attend school with enough water to see them through the day. This may require learners to be sent to school with two, full, reusable water bottles.

Fruity Friday Initiative (FFI)

We promote healthy foods and snacks such as fruit every day. However, on Fridays, learners are encouraged to bring freshly prepared fruit to share during our FFI.

FFI is a joint parent / school initiative to encourage learners to (i) explore different choices (ii) eat healthy snacks, and (iii) to be open-minded in their food choices.

Allergies - Banned Produce

BIS is a nut-free zone. This includes products that include or may include nuts, peanuts and seeds. Please see Annex 2 (*Nut-free Policy*) for full details.

1.5	Equipment
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From primary school and up, learners are expected to arrive at school each and every day with the necessary equipment to participate in learning:

- A pencil-case
- Pen
- Pencil and pencil sharpener
- Eraser
- Ruler
- Coloured pencils, pens or crayons
- A basic, mathematical instruments set (year 5+)
- USB stick (year 5+)

Please ensure all your child's belongings are clearly labeled with their name and class. Learners will be supplied with other necessary classroom materials, including notebooks, textbooks and arts and crafts supplies. Additional supply lists may be sent home by individual teachers during the school year.

For more information regarding learners' belongings and in particular - uniform - please refer to Annex A3 (Dress-code Policy).

1.6 Student Diary

Learner's Diary

From Kindergarten up; learners will be given a school diary to record their homework and upcoming activities and events. This diary is also used as a form of communication between home and school, it is vital that parents / guardians check the diary and sign it at least once a week.

1.7 Valuables and Lost & Found Items

Learners are asked not to bring valuables to school including laptops, tablets, and phones. Occasionally, learners may wish to bring valuable items into school as part of a project or other piece of school-related work. Under these circumstances, any valuables should be given to the school office for safekeeping. Unless items are deposited with the school office, the school takes no responsibility for the loss or theft of valuables.

A lost and found box is kept in the school office. We ask that all your child's articles be clearly labeled with his / her name. At the end of each term, any uncollected items are sent to a charitable organisation. The school accepts no responsibility for lost belongings.

1.8 Dangerous Items

Whilst at school, learners should not be in possession of anything that may pose a danger to themselves or others. Such items can include but aren't limited to: fireworks or other explosives, knives, guns, weapons or items that can be used as weapons, either real or imitation.

1.9 Emergency Procedures

Fire drills, evacuation and lockdown exercises are carried out regularly throughout the year. Parents visiting the school should contact the school office and/or read the signs posted around the school for more information, and to become familiar with emergency procedures, as well as referring to BIS's Health and Safety Policy for more information.

1.10 Fieldtrips and Offsite Activities

In order to give our learners a varied and rich education, BIS believes it's beneficial to take them out of the school setting for an extended period, so as to allow them to come into contact with different environments, and to encounter new experiences. Fieldtrips and offsite activities may take place for curricular, well-being, sporting or other extra-curricular reasons.

When possible, each class will usually attend two trips per academic year. These trips usually consist of one

curriculum-based fieldtrip (E.G: to Bunce Island as part of year 8's learning on the Atlantic Slave Trade) and one other offsite activity (E.G: attending the Chinese Gardens as part of Chinese New Year).

Some fieldtrips and offsite activities are included in the school fees. Others are subsidised, whilst others are not.

Learners participating in school trips are representatives of BIS. As such they are expected to abide by school rules, to follow appropriate standards of behavior and appearance, and to demonstrate maturity and concern for the wellbeing of themselves and others. If for any reason a learner's class teacher or the school's SLT believes that a learner is not capable of the aforementioned, they may not be permitted to attend a fieldtrip and / or other offsite activities.

Parents / guardians / learners are referred to BIS's *Behaviour Policy, Fieldtrips and Offsite Activities' Policy (Parents / Guardians)*, and *Health and Safety Policy* for more information.

1.11 Communication

Good communication between home and school is essential. The following information will assist you in identifying where information may be found and with whom you may wish to speak.

The school strives to model sustainable development and this means taking active steps to reduce our carbon footprint. Therefore, we have paperless communication whenever possible, and this can be summarised as follows:

- Formal Communication: The school will email parents with news about specific events, special announcements, fieldtrips ETC. In addition, all updates to school policies, procedures, documents and forms are sent via email, so it is very important that your email address is valid and that you check your email account regularly for school news. Additionally, each learner has a BIS diary (see chapter 1.6) which their class teacher may use to communicate directly with parents.
- Informal communication: The school uses online forums such as Clasdojo and WhatsApp to keep parents updated on school activities and/or changes to our normal routine at short notice. This may be due to school closure as a result of a national emergency, dangerous weather and/or last-minute confirmation by the government regarding a national holiday. We strongly recommend that you check these regularly to keep up-to-date with school events and activities.

1.12 Meeting the Team

To avoid being turned away due to schedule restraints, BIS requires and must insist that all parents / guardians arrange a meeting by phone to ensure (i) they're directed to the correct member of staff (ii) that the specific member of staff is available at the requested time (iii) that appointments made are recorded, and of course (iv) to ensure the school is aware of all visitors on site.

Appointments will be organized at the soonest possible opportunity at a time that suits both parents and staff.

Parents / guardians of students in the Early Years department are permitted to enter classrooms for drop-off and pick-up at the specified times (see 1.2 – The School Day) under certain circumstances only e.g illness, settling in. Parents / guardians in primary school are not permitted to enter their child's classroom without appointment and / or invite by the class teacher.

1.13 Personal Information

It is of utmost importance for the school to have complete and up-to-date information about all of its learners. Please ensure that you have submitted all the necessary paperwork that the school requests, including the Child-Pick up Authorization Form, the Parent Terms, Conditions and Commitments Form, and the Registration Form - which includes medical information and next of kin details. All new parents must complete a health form prior to joining the school.

If there are any necessary changes to be made to any of the details provided on the forms, please send them via email to: principal@bisme.org or info@bisme.org

Changes may refer to the following examples: your child contracts a communicable disease, your child develops an allergy, you / the other person listed under 'next of kin / emergency contact' leave town for more than one day.

1.14 Student Welfare

Parents are required to inform both their child's classroom Teacher and the SLT of any short or long-term health conditions, and any needs / requirements. If the child needs specific medication during the day, it is vital to communicate the administration details of this to the school, in writing, accompanied by a valid prescription. BIS cannot / will not administer drugs without written authorization from parents / guardians.

BIS is fully stocked and prepared to deal with the vast majority of injuries encountered in a school environment, including; cuts, grazes and sprains. However, should a more serious incident occur, parents / guardians will be notified immediately and the appropriate action will be taken as per the First Aid Responder's / SLT's judgement. This may include, in the absence of an available ambulance; driving a student to the hospital.

Parents / guardians / students are referred to BIS's Health and Safety Policy for full details on dealing with and managing learners' welfare and treatment.

1.15 Behaviour and School Rules

Many school rules are derived from and created as a result of BIS policies. All policies are created with and developed by BIS's staff and SLT, as well as the School Advisory Board and the Parent-Teacher Association.

Rules exist to ensure the school functions as a productive learning environment for everyone, whilst promoting (i) acceptable behaviour (ii) the safety of the BIS community and (iii) the development of each and every learner.

Parents / guardians / learners are referred to BIS's *Behaviour Policy* as well as the *Anti-bullying Policy* and *Health and Safety Policy* for more information on expected behaviour, and school rules.

1.16 Parent Volunteers

We like to involve our parents or other appropriate interested parties in the daily life of the school. Our parent / guardian population especially is extremely rich in experience, networks and culture, and we recognize that students benefit greatly from exposure to this. We welcome and encourage parents' / guardians' input in the following ways:

- Give a presentation on your country

- Demonstrate / teach your special talent in music, language, sports or crafts
- Host or chaperone fieldtrips or social events;
- Assist with the work and inclusion of students with additional learning needs
- Share your career experience or expertise with learners;
- Help out in the library.

This is of course not an exhaustive list and if you have time to spare and your own ideas then please let us know!

BIS has a strong commitment to the protection and safeguarding of its learners, and thus parents who are regularly scheduled to volunteer or who are employed to work on-site in any capacity are required to submit a C.V. with professional references and a police clearance certificate.

1.17 School Library

The school has its own, ever-growing library with books and publications to suit all of our learners. All learners are taught the rules of the library, including checking out books only via the librarian, checking books in before passing them onto a friend, and looking after them carefully both in school, and at home.

If a learner loses or damages a book beyond acceptable repair; the bill will be sent to the parent / guardian. Each damaged book will be charged between \$20-\$50.

Studies have shown that benefits of reading include but aren't limited to: improved concentration, increased vocabulary and language skills, development of imagination and empathy and overall increased scholastic improvement. Given the wonderful array of benefits of reading, all learners are encouraged to read, with primary school classes having a dedicated 30 minutes of reading each day. Learners are also encouraged to read at home.

1.18 School Advisory Board

The School Advisory Board works with the school's management and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) in an advisory capacity to improve administration and facilities.

The board is made up of parents and guardians who have shown an interest in children's education and welfare, and therefore make a valuable contribution to the school's programme by guiding and providing support as an adviser, mediator and facilitator between the principal, parents and staff.

The Advisory Board generally meets three times per academic year.

1.19 Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)

The BIS PTA is a registered non-profit organisation, the main purpose of which is as follows:

- To support and advance the moral, academic, cultural and physical growth of all BIS learners
- To promote understanding and cooperation amongst and between learners, parents, and teachers, as well as the community at large
- To submit proposals to BIS's Advisory Board and SLT regarding any observed needs of the school community in general and its learners in particular

- To mobilize resources for activities, to provide additional support, and advance the welfare and education of all learners

At the discretion of the PTAEA (Parent-Teacher Executive Committee) the association can provide a forum for the discussion of important issues, and where appropriate; inform the SLT and Advisory Board of the opinions of the members of the committee.

All parents / guardians of learners enrolled at BIS are automatically members of the PTA. At the beginning of each school year, parents / guardians will receive a PTA annual contribution form. BIS urges parents / guardians to remember that the PTA can thrive and fulfil its duties only through the contribution of each and every one of them.

The PTA welcomes participation from all parents / guardians and encourages them all to contribute in any way they can.

1.20	Student Council
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All learners are represented by their peers via the Student Council. This body usually and ideally consists of learners from Secondary School year groups, which are elected by all of the learners in Key Stage 3 and 4

The Student Council is consulted on important decisions regarding learners in the school and is mandated to represent individuals and groups of learners on the PTA.

Chapter 2 – Safeguarding, Child Protection and Student Wellbeing

2.1 Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

BIS is committed to maintaining the highest standards in the area of Child Protection and has a very clear *Child Protection and safeguarding Policy* (Annex A8) addressing the school's and individuals' responsibilities to protect the children in our care. If any member of the community has any questions or concerns about Child Protection or our policy regarding it, they should contact either the Principal or the PTA School Wellbeing Sub-committee.

2.2 Support for All

BIS and the BIS School Wellbeing Sub-committee of the PTA is dedicated to supporting each learner by promoting positive attitudes, choices, and behaviors. The sub-committee's objective is to support both the school's mission and objectives, and aims to:

- Develop transferable skills in compassionate thinking, self-development and self-management
- Develop skills to resolve conflict peacefully
- Promote the development of physical health, ethics and social behavior
- Encourage lifelong learning
- Provide an environment where learners feel secure and welcome
- Promote respect for the rights of everyone

The School Wellbeing Sub-committee's ethos is to encourage everyone in our school community to promote and maintain appropriate conduct, and this is characterized as behavior which:

- Values and respects the rights of others, especially the right to learn
- Fosters a happy, safe and secure environment
- Recognizes that each member of the BIS community is unique
- Treats others fairly
- Expects members of the community to take responsibility for their actions
- Promotes compassion and tolerance
- Values and respects others and their differences
- Addresses inappropriate behavior
- Upholds the school's mission, objectives and ethos

2.3 Responsibilities and Rights

All learners and members of the BIS community have rights and responsibilities, the predominant ones of which include:

Learners have a right to:	Learners have a responsibility to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn and play in a safe and clean environment - Learn and play in a supportive environment - Be respected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actively promote safe and clean practices whilst at school

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access adequate and appropriate facilities - Express their opinion - Express themselves in an appropriate manner - Privacy - Learning experiences which cater to individual requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participate in school activities to the best of their ability - Respect the rights of others - Care for school facilities in a respectful manner - Tolerate opinions of others - Express themselves in a socially acceptable way - Allow others their privacy - Respect the learning styles of peers - Report perceived bullying
<p>Parents have a right to:</p>	<p>Parents have a responsibility to:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be respected by staff, learners and the wider community - Feel welcomed at our school - Have their child's full potential realised within the limitations of available resources - Meet with staff and discuss issues relating to school policies, procedures, and their child's progress - Have their opinions valued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show respect towards staff, learners and the wider BIS community - Model appropriate behavior, including language, and express themselves in a socially acceptable way - Be available to discuss their child's progress - Ensure their child is sent to school prepared to be involved whilst adhering to relevant policies - Allow others their privacy - Report welfare concerns

Declaration (page 1 of 2)

The British International School requires parents / guardians to acknowledge that they have read, understood, and agree to abide by the information, guidelines, rules and procedures provided in this School Handbook, including any referenced secondary sources and annexes.

The British International School also requires and expects that parents / guardians commit to teaching their child about the contents of this School Handbook, including any referenced secondary sources and annexes. Learners are expected to be aware of and agree to abide by the information, guidelines, rules and procedures within.

The declaration pages can either be printed, signed and handed to a member of SLT, or signed electronically and emailed to principal@bisme.org Completed declarations must be received before a student's first day in school (new students) and/or the start of the new academic year (existing / returning students).

3.1 Parental / Guardian Agreement and Consent

I have read, understood and agree to abide by all of the information, guidelines, rules and procedures within this School Handbook, including any referenced secondary sources and annexes.

I have conveyed the information, guidelines, rules and procedures to my child(ren) using age-appropriate language and acknowledge that he/she/they have understood the contents of the aforementioned despite the language and way I have chosen to convey the content to them.

Name:	
Relationship to learner:	
Contact telephone numbers:	
Learner(s) name(s):	
Learners(s) class(es):	
Signature:	
Date:	

NB: Learner declaration(s) can be found on the next page

Declaration (page 2 of 2)

3.2 Learner Agreement and Consent (Learner 1)

I have read, understood and agree to abide by all of the information, guidelines, rules and procedures within this School Handbook, including any referenced secondary sources and annexes.

I have had and spent enough time with my parents / guardians going through the information, guidelines, rules and procedures and have had the opportunity to ask questions about anything I am unsure of.

learner's name:	
Learner's class:	
Signature:	
Date:	

3.2 Learner Agreement and Consent (Learner 2)

I have read, understood and agree to abide by all of the information, guidelines, rules and procedures within this School Handbook, including any referenced secondary sources and annexes.

I have had and spent enough time with my parents / guardians going through the information, guidelines, rules and procedures and have had the opportunity to ask questions about anything I am unsure of.

Learner's name:	
Learner's class:	
Signature:	
Date:	

3.2 Learner Agreement and Consent (Learner 3)

I have read, understood and agree to abide by all of the information, guidelines, rules and procedures within this School Handbook, including any referenced secondary sources and annexes.

I have had and spent enough time with my parents / guardians going through the information, guidelines, rules and procedures and have had the opportunity to ask questions about anything I am unsure of.

Learner's name:	
Learner's class:	
Signature:	
Date:	

Annexes (A1-A8)

A1	Fieldtrip and Offsite Activities' Policy (Parents / Guardians)
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A2	Information Communications Technology and Digital Learning Resources Policy
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A3	Nut-free Policy
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A4	Dress-code Policy
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A5	Behaviour Policy
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A6	Anti-bullying Policy
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A7	Health and Safety Policy
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A8	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
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Fieldtrips and Offsite Activities' Policy (Parents / Guardians)

Introduction and Scope

To give learners a varied and rich education, the British International School (BIS) believes it is beneficial to take them out of the school setting for an extended period so as to allow them to come into contact with different environments, and to encounter new experiences. Fieldtrips and offsite activities (encompassed within this policy as 'trips') may take place for curricular, well-being, sporting or other extra-curricular reasons.

By their very nature, trips involve a variety of risks and, therefore, require careful and stringent organisation for which BIS staff will adequately prepare learners and materials. BIS will balance the possible benefits of a trip with an assessment of risks and plan accordingly. The relevant Senior Leadership Team members (SLT) will approve any trip in advance as per the timelines listed in the *Fieldtrip and Offsite Activities' Policy (Staff)*.

This *Fieldtrip and Offsite Activities' Policy (Parents / Guardians)* provides many of the necessary guidelines, expectations and offers advice to parents / guardians. The SLT welcomes suggestions and feedback to help improve this and any other policy.

Trip Categories

There are four categories of trip:

Lesson Trip	Within the allocated classroom time of a teacher
Day Trip	During school hours
Extended Day Trip	Departing or arriving outside of normal school hours
Overnight Trip	A trip requiring overnight accommodation

Expectations and Responsibilities of Staff / Other Accompanying Adults

Staff associated with any trip are obligated to ensure they're aware and abide by legal and moral responsibilities involved before agreeing to organize, lead or accompany any trip. Other authorized, accompanying adults (such as parents) are obliged to do the same.

Any, and all authorized adults accompanying, organizing or leading are required to read, understand and stringently follow the requirements laid out in the *Fieldtrips and Offsite Activities' Policy (Staff)* both during the preparation period and whilst on the trip.

Each trip will have a 'fieldtrip leader' (FTL). Despite whether a trip is the idea of, and mainly planned by a parent or another, non-BIS Employee, an FTL will and must always be a BIS member of staff.

All authorized adults accompanying the trip are expected to model and maintain appropriate and mature conduct, consistent with expectations of a school environment.

Expectations and Responsibilities of Learners

The school will always take time before any trip to ensure learners are aware and are remind of the expectations in regard to their conduct and behaviour during any trip.

- Usual school rules and expectations as per the *Behaviour Policy* and *Dress-code Policy* apply to all learners
- Any serious breach of behaviour (smoking, alcohol, violence, aggressive language, breaking curfew ETC) shall be met with appropriate sanctions by the FTL in liaison with other accompanying BIS staff. Any action will also be followed up with appropriate sanctions upon return to BIS. A learner's action that endangers the safety and / or welfare of him / herself, or of others, is likely to be returned to school / home at the parents' / guardians' expense
- Specific rules concerning the use of music-playing devices, handheld electronic games, portable computers / tablets, and mobile phones will apply on trips. The FTL will inform learners and parents / guardians when these electronic devices may be used. Learners must switch off any electronic device when requested to do so by staff or other designated responsible adults (EG: field centre staff)
- Where deemed appropriate; students and parents / guardians may be asked to sign a behaviour contract as part of a *Student Trip Code of Conduct (Annex i)*, specific to the trip outlining the rules and expectations

Expectations and Responsibilities of Parents / Guardians

- Parents / guardians are required to provide medical and emergency information details on their child's *Registration Form*, and should ensure the school is aware of any special health conditions and medical needs that may have occurred since that form was submitted
- For all trips; parents will receive written notifications from BIS, notifying them of the details and expectations of the trip. When necessary / requested; parents / guardians should provide written permission for their child(ren) to participate at least one week before the departure date using the *Parental Notification and Permission Document (Annex ii)*
- Parents / guardians are required to follow any payment schedule issued by the school to ensure their child's inclusion on any trip
- Parents / guardians are expected to attend any required meetings regarding fieldtrips and offsite activities
- Parents / guardians must ensure their child arrives in school / other rendezvous point promptly so that the trip can commence as planned
- Parents / guardians are encouraged to remind their child of the dangers and thus; higher expectations of their behaviour whilst on the trip.

Effective / Review Dates

This policy is effective from: 1st September 2022 and supersedes all previous policies regarding Fieldtrips and Offsite Activities (Parent / Guardian).

This policy is due for review and republication on: 1st September 2024.

Annex i - Exemplar Learners Trip Code of Conduct

Learners Trip Code of Conduct	
Trip title:	Bunce Island Historical Tour
Trip type:	Overnight Trip
Trip period:	27.05.2019 – 28.05.2019
Trip purpose:	To learn about Sierra Leone's strategic location and contribution to the Transatlantic slave trade during C16 th -C19 th
Key trip activities:	Cells tour, dock tour, museum tour, traditional entertainment, craft market

The British International School (BIS) wishes to provide its learners with a varied and rich education. BIS believes it is beneficial to take learners out of the school setting from time to time in order to allow them to come into contact with different environments and encounter new experiences.

BIS expects all learners participating in fieldtrips and / or offsite activities to abide by the usual school rules and expectations as set out in the *School Handbook*, and to conduct themselves with maturity and respect for others as well as for the environment around them. Failure to do so jeopardizes participation in future trips.

Given that by their very nature; trips often take place in unfamiliar environments, they pose an increased risk factor. BIS must therefore establish additional, trip-specific expectations of participating students:

1. Learners are expected to show the same respect to field-center staff as they do to school staff
2. Possession and consumption of alcohol, and / or smoking of any kind is not permitted on trips
3. The fieldtrip leader (FTL) has the authority to ensure learners observe an evening curfew and to respect time-limits on recreation offered during the day. The FTL will set-out these time limits clearly for learners, and they must adhere to these
4. Learners are allowed to bring music playing devices, handheld electronic games, tablets, and mobile telephones. Please note that these items are carried entirely at the students' own risk and they may only be used at times designated by the FTL
5. When taking photographs of people they encounter on the trip, learners should consider and be sensitive to the feelings of those being captured and when possible; seek their permission. If in doubt learners should consult a member of staff
6. Learners are not allowed to leave the trip group whilst unaccompanied or without the permission of the FTL
7. Whilst on the boat / bus learners are expected to closely follow the instructions of staff. This includes remaining seated and wearing a lifejacket / seatbelt
8. Learners who violate rules / expectations or whose actions place themselves or others in danger may be required to leave the trip and return home at their parents' expense. Failing this, learners may face suspension on returning to school.

Learner Behaviour Contract

Please complete and return to school with your Parental Notification and Permission Document

Declaration:	In witness of my parent(s) / guardian(s) I understand and accept that attending a fieldtrip requires me to follow the rules and fulfil the expectations of BIS as detailed in the <i>School Handbook</i> . I understand and accept that there are further rules and even higher expectations than usual on fieldtrips (as listed above) and I promise, in order to stay safe; to follow all rules and attempt to fulfil all expectations at all times.	
Learner's Name / Class:		
Learner's Signature:		
Parent Signature:		
Date:		

Annex ii – Exemplar Parental Notification & Permission Document - to be modified as appropriate for each trip

Parental Notification and Permission		
Trip title / location:	Bunce Island Historical Tour	Bunce Island
Trip period:	XX.XX.XXXX – XX.XX.XXXX	
Trip purpose:	For students to interact with and learn about Sierra Leone's strategic location and contribution to the transatlantic slave trade during C16 th -C19 th	
Key trip activities:	Cells tour, dock tour, museum tour, traditional entertainment, craft market	
Cost of trip:	Le.xxxxxxx per student	
Payment schedule:	In full by XX.XX.XXXX	
Cost inclusions:	All transport to / from Bunce Island, insurance, overnight accommodation, all meals	

Dear Parents / Guardians,

The British International School (BIS) wishes to provide its learners with a varied and rich education. BIS believes it is beneficial to take learners out of the school setting from time to time in order to allow them to come into contact with different environments and encounter new experiences. For these reasons your child is being offered the opportunity to attend the above fieldtrip.

Non-refundable payment is due in full by the above date. Should you need to cancel your child's attendance, or if your child's health prevents him / her from attending, we're unfortunately unable to refund any of the payment. This is due to the policy of the tour agency assisting BIS with the trip. Non-refund of payment also applies should your child exhibit behaviour before / during the trip that BIS considers unacceptable and thus withdraws permission of attendance based on that child's actions.

As per all overnight trips, parents / guardians are required to attend a compulsory Parent / Guardian Trip Meeting at 1530, on 07.02.2019 at BIS. This meeting will cover all aspects and details of the trip and is only for the parents / guardians who have (i) completed and returned the bottom of this form, and (ii) followed the above payment schedule.

Kind regards,

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Fieldtrip Leader

Parent Notification and Permission

Please complete and return to school in a sealed envelope addressed to the Principal (where necessary along with full payment)

Declaration:	I have read and understood the above information and give permission for my child / children named below to attend this trip
Trip:	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Child(ren)'s Name(s)	
Parent's Signature:	
Date:	
Medical info:	
Emergency contact 1:	

Information Communication Technology and Digital Learning Resources Policy

Introduction and Scope

The British International School (BIS) aims to foster appropriate use of digital technologies and to establish attitudes and behavior that will protect the students, the school and its I.C.T. resources, and the BIS community as a whole.

This Policy consists of two main parts:

Acceptable use of Information Communications Technology (I.C.T.) at BIS: Specific rules relating to the use of the school's IT systems and resources.

Guidelines for the use of digital technologies:

General advice relating to the use of all digital technology, including social media, both within and outside the school environment. The technologies and resources covered include but are not restricted to:

- Shared classroom technology
- Local and wireless network resources
- Cloud based systems and resources provided by BIS
- Use of other digital resources
- Data protection and security
- Privacy and e-safety

All staff, students and parents are expected to read the Acceptable Use Policy below;

Acceptable Use of I.C.T. Policy

BIS's I.C.T. resources, including Internet access, are provided primarily for educational purposes. Staff and students are responsible for good behavior and judgement in this digital environment just as they are in the physical school environment.

Please remember that access to BIS's I.C.T. resources is a privilege, not a right, and that access requires responsibility and prior permission. Individual users of the school's resources are responsible for their behavior, actions and communications.

Shared Classroom Technology

The school provides a wide range of classroom technology resources including online learning programmes, laptops, projectors, workstations and mobile devices.

Staff and students are expected to treat these resources with care and respect. Damage to any equipment should be reported, as soon as it is detected, to the I.C.T. Coordinator.

Procedures for the loan and return of shared resources should be strictly followed.

Users must not change physical connections or alter in any way the configuration of the classroom technology, without the authorization of the I.C.T. Coordinator and then only on the clear understanding that it will be returned to the original settings after use.

Local and Wireless Network Resources

Access to the local network and the wireless network is permitted through generic accounts held by the school staff. In either case, accessing the network implies that staff and students have read and understood our Acceptable Use of I.C.T. Policy.

This Policy is in place to protect all users (staff and students) and our network. Any attempt to bypass the access permissions set by the school to internal or external locations will be considered a serious breach of this Policy.

Under no circumstances should any staff or student install, or attempt to install, any software or change or adjust any of the security permissions for any device.

Cloud-based Systems and Resources

BIS aims to provide a wide and constantly evolving collection of online systems and resources, many of which require users to login with personal account names and passwords. Such account details should be carefully protected and should not be divulged to, or shared with, any other person except teachers and parents.

It is extremely important to ensure that students are properly logged out from any secure system that are accessed through a shared BIS device. If in the event that another user has left a personal account open, students are expected to sign out of the account immediately or inform a teacher.

Sending an inappropriate or unauthorized message from another user's account is considered a serious breach of the Acceptable Use of I.C.T. Policy. Please do not synchronize personal data from an online system on any shared device.

Should any staff or student suspect that one or more of their personal accounts may have been compromised they must inform the I.C.T coordinator immediately.

Use of Other Digital Resources

The following points relate specifically to use of the internet and social media and are intended to cover the areas where there might be serious, and possibly legal implications for the student and/or the school.

Staff and students should:

- Respect minimum age limits for accessing social network sites (E.G: age 13 for Facebook)
- Not intentionally access, transmit, copy, or create material that would be considered inappropriate. This includes but is not limited to, messages or materials that are pornographic, threatening, rude, discriminatory, or meant to harass
- Respect and protect the intellectual property of others. Not infringe upon copyright or intellectual property rights. This includes, but is not limited to making and/or distributing illegal copies of music, games, or movies
- Not use the resources to further any acts that are criminal
- Not to use the resources to send spam, chain letters, or other unsolicited mass mailings
- Not buy, sell, advertise, or otherwise conduct business through BIS resources or systems
- Not commit acts of plagiarism. Always give full acknowledgement of the sources for any materials or ideas submitted as course work or assignments

Personal Electronic Devices (Students only)

Students are not permitted to bring mobile phones, tablets, laptops, music devices, electronic games, or other similar devices to school unless (i) for educational purposes and (ii) with permission from a member of staff. **With or without permission:** BIS cannot and will not accept any responsibility for any loss of, theft of and/or damage to students' personal electronic devices and/or other valuables.

Online Learning Subscriptions (Students only)

Students of almost all year groups at BIS are subscribed to a plethora of online learning and sharing platforms. At the time of compilation of this Policy these platforms include:

IXL

Literacy Planet

Purple Mash

Education City

CK-12

Seneca

Kognity

Learning Ladders (Homework Platform)

As platforms specifically created for and directed towards school children, the above list conforms to the standards expected by BIS. However, parents are strongly encouraged to play a part in their child's online usage opportunities at home.

Data Protection

Staff and students should:

- Use only assigned accounts to access BIS systems and/or resources
- Not attempt to view, use, or copy passwords, data, or networks to which they are not authorised
- Never attempt to install unauthorised software
- Report any suspected violations or vulnerabilities immediately to the Teacher
- Observe all network security practices, as posted
- Not delete, edit or move data or other resources that do not belong to them

Privacy and E-safety

These points on good e-citizenship and e-safety are listed here for emphasis. Staff and students should:

- Respect and protect the privacy of others.
- Do not post online or otherwise distribute private information about others or themselves
- Report any incident which gives them any cause to feel threatened / uncomfortable immediately

Supervision and Monitoring of I.C.T. Resources

School and network administrators monitor the use of I.C.T. resources to help ensure that use is secure and conforms to the school's standards. BIS reserves the right to examine, use and disclose any data found on the school's networks or information systems to further the health, safety, welfare, discipline or security of any student or other person, or to protect property.

BIS can and will monitor user accounts and internet access and keep logs of inappropriate activities. Please use our I.C.T. resources thoughtfully and responsibly. We may also use this information in disciplinary actions, and will, where appropriate, furnish evidence of crime to law enforcement agencies in line with Sierra Leone and international law.

Consequences for Violation

Violations of any of these rules and expectations may result in disciplinary action, including the loss of a staff's or student's privileges to use the school's I.C.T. resources, suspension and / or expulsion, disciplinary action for the staff member.

Guidelines for Use of Digital Technologies

New digital technologies mean that access to I.C.T. resources at BIS extends beyond the physical boundaries of the school and that the distinctions between school and home are not as clear cut as they once were.

Please carefully read the following guidelines and notes on the use of digital technologies as they apply to Employees, students, parents and the wider BIS community (known herein as the 'BIS Community').

Classroom Use of social media

The BIS Community is expected to refrain from accessing social network sites during school hours unless expressly asked to do so as part of a class activity. Staff members are required to limit class activities to approved online tools.

Classroom Use of Other Public Online Applications

Where online tools are used to share information with students or about the class or school, appropriate care must be taken regarding content and security. Specifically, no photos should include names of the children in the photos and no student / parent names or contact details should be displayed.

Contributions to Social Media and Online Forums

When posting messages to BIS social media forums or blogs, the BIS Community should use appropriate etiquette and avoid posts or responses that could be misinterpreted, upset, or offend any persons.

Social Media Relationships with Students, Alumni and Parents

Staff are instructed not to initiate or accept social media 'friend requests' from current students (of any age) or former students under the age of 18.

Staff and parents of current / prospective students are discouraged from “friending” each other due to the inherent conflicts of interest that may arise.

Social Networking Sites

Social networking sites usually have a minimum age for membership. Staff members who see children under this age using these sites are asked to report the incident to the School Leadership Team (SLT).

Privacy Settings

On most sites, privacy settings can be changed at any time to limit searchability and access to profiles. Students and Employees should be prudent in allowing access to their online content, consistent with other requirements of this Policy.

Use of BIS Email Accounts

Messages sent from BIS email addresses should not include content that would reflect poorly on the sender or the school.

Data Protection

Staff and students must ensure that their online accounts are protected with strong passwords. A ‘strong’ password may include a lowercase letter, and uppercase letter, a symbol and a number.

Passwords for accounts such as email and social media should not be shared with anyone except parents. Passwords for accounts such as subscribed BIS online learning and sharing platforms (E.G: Literacy Planet) should not be shared with anyone except parents and teachers.

Passwords should be changed immediately if there is any reason to believe an account has been or may be compromised (or shared) by another students for example.

E-safety

The BIS Community should ensure that they understand all the risks that digital technologies create and have clear strategies in place to minimize the impact of these risks.

E-safety is taken very seriously at BIS. It is incorporated into some of the activities that will be led by the PTA School Wellbeing sub-committee and there will workshops and presentations that parents can attend where they can learn more and discuss these issues with teachers.

Emerging Technologies

As new technologies and technology initiatives emerge, it may be necessary to make changes to this Policy. Where such changes are significant, prior to the policy review date as listed below; these will be communicated directly to students and their parents.

Further Information, Guidelines and Regulations

BIS Employees are directed to the school’s Communication Policy for further information, guidance and regulations, and in particular, to the following relevant chapters:

Electronic Devices

- Photography, Videoing, Voice Recordings and Other
- WhatsApp / Email Communications
- BIS Wi-Fi and Electronic Devices
- Social Media
- Sensitive Information

Effective / Review Dates

This policy is effective from: **1st September 2022** and supersedes all previous I.C.T.D.L.R. policies. This policy is due for review and republication on; **1st September 2024**.

Nut-free Policy

Introduction and Scope

The British International School (BIS) is a nut-free school. Although BIS recognises that this cannot be guaranteed, we aim to be as nut-free as possible. This policy serves to set out all measures to reduce the risk to those children and adults who may suffer an anaphylactic reaction if exposed to nuts to which they are sensitive. The school aims to protect children who have allergies to nuts yet also help them, as they grow up, to take responsibility as to what foods they can eat and to be aware of where they may be put at risk. We do not allow nuts or nut products in school lunch boxes.

Banned Products / Foodstuffs

Our 'Nut-free Policy' means that the following items are NOT allowed to be brought into school by any child or adult (please be aware that these are some common examples and this list is not exhaustive).

- Groundnut sauce / soup
- Packs of nuts
- Peanut butter / peanut butter sandwiches
- Nutella / Nutella sandwiches
- Fruit and cereal bars that contain nuts
- Chocolate bars or sweets that contain nuts
- Sesame seed / sesame seed rolls (children allergic to nuts may also have a severe reaction to sesame)
- Cakes made with nuts

Our in-house policy is to not use nuts (such as during after-school cooking club). However, we cannot guarantee freedom from nut traces. We cannot allow any sweets, treats or cakes brought in from home to be given out as birthday treats – so please ensure these are nut-free if / when coming to school with such foodstuffs on your child's birthday to avoid disappointment.

Definition

Anaphylaxis (also known as anaphylactic shock) is an allergic condition that can be severe and potentially fatal.

Anaphylaxis is your body's immune system reacting badly to a substance (an allergen), such as food, which it wrongly perceives as a threat. The whole body can be affected, usually within minutes of contact with an allergen, although sometimes the reaction can happen hours later.

Staff

Staff must ensure they do not bring in or consume nut products in school and ensure they follow good hand washing practice if recent consumption / handling has happened prior to entering school.

Caution must be taken at certain times of year such as Easter and Eid. If staff distribute confectionary, care must be taken to ensure that no nuts are included in the product. Fruit sweets such as Haribo are a better alternative than chocolate that may contain nuts.

All product packaging must be checked for warnings directed at nut allergy sufferers and if the following or similar is displayed, the product must not be brought into school:

- 'Not suitable for nut allergy sufferers'
- 'This product contains nuts'

- 'This product may contain traces of nuts'

Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians must notify staff of any known or suspected allergy to nuts and provide all medical and necessary information. This will be added to the child's file.

Homemade snacks or party food contributions must have a label clearly detailing ingredients, and the environment where the food was prepared must be nut-free. If you are unsure about a selection please speak to a staff member before bringing the food item into school.

The school requests that parents and guardians strictly observe the Nut-free Policy and therefore do not include nuts or products that contain nuts, or traces of nuts, in any packed lunches and snacks.

Given the severity and risk to children with nut allergies, the school will confiscate any and all products containing nuts, and parents / guardians will be called to the school for a meeting to discuss the risks of their / their child's actions.

Children

All children are regularly reminded about the good hygiene practice of washing hands before and after eating which helps to reduce the risk of secondary contamination. Likewise, children are reminded and are supervised to minimise the act of food sharing with their friends.

Symptoms

The symptoms of anaphylaxis usually start between three and sixty minutes after contact with the allergen. Less commonly they can occur a few hours or even days after contact.

An anaphylactic reaction may lead to feeling unwell or dizzy or may cause fainting due to a sudden drop in blood pressure. Narrowing of the airways can also occur at the same time, with or without the drop-in blood pressure. This can cause breathing difficulties and wheezing.

Other symptoms:

- Swollen eyes, lips, genitals, hands, feet and other areas (this is called angioedema)
- Itching
- Sore, red, itchy eyes
- Changes in heart rate
- A sudden feeling of extreme anxiety or apprehension
- Itchy skin or nettle-rash (hives)
- Unconsciousness due to very low blood pressure
- Abdominal cramps, vomiting or diarrhoea, or nausea and fever

Anaphylaxis varies in severity. Sometimes it causes only mild itchiness and swelling, but in some people; it can cause sudden death. If symptoms start soon after contact with the allergen and rapidly worsens, this indicates that the reaction is more severe.

If any of the above symptoms appear to be manifesting in children with known allergens, a First Aid Responder must be called immediately.

At the time of compilation of this Policy, BIS First Aid Responders are:

1	Jenny Condron	Principal
2	Julia Kamara	Administration
4	Mohamed Manasaray	P.E. Teacher
5	Apolonia Mukashuri	Designated Safeguarding Lead
6	Buhle Mpala	Early Years Lead

Further Guidance

Further guidance (external)

- Managing Medicines in Schools and Early Years Settings (DfE 2005)

Further guidance (internal)

- Educare: Administration of Medication in Schools – Level 2, 1 module, 2 CPD credits
- Educare: First Aid Essentials for International Schools 2018 – Level 2, 3 modules, 3 CPD credits
- Educare: Food Hygiene and Safety 2018 – Level 2, 4 modules, 4 CPD credits

Effective / Review Dates

This policy is effective from: **1st September 2022.**

This policy is due for review and republication on: **1st September 2024**

Dress-code Policy

Introduction and Scope

At the British International School (BIS) we're proud of what our uniform represents: to be a part of a family, coming together as one; to learn, grow and develop. This is deeply engrained in our ethos and so: we insist that all students wear the appropriate items when attending school for the following reasons:

- To establish and enhance the image of the school
- To establish school spirit and a sense of belonging
- To identify the students with the school
- To ensure students are safely and appropriately dressed for school and specific activities
- To encourage equality amongst students and support our commitment to inclusion
- To prepare students for their work life
- It's practical and smart

Despite encouraging individuality and being aware of cultural differences and preferences, BIS requires its students to follow a dress-code that is generally considered appropriate for both the school and work environment, and thus; effective training on expectations for later in life.

Uniform brief, Primary – High School:

Regular School Day Uniform	
Girls	Boys
School-blue shirt or polo (with logo), yellow shirt or polo (primary school) White shirt or Polo for Secondary School (with school's logo)	School-blue shirt or polo (with logo) yellow shirt or polo (primary school) White shirt or Polo for Secondary School (with school's logo)
Knee-length navy blue skirts, shorts or trousers	Knee-length navy blue shorts or trousers
Black, dark grey or navy-blue footwear (without logos)	Black, dark grey or navy-blue footwear (without logos)

P.E. Kit	
Girls	Boys
Plain white tee shirt	Plain white t-shirt
Navy blue or black Knee-length, sports-appropriate shorts Sports-appropriate trousers (Plain design)	Navy blue or black Knee-length, sports-appropriate shorts Sports-appropriate trousers (Plain design)
Comfortable, sports-appropriate footwear navy, dark grey or white	Comfortable, sports-appropriate footwear navy, dark grey or white

Name tags

All school clothing (including accessories such as backpacks) should be clearly marked with the students' name.

Jewellery

Students are not permitted to wear excess jewellery in school but may wear some simple jewellery. The following has been deemed acceptable by BIS: a single ring, a bracelet or watch, one set of stud earrings, a single necklace (to be worn inside clothing). These allowances are for both boys and girls.

Jewellery (cont.)

Ear stretchers and other facial piercings are not permitted.

For health and safety reasons: all jewellery must be removed for P.E. lessons.

Cosmetics

Wearing cosmetics is not permitted in Early Years or Primary School. Secondary School students may wear some cosmetic products, but it is expected that the amount remains appropriate. The allowance does not include bright lipstick, bright nail varnish, nor fake nails / eyelashes.

Any students not conforming to this rule will be asked to wash it off / remove the items.

Haircuts / styles / colours and accessories

BIS has clear views on suitable haircuts / styles / colours and accessories. Students are not permitted to attend school with a hair colour not considered natural (E.G., green or blue).

Students should not have tramlines or other patterns cut into their hair, nor should they have hairstyles considered 'radical' such as a Mohican. Extravagant hair accessories and decorations are also not permitted whilst attending BIS.

For health and safety reasons, hair that is shoulder-length or longer should be tied back.

Tattoos

Any students with tattoos must have them covered up at all times.

Footwear

For health and safety reasons we do not allow children to wear shoes with platform soles or high heels. All children are required to wear plain black, navy blue or dark grey shoes or trainers, without logos.

Footwear should be comfortable and supportive; allowing students to move freely in a variety of environments. Open-toed footwear including sandals and flipflops are not permitted.

Boots are also not permitted unless in adverse weather condition in which case; students must bring school-appropriate footwear with them to change into once arriving.

Socks / legwear

Students should wear only navy blue or white socks or tights for schools. Leggings should not be worn either on their own or underneath a skirt.

Headwear

Headwear is not allowed in the school buildings unless for religious or other justified reasons. Hats and caps maybe worn outside in the sun but should follow the same styling rules as for footwear: plain black, navy blue or dark grey, without logos.

Outerwear

Coats, jackets, jumpers and other necessary, non-uniform clothing items should follow the same styling rules as footwear and headwear: plain black, navy blue or dark grey, without logos. 'Hoodies' are not permitted.

The Role of Parents / Guardians

At BIS, we believe it is the responsibility of the parents / guardians to ensure that their child has the correct uniform and P.E. kit, and that it is clean, in good repair and has the child's name written on all items. If a parent has difficulties for any reason with fulfilling this request, they are asked to speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to discuss the issues. Parents should be assured that we will do all we can to help.

Parents / guardians of children who arrive at school wearing non-school uniform or without their P.E. kit will be contacted to discuss the matter, as detailed below.

The school welcomes children from all backgrounds and faith communities. If there are serious reasons, for example on religious grounds, why parents want their child to wear clothes that differ from the school uniform, the school will consider such requests sympathetically. If any parent would like to request a modification to the Dress-code Policy they should, in the first instance, contact a member of the SLT.

Early Years

Given the age of our Early Years students, there is no specific dress-code for them. Parents are expected to dress their child in school-appropriate clothing and footwear that is suitable for a variety of activities, including:

- Painting
- Playground activities
- Dancing
- Other physical activities

Procedures for Managing Non-compliance with the Dress-code Policy

First incident: A reminder to the student

Second-Third incident: Phone call home

Fourth incident: Formal letter home and recorded on student file

Fifth incident: Formal meeting requested with the Principal

Sixth incident: Escalated to the Board of Governors

*****See the uniform Requirements for guidance**

Effective / Review Dates

This policy is effective from: 1st September 2022 and supersedes all previous Dress-code Policies.
This policy is due for review and republication on: 1st September 2024.

Behaviour Policy

Introduction and Scope

The British International School (BIS) believes that the maintenance and promotion of good discipline and desirable behaviour is of paramount importance for the growth, welfare and development of students. Students should be given clear expectations, effective pastoral support, and opportunities to build good social relationships. These aims are backed up by a system of rewards and where necessary, appropriate sanctions.

This Behaviour Policy has been referenced and will make reference to the following policies and documents, and should be read and considered alongside them; *Anti-bullying Policy*, *Health and Safety Policy*, *Child Protection Policy*, *Fieldtrip and Offsite Policy*, and the *School Handbook*.

School Policies and Standards

The school exists for the benefit of its students and thus all staff, parents / guardians, the students themselves and the rest of the BIS community are required to work together in a spirit of cooperation and understanding. Students are actively encouraged to fulfil their potential academically, in sports, the arts and any other school activities. Students are expected to behave considerately towards others in a socially acceptable manner as outlined in this Policy, the *Anti-bullying Policy* and by guidance from staff and parents / guardians alike. We live in a society, where social skills are vital to our well-being, and learning to interact with others is therefore a critical part of education. Students are reminded of the importance of respecting others, whether inside or outside school. Selfish actions are discouraged and will be met with appropriate and measured sanctions as per the nature of the offence and maturity / understanding of the student.

It is the duty of the entire BIS community have and maintain high expectations, and to strive to uphold the reputation befitting a well-respected, student-focused school.

The specific rules of the school are dictated by common sense and are referred to in a plethora of documents and policies. The following guidelines and expectation are not exhaustive.

The school places the highest possible emphasis on three broad values, centred around 'respect', they are: (i) respect for others, (ii) respect for property and (iii) respect for one's self.

Respect for Others

This is fundamental to the entire operation at BIS. Any actions, words or attitudes which show a lack of respect for others will be taken seriously, in particular:

- Disruption: which shows a lack of respect for both the teacher(s) and other students' experience
- Bullying: as detailed in the Anti-bullying Policy; at BIS we seek to nurture a culture in which all students are valued as individuals. Any instances of bullying will be dealt with firmly and sensitively. Our aim is to pro-actively prevent bullying in any form. This requires ensuring students understand and therefore avoid any deliberate unkindness to another member of the BIS community. It also requires anyone made aware of any such behaviour to report it. The school is prepared to offer support and guidance to any and all students but bullying will not be tolerated. Any member of the BIS community who

continues to bully after initial sanctions have been issued will have their enrolment / membership as a member of the BIS community reviewed by the senior leadership team (SLT).

Respect for Property

We are committed to engender a culture in which the property of others is respected by all. Students should do all they can to minimise the possibility of theft and vandalism by not bringing valuables or significant amounts of money to school. All clothing and equipment should be clearly marked with each student's name. The following examples would be met with serious sanctions:

- Theft: if theft is suspected, a full investigation will be launched and may result in the student(s) involved being immediately suspended or permanently expelled.
- Vandalism: any damage (which includes graffiti) to someone else's property, be it a fellow student's, teacher's or the school's will be fully investigated. Not only will the damage have to be paid for by the student's parents / guardians but depending on the severity; the student may face immediate suspension or permanent expulsion.

Respect for Oneself

BIS wants and thus actively encourages and promotes all its students to have respect for themselves, be it their mental, emotional or physical self. As a school, we strongly disapprove of the following:

- Smoking: BIS is a no smoking environment for all members of its community.
- Alcohol: BIS is an alcohol-free environment; this includes any member of the BIS community entering the site under the influence of alcohol.
- Drugs: drug, solvent or other substance abuse in any form goes against everything BIS stands for, this includes any member of the BIS community entering site under the influence of or in the possession of the aforementioned.

The School

BIS is an environment for its students; it is to be respected and proud of. Students are expected to do all that they can to make BIS a school where individuals are respected and treated courteously, and where those who attend are happy and content, where hard work is honoured, sports and competitions are fair and artistic endeavors are valued and promoted. Students must remember that if they act in ways which harm the reputation, morality, and objectives that BIS strives to uphold and achieve, they are ultimately harming themselves, their classmates, and the entirety of the school community.

All members of the BIS community should be familiar with the *School Handbook* which further outlines policies, standards, and expectations. With that, the following stipulations are intended to make the BIS experience more enjoyable and effective for the entire community:

- Be polite and show respect to all members of the school community including visitors.
- Move about the school in a respectful and safe manner, walk don't run, and keep to the right in busy corridors and on staircases.

- Make every effort to keep the premises and locality tidy. Litter should be placed in the bins, you should tidy up after yourselves at the lunch tables, wash your hands regularly (especially before eating and after using the bathroom), and try not to run your hands along walls.
- Make yourself aware of the boundaries of the school and understand that no student may leave the premises during the school day, without the permission of SLT and/or parents / guardians.
- Ensure that all clothing, sports kit and personal possessions are clearly marked with your name.
- Wear your school uniform, as detailed in the *Dress-code Policy* smartly each day, including on the journey to and from school.
- Do not bring valuables to school, including mobile phones as these aren't permitted without authorisation from a member of staff.
- Arrive promptly in school each day.
- At the end of each school day, you must be collected from the agreed area as detailed in the *School Handbook*.
- Remember that your behaviour out of school reflects on you school, your parents and your own reputation. Refrain from thoughtless and anti-social behaviour in public.

Classroom Code of Conduct

A Classroom Code of Conduct exists in every class at BIS. At the start of each academic year each class will assist their teacher in creating their own Code of Conduct. Even though these may differ slightly from class to class, there are certain aspects of conduct that are expected throughout the school which include a student's (i) right to learn (ii) right to be treated fairly (iii) right to learn in a clean and conducive environment and (iv) a right to feel and be safe. These are detailed below:

We have the right to learn which means that all students are expected to:

- Arrive on time and enter the school / class in an organised manner
- Bring the proper equipment, including books and stationery
- Listen carefully to instructions and not interrupt when others are speaking
- Exhibit common courtesy and not disrupt learning
- Complete tasks (including homework) in an appropriate manner and not interfere with the work of others

We all have the right to be treated fairly which means all students are expected to:

- Be considerate
- Not knowingly make racist, sexist, homophobic or any other derogatory remarks
- Refrain from using bad language and name-calling
- Respect each other's belongings
- Not fight or bully, and to report incidences of this nature

We all have the right to learn in a clean and conducive environment which means all students are expected to:

- Refrain from littering
- Help keep their learning environment neat and tidy
- Wear the correct uniform

- Not chew or eat in the classroom
- Not vandalise

We all have the right to feel and be safe, which means that all students are expected to:

- Use equipment appropriately and safely
- Not run, push, shove, or act dangerously or in a way that makes others feel uncomfortable and / or unsafe

Rewards

It is the responsibility of all teaching staff to ensure that the school's policies and Code of Conduct are applied fairly and consistently, without regard to race, gender or seniority, and should be consistent from student to student.

BIS cannot stress enough that the best way to ensure the highest standards in both behaviour and progression is to create a positive ethos where the self-confidence and self-esteem of students is promoted by appropriate praise, congratulation, and affirmation. A school culture which is dominated by a mutual respect between and amongst students and staff will not only lead to harmonious relationships, but also to the fulfilment of the student's potential both academically and socially.

Rewards should always outnumber sanctions and may take the following forms:

- Verbal or written praise
- Awarding of school-house points
- Commendations for particularly outstanding work or contributions to school life
- Merit certificates celebrating the award of individuals who have earned 25 house points
- Sending students who have distinguished themselves to the SLT
- A positive note to parents in the student's homework diary

Sanctions

Whilst promotion of expected and desirable behaviour is our goal, it will sometimes be necessary to employ sanctions in order to: enforce school rules, to reflect up on the seriousness of a misdemeanor, to deter individuals from repeating unsatisfactory behaviour, and to deter others from committing the same misdemeanor. In cases of bullying or other types of unkind or thoughtless behaviour, sanctions are also necessary to allow victims and those who speak up to see that they have been listened to and action has been taken.

All staff are encouraged to use the following less-formal sanctions, before applying one of the more formal school sanctions:

- Verbal reprimand
- Re-do inadequate work
- Report back for work at break or lunchtime

The above is not necessarily considered formal sanctions, but rather a way of encouraging and providing a student with the opportunity to improve of their own accord.

More formal sanctions include:

- A phone call home to parents; a summary of which must be logged and filed through the school office
- After school detention (24-hour notice should be given in writing to parents)
- The filling in of a Cause for Concern Form
- Referral to SLT
- A note in homework diary requiring signed acknowledgement of receipt by a parent / guardian
- Placing the student on a 'behaviour report' which requires a parent / guardian signature daily, for a specified number of days

The above sanctions allow the school to bring the student's (and parents' / guardians') attention to the gravity of their actions and allow all concerned parties to monitor a student's behaviour more closely, whilst providing further support.

For more serious or repeated behaviour considered a breach of this and any other school policy, the following may be actioned:

- **Exclusion from Class**

It is only ever appropriate to exclude a student from class if their behaviour is seriously damaging the learning of others in the classroom. On occasions where the Teacher feels this is necessary; the student should be brought immediately to a member of the school's SLT with their work. When the Teacher is next available, he / she will come back for a conversation with the member of SLT and the student.

- **Formal Written Warning**

The School's SLT may wish to formalise the sanction of a student. A formal written warning will require the student's parents / guardians to attend a meeting at school with a member of the school's SLT and their child.

- **Suspension**

If deemed necessary by the school's SLT a student may face suspension for one, three, or five school days. The number of days will depend on the severity of the student's actions and/or the recurrence of behaviour considered a breach of this or any other Policy.

- **Permanent Expulsion**

If deemed necessary due to the severity of a student's actions, the school's SLT may expel the student permanently.

NB: Corporal punishment is not permitted in any form at BIS. Any member of staff involved in inappropriate physical contact with a student will face disciplinary action. Parents are advised that they are not permitted to give permission to staff to use corporal punishment on their child, since a parent's opinion cannot and does not simply override any school policy.

Effective / Review Dates

This policy is effective from: 1st September 2022 and supersedes all previous Behaviour Policies.
This policy is due for review and republication on: 1st September 2024.

Anti-bullying Policy

Scope and Introduction

The aim of the British International School (BIS) *Anti-bullying Policy* is to prevent bullying of all kinds and to ensure that everyone can operate in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. All members of the school's community, including its board, senior leadership team (SLT), pedagogical and support staff, students and parents should understand what bullying is and be familiar with the school's policies on matters relating to bullying, as well as other behaviour. Therefore, the aim of this Policy is to assist members of the school community to deal with bullying when it occurs and, even more importantly; to recognise and prevent it.

Bullying is an anti-social behaviour which affects everyone; it is unacceptable, and it will not be tolerated in any form. Every individual in the school community has a responsibility to report any incident of bullying that comes to their attention and these reports will always be taken seriously.

The *Anti-bullying Policy* is freely available to all members of the school community and can be found as part of the School Handbook. Additionally, printed, and electronic copies can be obtained from the SLT on request.

The *Anti-bullying Policy* is to be read and considered in conjunction with the contents of the School Handbook, the school's *Behavioural Policy* and the school's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*.

Definition / Types of Bullying

Bullying may be defined as any deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Examples of such behaviour include:

- Physical Bullying: pushing, hitting, tripping, punching, restraining, and matters of a sexual nature, ETC
- Verbal Bullying: name-calling, teasing, intimidation, making offensive remarks, ETC
- Cyber Bullying: using ICT (social websites, emails, mobile phones ETC) in a way that is intended to upset ETC
- Social Bullying: exclusion, spreading rumours, humiliating practical jokes, negative facial / physical gestures

Bullying may involve complicity that falls short of direct participation by, for instance; manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It may be overt and intimidating but is often hidden and subtle. It includes actions or comments that are racist, sexist, homophobic, religious or cultural, sexual or which focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape).

Zero Tolerance

The seriousness of bullying cannot be emphasised enough. Bullying is among the top concerns that parents / guardians have about their children's safety and well-being at school. Bullying is also a top concern for children and young people themselves. Bullying makes the lives of the victims a misery: it undermines their confidence and self-esteem; and destroys their sense of security. Bullying impacts on its victims' attendance and attainment at school, marginalises those groups who may be particular targets for bullies and can have a life-long negative impact on victims. At worst, bullying can and often is a significant factor in suicide amongst young people.

It is acknowledged that bullies may have complex reasons for their behaviour and may well need help. It should also be recognised that the consequences of being allowed to 'get away with it' can be detrimental to them as well as to

their victim(s). All students deserve the opportunity to be helped to understand what acceptable behaviour is. In addition to this Policy, there are also criminal laws that apply to harassment, assault and threatening behaviour.

Anti-Bullying Procedure

What to look for:

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school.

All members of the BIS community must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it, in accordance with this *Anti-bullying Policy*. Surveys have shown that in the vast majority of bullying incidents; most people knew that what was going on was wrong. Sometimes, individuals, either through lethargy, peer-group pressure, or tacit support for what is going on, fail to take action – the consequences of such failure can be calamitous.

What to do:

The way to stamp out bullying is for individuals to be aware of what to look for, the issues involved, and to be clear in their own minds what action to take should cases arise.

Here is some group-specific advice on the aforementioned:

If you are a victim of bullying:

- If you feel able; confront the bully by verbally making them aware that you think what they're doing is wrong and would like them to stop.
- Share your feelings / concerns with someone else.
- Talk to a member of school staff – a teacher, or a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team. If you don't feel comfortable going to a member of staff; talk to your parents, a friend, a friend's parent or a senior student. They may well be able to advise on an appropriate course of action or will be able to involve other people who can.
- Remember that you are not alone and that talking to someone can help you feel better, as well as help to improve the situation and stop the bullying.
- Never suffer in silence and never blame yourself. Nobody asks for or deserves to be bullied.

If you are a witness of bullying:

- Support the victim by offering your friendship and make it clear that you believe what is happening is wrong. Being bullied can be incredibly upsetting and frightening, your friendship can help a lot.
- Encourage the victim to speak out and to confront the bully by explaining how they are making them feel, and how they believe what they are doing is wrong. With the victim's permission, you could confront the bully together – sometimes having the opinion of someone who isn't part of the situation can be helpful.

- Encourage and offer to accompany the victim to a member of staff to provide moral support. If the victim doesn't feel they can speak to a member of staff or other adult (such as their parent), suggest that you could see a member of staff on their behalf.

If you are a member of staff:

- Reassure and support the victim and ensure they understand that the reported bullying will be investigated fully, seriously and sensitively.

- Never promise to keep things a secret. Advise the victims that you are required to pass details on to the relevant staff to ensure that the reported bullying is brought to an end.

- Inform the appropriate member of the SLT as soon as possible who will discuss and advise on a course of action. SLT are also required to record all incidents of reported bullying and ensure that the staff are informed. SLT will keep a central log of all complaints or incidences of bullying, included necessary actions.

What will happen (short-term):

'Bullying' is a term that is often overused / misused. The key word in the definition of bullying is 'repeated' - *Bullying may be defined as any deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually **repeated** over a period of time*, and thus the first course of action is to identify whether or not bullying has been committed. Of course, all accusations / perceptions of bullying will be fully investigated and all acts of undesirable and unacceptable behaviour (be it bullying or other) will be recorded and dealt with appropriately.

In most cases of reported bullying; the victim will be met by their class teacher and a member of the SLT, a parent or other trusted adult may be present, and asked to recall an account of events. The process for dealing with bullying will be explained clearly to them. The victim is also given the opportunity to discuss his / her own reactions and behaviour towards the bully. The victim is given support and advice and counselling may be suggested to parents if deemed appropriate.

Next, the accused bully and any others involved will be interviewed individually by SLT, in the presence of their class teacher and asked to recall an account of events. The process for dealing with bullying will be explained clearly to them. If it becomes clear that a bullying offence has been committed, SLT will agree on a course of action.

In the first instance; the bully will be given a Formal Warning; making it clear that any further incident (or discussion with peers about the current incident) would be considered to be further bullying. It will be made clear why the behaviour was inappropriate and unacceptable. Support will be offered as necessary. A suitable punishment will also be given.

The following steps will be applied in accordance with the school's *Behavioural Policy*:

1. Formal Warning from SLT who will speak to the student(s) involved and will contact the parents / guardians giving details of the offence, and inviting them into school to discuss the matter and to be present when their child is given the Formal Warning. Their support for the school's actions is desirable (but not necessary)
2. Temporary Exclusion at the SLT's discretion
3. Permanent Exclusion at the SLT's discretion
4. Any other actions that the school deems necessary, such as: filing a report with the police, calling a joint meeting with the parents of the bully / bully's victim ETC

What will happen (long-term):

The school will raise and share awareness of the incident as necessary.

The school will take appropriate action to reduce the risk of bullying at the times and places where it is most likely to occur and provide refresher training to staff on bullying if deemed necessary.

The key points from this Policy will be delivered to students during class sessions at the start of each academic year and repeated as necessary.

Anti-bullying will feature as a discussion point for PTA meetings and feedback will be taken to the School Board. It will also be reinforced in other areas of the curriculum as the opportunities present themselves E.G., drama club, themed-assemblies, physical education, PSHCE, and other activities. Opportunities will also be sought to allow parents to contribute to the school's actions to prevent bullying.

Student surveys will be used to facilitate an understanding of the level and type of bullying that students might have experienced.

Incidents of reported bullying will be followed up by teachers and the SLT to monitor and ensure that the problem has been resolved.

Community Effort

We are absolutely confident, that the vast majority of the BIS community will agree with our sentiments on Bullying. It is our intention to identify and take appropriate action against those who do not.

It is the responsibility of both school staff *and* parents / guardians to ensure that BIS students are well-versed in what is considered appropriate and acceptable behaviour, including the gravity of bullying.

The school welcomes any questions, queries, or suggestions regarding this *Anti-bullying Policy*.

Effective / Review Dates

This policy is effective from: **1st September 2022** and supersedes all previous Anti-bullying Policies.

This policy is due for review and republication on: **1st September 2024**.

Health and Safety Policy

Introduction and Scope

The British International School (BIS) is committed to the creation and promotion of an environment that operates and practices in a health and safety conscious way. The policy applies to and involves all academic, support and administrative staff, volunteers, and visitors, as well as of course: students and parents / guardians.

This Health and Safety Policy has been designed by the school in correlations with the School Advisory Board and covers all predominant, common, and likely factors that would arise / be of concern in a school environment such as the British International School.

This Policy makes reference to and may be referenced in the following policies and publications and should be read and considered alongside them; *Anti-bullying Policy*, *Child Protection Policy*, *Fieldtrip and Offsite Policy*, *Dress-code Policy* and the *School Handbook*.

Roles and Responsibilities

All members of the BIS community are expected to exercise basic common sense in order to create and maintain a safe environment for themselves and those around them.

Certain individuals and groups within the community however have a duty to provide, and responsibility to ensure that certain aspects that fall under the health and safety umbrella are covered. They are as follows:

Principal:

- To ensure that appropriate health and safety related documentation is in place and up-to-date
- To monitor implementation of this and any related policies, including data produced from risk assessments
- To review this and any related policies on an annual basis, or before if necessary

Principal and SLT:

- To manage health and safety related matter on a day to day basis
- To ensure that all staff are aware of the information contained in this and any related policies
- To ensure that staff comply with the procedures laid down in the document
- To ensure processes to control substances hazardous to health are in place
- To carry out a full and thorough audit of the school's premises and grounds and report to the Advisory Committee on health and safety matters termly
- To liaise with contractors to ensure an adequate exchange and awareness of health and safety information occurs

Compound Manager:

- To ensure that a daily check of buildings, grounds and outdoor play equipment occurs, and that all defects are reported and dealt with promptly
- To ensure that a daily check for snakes in the school's grounds is carried out each and every morning, and precautions are taken to limit such risk

- To control and limit the entry of vehicles in-line with the SLT's wishes

All staff:

- Are familiar with the health and safety arrangements in place and comply with them at all times
- Are responsible for the health and safety of themselves and others, and should report any problems using the procedure outlined in the following section. If necessary, they must be prepared to take appropriate action themselves to remove hazards and limit risk
- Must ensure that students in their care behave in a safe and proper manner, adhering to proper safety precautions and school rules

In essence, the entire BIS community have a role to play in creating and maintaining a school that's safe for all who attend, work and visit the site.

Incident / Accident Recording, Reporting and Investigation

All incidences, accidents, risks and near missed should be recorded in the appropriate books. All report books (except first aid) are stored in the school office.

When a student has received treatment, no matter how minor, it must be recorded in the incident report books that are kept alongside the first aid boxes.

On a half-termly basis, the accident books will be reviewed by SLT to identify trends, and necessary actions taken.

Practical Information and Arrangements

First Aid:

- The first aid boxes (along with their incident report books) are kept in dedicated locations and are not permitted to be moved or stored elsewhere whilst not in immediate use
- Additional first aid kits exist to be taken on excursions / offsite activities
- Students who require first aid should be directed to an identified First Aid Responder or a member of the SLT
- All staff that access and use the first aid kits are responsible for reporting when items are running low

Contaminated Waste:

- All contaminated waste **MUST** be put in the identified 'contaminated waste bin'. Contaminated waste includes but isn't limited to; used or soiled:
 - Plastic gloves
 - Paper towels / tissues / cotton wool
 - Plasters
 - Dressings
 - Wet / antiseptic wipes
 - Feminine hygiene products

Using the identified contaminated waste bin for used and/or soiled products and materials will significantly decrease the risk of contamination and spread of potentially dangerous diseases.

Student Welfare

Parents / guardians of all students are required to submit full and honest details regarding their child's (and family's if necessary) health prior to enrolling at BIS, using the provided space on the Registration Form. Health card or vaccination information and history must be presented too, photocopies of which must be attached to said form.

Parents / guardians should medical information as necessary including health checks and vaccinations.

Should a new or change in an existing condition arise; parents / guardians are required to inform both their child's classroom Teacher and the SLT, including any needs / requirements. If the child needs specific medication during the day, it is vital to communicate the administration details (incl. dosage, schedule and side effects) of this to the school, in writing, accompanied by a valid prescription. In this scenario, a dedicated member of staff will be assigned to administer and record the medication, which will be kept in a secure location. Under no circumstances are students permitted to keep medication on them.

BIS cannot / will not administer drugs without written authorisation from parents / guardians.

If it becomes apparent, or even suspected that a student has contracted a contagious illness, parents / guardians are required to notify the school as soon as possible. This is to ensure that we are able to work together to support and protect the physical and emotional health of your child, as well as the rest of the BIS community.

Parents / guardians should not send their child to school if:

- Their illness will prevent them from participating comfortably in the learning environment
- Their illness results in needing a greater care than can be provided by the school without compromising the health and safety of the other children in the care of staff, or
- The child has any of the following symptoms:
 - Oral temperature of 39°C+ / axillary (armpit) temperature 40°C+ and accompanied by behavioural changes or other signs or symptoms of illness. Oral temperature should not be taken on children <4 years (or <3 years if using a digital thermometer)
 - Symptoms and signs of possible illness (such as chronic lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs)
 - Diarrhoea and/or vomiting
 - Rash with fever / behavioural change
 - Conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge)
- The child has any of the following conditions or communicable diseases:
 - Impetigo or herpetic gingivostomatitis (cold sores)
 - Headlice, scabies or other infestation
 - Tuberculosis
 - Strep throat or other streptococcal infection
 - Chicken pox
 - Pertussis (whooping Cough)

- Mumps, measles or rubella
- Hepatitis A
- Any other suspected / confirmed communicable diseases

Parents / guardians are expected to make the school aware immediately if any of the aforementioned is suspected to affect their child.

Once a condition has been treated and symptoms have subsided, it does not mean that the student is ready to return to school. In some cases, a disease, infection or other condition may still be communicable days after treatment has started and symptoms subside. Parents / guardians are required to contact the school for authorisation of return when they believe their child has fully recovered from a communicable condition.

Cases of recurrent / persistent conditions will be addressed on a case-by-case basis and may include a decision from BIS's SLT to send a child home until proven treatment is effective. BIS may request a letter from the student's physician confirming that the student is healthy enough to return to school. BIS appreciates parents' / guardians' understanding when these decisions have to be made since infections and diseases can spread widely and quickly in a school environment.

From time to time a student may become unwell whilst at school. In this scenario the student is referred to a First Aid Responder and/or a member of the SLT. One of the aforementioned people will evaluate the situation whilst consulting the student's medical notes as per the Registration Form and make an informed decision on the course of action. This may range from allowing the student to rest for a while, to administering first aid.

If deemed necessary, the school will contact the parents / guardians listed on the student's Registration Form to inform them of the situation and advise them on whether or not the student needs to be collected from school.

In the case of a more serious concern; the school will contact the parents / guardians of the student as well as the school's designated emergency medical services – if deemed necessary by the First Aid Responder and SLT, this could include driving the student directly to a medical centre, in the absence of an ambulance. Any costs occurred whilst transporting, as well as consultation and the administering of treatment at a medical centre must be paid for / reimbursed by the parent, unless covered by the school's insurance.

The school will contact parents / guardians in the case of illness or injury that may require further observation at home. For this reason, it is vital that the school has up-to-date records of telephone numbers and addresses. Please inform the school of any change in your contact details.

Any information considered sensitive, including that divulged via medical notes or verbally to a member of staff in the school, will be treated as confidential within the team, except when:

- a failure to disclose information would be detrimental to that student's welfare and/or education
- it would mean that BIS would be in breach of the law
- BIS would not meet its responsibility acting in loco parentis to the student in questions, and others

Fire Safety

There will be a fire drill and evacuation practice each term, the outcome of which will be recorded in the Fire Logbook. The time of the practices will be varied as to be as unexpected as a real emergency evacuation would be.

Fire evacuation procedures and routes are displayed around the school. All staff and students will receive training on fire evacuation procedures and must ensure that they are familiar and comfortable with them through additional training and practice if necessary.

Fire extinguishers are located in key areas. Staff should be well-versed in the location and use of them. Fire extinguishers are checked periodically, and the date noted in the Fire Logbook.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments help the school to identify, prepare for and reduce factors that pose any possible risks to the health and safety of its staff, students and visitors.

The results of termly audits will help to determine the areas for which further, formal risk assessments need to be carried out.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health

Substances hazardous to health in a school environment mostly include cleaning products. Additionally, our science laboratory stores and uses substances as part of the curriculum's experiments. The responsibility for carrying out COSHH assessments will rest with the SLT but the control of such substances on one a day to day basis lies with the member of staff using the substance (E.G: cleaner, science teacher).

The staff who are responsible for the safeguarding of such substances are trained on their usage, storage and risks should they be used for any unintended purpose.

Security

All visitors (excl. parents / guardians) are directed to the school office, where they are required to sign the visitors' book. They are to be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.

Staff are encouraged to politely challenge anyone in school they do not recognize and escort them to the school office.

More information regarding school security procedures can be found in the *School Handbook*.

Fieldtrips and Offsite Activities

By nature, fieldtrips and offsite activities involve a variety of risks and, therefore; require careful and stringent organisation for which BIS staff adequately prepare students, materials and schedules. All trips are approved in advance by SLT, as per the timelines listed in the *Fieldtrips and Offsite Activities' Policy*.

For all offsite activities, parents are required to complete permission forms, and maybe required to attend a compulsory fieldtrip meeting with their child.

Parents / guardians / students are referred to the *Fieldtrip and Offsite Activities Policy* for more information.

Nappy Changing Routines

All staff are required to respect each individual student's privacy; therefore, the appropriate adult must carry out the procedure of changing nappies, preferably the student's individual key worker.

The following procedures exist to ensure that the process of changing a nappy is as hygienic and dignified as possible:

- Nappies are changed in the identified changing area
- Protective aprons and gloves are worn when nappy changing nappies and when changing soiled clothes
- Changing mats are wiped using single-use, paper towel and anti-bacterial solution after every single usage
- Hands are washed with anti-bacterial soap and nailbrush after each child is changed
- Spillages in and around toilet areas and immediately cleaned using the appropriate products and equipment
- Nappies are bagged and disposed of using the identified nappy bin
- Gloves and aprons are disposed of using the nappy bin
- The nappy bin is to be emptied regularly and

Other health and safety related notes

Due to the unpredictable nature of animals, as well as allergies and sensitivities; no pets are permitted on the school premises at any time.

Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the school buildings, grounds or near entrances / gateways to the compound. This includes students, staff, parents / guardians, drivers / nannies and visitors to the school.

All Early Years students must be dropped off and collected by an adult or responsible older sibling.

All students must be collected from after school activities by an adult.

Staff are responsible for the supervision of students in the classroom and / or playground from 7.45 a.m. until 3.15 p.m. Before and after these times no students should be on-site. This is with the exception of those students enrolled in an after-school club that will be supervised until 4.10 p.m.

No jewelry is permitted to be worn during P.E. and other physical activities due to obvious health and safety reasons. Parents / guardians and students are referred to the school's *Dress-code Policy* for more information.

Effective / Review Dates

This policy is effective from: **1st September 2022** and supersedes all previous Health and Safety Policies.

This policy is due for review and republication on: **1st September 2024**.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Key Contacts for Safeguarding and Child Protection at the School

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Contact email	Apolonia Mukashuri
Telephone	078824258

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

Contact email	Laila Ben-Kaddour
Telephone	078824258

Safeguarding Officers

Contact details	078824258
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Pastoral Staff

Contact details	Ms. Beth Gluaseay
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Nominated Governor for Safeguarding

Contact Details	Mr. Pius Nishimwe Pmpakaniye94@gmail.com
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Others within the school with any responsibilities for Child Protection / Safeguarding

Contact details	Jenny Condron principal@bismesl.org
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Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

1. Purpose of Policy

The British International School and Montessori Education (BIS) fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children. Our students' welfare and safety are at the heart of our school's ethos and in everything we do.

In this policy, a 'child' means all children and young people below 18 years of age. In accordance with relevant law and guidance, as set out below in the second section, this policy details our procedures for safeguarding and child protection.

It is applicable to the whole school community. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility, whether they work or volunteer in the school. Everyone has a role to play in child protection and safeguarding.

All staff and volunteers will ensure that their approach and actions are child centred. This means that they'll consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child. Because of the day-to-day contact with students, school staff and volunteers are well placed to observe signs of harm, abuse, neglect, peer on peer sexual violence and sexual harassment, victimisation and/or exploitation.

The school ensures that arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of students by:

- Creating and maintaining an environment where all students feel secure, are encouraged to communicate, and are listened to.
- Making sure that all students know which adults in the school they can approach if they have any worries.
- Teaching students to keep themselves safe from all forms of abuse including: child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, extremism, radicalisation, and peer on peer abuse including sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- Appointing senior members of staff from the school leadership team to the roles of Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Leads.
- Providing effective, relevant and ongoing training and development for all staff and Governors. We do this through a variety of external providers, including local authority, prevent leads, to ensure best practice
- Swiftly and effectively addressing any concerns and ensuring robust, timely referrals are made to other agencies. Ensuring effective links with relevant agencies in all matters regarding safeguarding and child protection.
- Reviewing and supporting students who are subject to child protection plans and contributing to the implementation of the plan.

- Keeping meticulous, written records of concerns about students, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately (this includes recording dates, times, people responsible, and actions), and ensuring all records are kept securely and shared appropriately.
- Ensuring the suitability of all staff through safe recruitment practice and maintaining an accurate and up to date Single Central Register.
- Making sure that all school staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding and child protection.
- Ensuring that parents and carers also have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and its staff for safeguarding and child protection.
- Maintaining awareness of those students who are persistently absent or missing from school, notifying the local authority in line with 'Children Missing in Education' protocols.
- Maintaining clear procedure in line with the latest guidance for reporting allegations against staff members.

Furthermore, The British International School and Montessori Education recognises that:

- Some students are at increased risk of abuse.
- Some students face additional barriers with respect to recognising or disclosing abuse.

The school is committed to recognising diversity and ensures anti-discriminatory practices. We ensure that all students have the same protection. We give special consideration to students who:

- Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities (further information is in section 9).
- Are young carers.
- Show signs of mental health problems.
- Are missing education.
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification, or sexuality.
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation.
- Have English as an additional language.
- Are known to be living in difficult situations e.g where there are issues at home, such as: substance abuse/misuse or domestic violence or where a family member has mental health needs.

2. Safeguarding Children

The British International School and Montessori Education recognizes that safeguarding covers a broad range of areas and it aims to achieve the following:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health and/or development.
- Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective

care.

- Undertaking that role to enable children to have optimum life chances, so they can enter adulthood successfully

As part of meeting a child's needs, the school;

- Recognises that sharing information, particularly with safeguarding partner agencies and other professionals, in a timely manner is crucial in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children. The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.
- Recognises that, to facilitate the sharing of 'special category personal data,' the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.
- Will identify children who may benefit from the Early Help process and make timely disclosures to the Local Authority to enable that process to begin. Working with safeguarding partners and other professionals to assist with these assessments and work flowing from these assessments.
- Recognises that mental health issues can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and will share any such concerns appropriately.
- Will identify students who may be suffering from significant harm and make child protection referrals.
- Will identify students who need extra help and make appropriate referrals, including to early help service, to prevent concerns escalating.

The school also understands the importance of contextual safeguarding, i.e. that incidents or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and can occur between children outside of school. All staff should be considering the context within which such incidents and behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding and simply means that assessments should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

3. Legislation and guidance

The British International School is committed to being compliant with all standards for safeguarding in Sierra Leone, in line with UK and the standards of the Council of British International Schools (COBIS).

This policy is derived from a variety of legislative provisions and statutory guidance. In particular, it is based on good practice found in:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021).

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).
- United Nations Conventions on the Right of the Child (1990)

Our safeguarding policy and procedures comply with all of this guidance and is updated with local arrangements agreed and published by the three local safeguarding partners.

The following legislation is also incorporated into this policy:

- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which gives a broad framework for the care and protection of children and includes provisions for Local Authority inquiries, care proceedings, and emergency provisions.
- ‘Regulated activity’ in relation to children is found in Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Schools “PREVENT” duties under the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism can be found in: Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty.

Other statutory provisions relevant to child protection and safeguarding include:

- The Education Act 2002 (section 175/157).
- The Education (pupil information) (England) Regulations 2005.
- The Sexual Offences Act, 2003, Home Office.
- Teaching on-line safety in schools, DfE, 2019.

A full list of the guidance this policy has referred to, and which staff can refer to for further information, can be found in Appendix 3: ‘The Schools’ Statutory Duty.

3.1 Related Policies

Safeguarding covers more than the contribution made to child protection in relation to individual young people. It also encompasses issues such as staff conduct, health and safety, bullying, online safety, arrangements for meeting medical needs, providing first aid and/or intimate care, drugs and substance misuse, positive behaviour management, and the use of physical intervention and restraint.

This document must therefore be read, used, and applied alongside the school policies and procedures referred to below:

- The Single Central Record of identity, qualification, and vetting checks for all staff and volunteers.
- The Safer Recruitment Policy.
- Local Authority policies on dealing with allegations against members of staff.
- Visitors Policy

- The Safer Working Practices guidelines for staff and volunteers.
- The E-safety and Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy.
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Data Protection Policy.
- Online Safety Policy.
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy.
- The Confidentiality Policy.
- The Health and Safety Policy.
- Field Trips Policy.
- The Whistleblowing Policy

4. Responsibilities

The British International School and Montessori Education recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their parents or carers has a role to play in safeguarding children.

All staff working (including visiting staff) in BIS are required to:

- Read and understand part 1 and Annex A of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and review this guidance at least annually.
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1161273/Keeping children safe in education 2023 - statutory guidance for schools and colleges.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1161273/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023_-_statutory_guidance_for_schools_and_colleges.pdf)
- Be aware of our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, including referrals to statutory agencies. They must understand the role of the DSL and know how to deal with children missing from education.
- Observe and comply with the staff code of conduct.
- Attend all relevant training and development provided by the school and be aware of all their responsibilities in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.
- Know how to deal with a disclosure. If a student discloses to a member of staff that they are being abused, the staff member should follow the guidance set out in Appendix 1.
- Report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in their absence, the Deputy, in line with the Child Protection Procedures and legal duty for reporting FGM as set out in this policy.
- Understand the school's management policy and procedure and knows what to do in the event

of an allegation made against someone working with children.

- Be alert to the signs of harm and abuse, including issues that can manifest themselves due to peer-on-peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults and sexting. Staff should follow the Child Protection Procedures with regards to peer-on-peer abuse as outlined in this policy. Further information can be found in Appendix 2.
- Know the Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Lead's name and contact details including telephone numbers and email.
- Be aware of the early help process. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.

The Governing Body will:

- Assess the impact of this policy in keeping children safe.
- Contribute any local, contextual information that may support children's safety and welfare.
- Appoint a nominated governor to liaise with the Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) on Safeguarding issues.
- Receive and consider regular reports from the Principal about the effectiveness of safeguarding and child protection at the school.
- Keep abreast of training to ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep all children safe.
- Review and annually approve the safeguarding policy, ensuring it complies with all law, regulation and good practice. They will also hold the Principal to account for its implementation.
- Ensure all Governors read Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.
- Receive any allegations made against the Principal.

*******All Governors must read Keeping Children Safe in Education.**

The Principal will:

- Be responsible for the implementation of this and all related policies and procedures, ensuring that the outcomes are monitored.
- Ensure that whilst the activities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, as set out below, remains with the DSL.
- Meet regularly with the DSL.
- Ensure that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training, and resources to fulfil all of their functions

and ensure adequate cover in the event that the DSL isn't available.

- Ensure that everyone connected to the school is aware of this policy including safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- Attend advanced training with an accredited provider.
- Ensure that all staff are vigilant to harm and abuse, are able to identify those students for whom there are child protection concerns, and can make appropriate referrals, including to early help services.
- Be alert to the signs of harm and abuse and specific safeguarding issues including but not limited to: Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE); Child Criminal Exploitation including County Lines activity; serious violent crime including serious violent sexual offences; peer on peer abuse, FGM, and radicalisation. Peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways but often in bullying (including cyber bullying) gender-based violence / sexual assaults and sexting. Staff should follow the Child Protection Procedures with regards to peer-on-peer abuse as outlined in this policy.
- Appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement and welfare of students who are looked after and to ensure that this person has appropriate training.
- Communicate clearly to school board of governors, visitors, parents, and students so everyone understands the school's safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Appoint a DSL and Deputy DSL giving consideration to the range of responsibilities the DSL undertakes, e.g. the DSL needs to have the flexibility to act immediately on a referral that requires an urgent response and time to attend lengthy meetings or case conferences.
- Ensure that contact and role details of the DSL and Deputy DSL are clearly displayed in staff online areas and the website (along with this policy).
- Report to the Governing Body regularly regarding the effectiveness of safeguarding and implementation of related policies.
- Ensure safe recruitment practice is followed when recruiting for posts, and ensure appropriate action is taken when an allegation is made against a member of staff.
- Ensure all appropriate checks are made in relation to all staff, volunteers, and visitors, including checks for school Governors.
- Ensure the school offers a safe environment via a robust health and safety policy and procedure to meet the statutory responsibilities for the safety of students and staff at the school.
- Ensure the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable.
- Make sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned to a key person.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- Being available for all staff to discuss any safeguarding issues or concerns.
- Ensuring all staff are aware of the DSL and deputy contact details.
- Ensuring that all cases of suspected or actual problems associated with child protection or safeguarding concerns (including cases where the early help process may be appropriate) are referred to the appropriate agencies in line with procedures set out in this policy, keeping the principal apprised.
- Ensuring the school's safeguarding policy and practice is relevant and consistent with the most recent statutory guidance (KSCIE 2023).
- Being aware of the latest national and local guidance and requirements and keeping the Principal and staff informed as appropriate.
- Attending accredited, enhanced training each year, as required to fulfil the role.

- Ensuring that appropriate training for staff (including periodic updates via e-bulletins, email, or as part of staff meetings) is organised according to the agreed programme with the Principal and renewed through ongoing professional development.
- Ensuring families are fully aware of the school policies and procedures and kept informed and involved.
- Ensuring that effective communication and liaison takes place between the school and the Local Authority or partner agencies, and any other relevant agencies, where there is a Safeguarding concern in relation to a student.
- Ensuring that all staff have an understanding of child abuse, neglect, and peer on peer abuse (including serious violence and serious sexual violence, Child Criminal Exploitation, FGM, and Prevent) and their main indicators, including for looked after children and additional vulnerabilities of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Dealing with allegations of abuse, including assessments for early help, in accordance with local and statutory procedures.
- Supporting the staff member in liaising with other agencies and setting up an interagency assessment as appropriate if early help is appropriate.
- Ensuring that adequate reporting and recording systems are in place.
- Liaising with the Governing Body's nominated governor for safeguarding.
- Ensuring relevant records (and further information not contained in the child's child protection file) are passed on appropriately when students transfer to other schools or are being educated at alternative provision or off-site education.
- Being aware of children who are or who may be living in a private fostering arrangement. The Local Authority Private Fostering Officer is known to the school and ensures liaison to support the welfare and safety of the child.
- Undertaking the Children and Safeguarding Board Executive (LSBC) annual safeguarding audit.
- Referring suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly.
- Contributing and helping other staff to contribute to early help assessments.
- Meeting regularly with the principal to discuss safeguarding issues including outcomes and implementation of actions relating to case conferences and core groups and all current case work. Other key staff will be invited as appropriate. Safeguarding matters arising will be discussed routinely at each staff and/or Senior Leadership Team (SLT) meeting.

4.1 Child Protection Procedures

Staff at the British International School and Montessori Education will follow the necessary child protection procedures if an incident occurs. They will be made aware that:

- Where a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.
- Anyone can make a referral.
- Staff should not assume that somebody else will take action/share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.
- Where referrals are not made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed, as soon as possible, that a referral has been made.
- The reporting of concerns relating to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is mandatory.
- The DSL or Deputy DSL will always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns.

When a member of staff at the school suspects that any student may have been subject to abuse, or a

student has suggested that abuse has taken place either to themselves or another student, the allegation must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputy DSL if the DSL is off site.

The DSL or Deputy DSL will:

- Ensure the allegation is acted on within the school day.
- Ensure that the Principal is informed of all allegations unless the allegation is against the Principal, in which case the chair of governors will be informed.
- Deal with the allegation in accordance with the agreed procedures. In the case of a violent sexual assault or sexual harassment matter, school will follow the latest procedures as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023. The link can be found in appendix D
- Be best placed to carry out a risk assessment of the issue and determine the escalation and timescales for dealing with the allegation.

It is best practice to ensure that all colleagues who are involved in the allegation are informed of the outcome, so there is closure or continual vigilance as necessary.

4.2 Allegations of Abuse

Appendix 1 provides guidance and detail about:

- Each child abuse category.
- Potential signs of abuse.
- Specific procedures about how to deal with a disclosure.

4.3 Allegations Against Members of Staff

All allegations of abuse made against a member of staff (including supply teachers and volunteers) in relation to a student must be brought to the attention of the Principal and where appropriate the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. The Principal will act in a co-ordinating role. In the event that the Principal is the subject of the allegation, the DSL will report to the Chair of Governors immediately and follow child protection procedures.

a. Whistleblowing

Where a staff member at the school feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed; other whistleblowing channels may be open to them.

General guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

5. Training for staff

The school ensures all staff complete safeguarding and child protection training as part of their induction. The school also has a commitment to updating training for all staff each year and for appropriate staff to attend Local Authority and Inter-Agency Safeguarding Board Meetings.

To achieve this:

- Time will be given to enable this commitment to be met.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL will receive relevant training every year.
- All staff and volunteers new to the school will be given appropriate safeguarding training as part of their induction programme to the school. Updates will feature regularly in all staff and SLT meetings, as appropriate.
- All school staff and Governing Body members will undertake the training at least every two years as organised by the DSL.
- Newly recruited staff will complete the online training as part of their induction and will receive school-specific training, including being made aware of local risk factors for extremism.
- The DSL will attend Local Authority and other training courses as necessary and other appropriate inter-agency training every year.
- The DSL will attend Prevent training (WRAP) as provided by the Home Office and Local Authority.
- The Head Teacher will attend advanced training with a designated provider.
- The Senior Leadership team, Pastoral Leaders, and the Governing Body will attend training with a designated provider.

6. Suitability of staff and safe recruitment practices

The school recognises that safe recruitment practices are an essential part of creating a safe environment for children and young people. Consequently, we will ensure that staff (including supply teachers) and volunteers working at the school are suitable to do so and therefore do not pose any kind of risk to our students.

Appropriate members of SLT, Governors, and other relevant staff are required to complete Safer Recruitment Training in order to ensure that one panel member on every selection panel is trained in 'Safer Recruitment.'

Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

- complete an application form which includes their employment history.
- provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children; check verbally at least one of these references.
- provide evidence of identity and qualifications.
- be checked in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if worked in the UK and other agencies for other foreign nationals, meeting regulations as appropriate to their role.

- include prohibition checks with the NCTL for teaching staff.
- provide evidence of their right to work in the Sierra Leone to obtain the working visa; and be interviewed.

For local staff:

- Last two employers' employment certificate showing the employment duration and the roles you once took in these places
- Social insurance participation history matching your employment as above (previous two employers)
- Name and contact details of someone we can contact for an oral check in their two previous posts
- Updated non-criminal history check by the police – HR will contact you if you haven't provided a recent update (within the last 12 months)

Safer recruitment also means that the School will ensure that:

- the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities is verified.
- at least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.
- all new members of staff undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and identify their child protection training needs.
- all staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, which is part of the Safeguarding Code of Conduct and written confirmation is obtained from recruitment agencies that staff have been appropriately checked.
- Full details of the school's recruitment procedures are to be found in the Safer Recruitment Policy.

7. Volunteers and supervised volunteers

Volunteers, including governors, will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the School and contact with the children. Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are not in regulated activity will undergo the safe recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the School's risk assessment process and statutory guidance.

8. Contractors

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests police checks where appropriate.

9. Prevent Duty - Safeguarding students who are vulnerable to extremism

a. The school's prevent strategy

The British International School and Montessori Education follows the statutory guidance on the school's responsibility to fulfil our Prevent Duty. The Prevent Duty is an effort to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism or supporting terrorism – this is a global concern. We expect school staff to use their

professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

It is rare for children to become involved in terrorist activity. However, some students from an early age can be exposed to terrorist and extremist influences or prejudiced views. Consequently, the school takes the view that early intervention is always preferable and includes this in its procedures as it does for all safeguarding concerns.

As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Members of staff, who have concerns about a pupil, will make these concerns known following the school's safeguarding reporting procedure. The DSL will then make a judgement as to whether it is appropriate to make a referral to external agencies or the appropriate embassies for foreign nationals.

In line with both the fundamental British Values and the School Values, the following key principles underpin the community in which the school is based.

- Inclusion.
- Tolerance.
- Freedom of speech.
- The expression of beliefs and ideology.

Both students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility. Free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued.

Free speech is subject to treating others with respect, understanding differences, equality, an awareness of human rights, community safety, and community cohesion. The Prevent statutory guidance requires school to have clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers are appropriately supervised and suitable.

The school is committed to working with the local authority and other local partners, families, and communities to play a key role in ensuring young people and our communities are safe from the threat of terrorism. The DSL will keep up to date with all local policies and procedures relating to Prevent Duty.

Staff must consider the level of risk to identify the most appropriate referral, which could include reference to the Local authority or the police.

9.1 Reducing risks of extremism

The Principal and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk.

Actions will include consideration of:

- The school's RE and PSHE curriculum.
- Relationship Education (for all primary students) and Relationship and Sex Education (for all secondary students and Health Education (for all students in the school).

- SEND policy.
- Assembly content.

Risk assessments will include:

- The use of school premises by external agencies.
- Integration of students by gender and SEND.
- Anti-bullying policy.
- Other issues specific to the school's profile and community.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist/radical ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, all school staff will be vigilant to changes in students' behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

It is commonly recognised that children at risk of radicalisation may display changes in behaviour, show different signs or seek to hide their views. Staff are advised to use their professional judgement in identifying students who might be at risk of radicalisation and always act proportionately and seek support if they are concerned.

The school recognises that the Prevent duty does not ask teachers to carry out unnecessary intrusions into family life, but as with any other safeguarding risk, they must take action when they observe behaviour of concern.

9.2 Potential signs of radicalisation and extremism

There is no limit to the signs that you might notice – every student is different. However, some of the indicators that staff should look out for includes;

- Vulnerability: identity crisis, personal crisis, migration, unmet aspirations, and history of criminality.
- Access to extremist influences: friendship groups, internet activity, activities abroad i.e military camps, and vocalised support of illegal or extremist/militant groups.
- Experiences and influences: social rejection, personal impact from civil unrest and widespread media coverage of international events, change in appearance and behaviour, family conflict over religious reviews, and verbal or written evidence of support for terrorist activities.
- Travel: pattern of regular extended travel, evidence of falsifying identity documents, and unexplained absences.
- Social factors: disadvantaged background, lack of empathy and/or affinity with others, severe learning difficulties or mental health, being a child of a foreign national or refugee, experience of trauma or sectarian conflict, and extremist views of a significant other.

9.3 Indicators of radicalization or extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups

- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent)
- secretive behaviour
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, artwork or writing that displays extremist themes
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- advocating violence towards others

It is always worth remembering that numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours that are defined as violent extremism, but most children or young people do not become involved in extremist action. For this reason, the appropriate interventions in any particular case may not have any specific connection to the threat of radicalisation.

10. Safeguarding students who are vulnerable to exploitation, child sexual exploitation, honour-based abuse (forced marriage and female genital mutilation), and at risk from or involved with violent crime and peer-on-peer abuse.

All staff at the BIS will be provided with an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviors linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education, and sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger.

a. Children Missing from Education (1)

All staff should be aware that children who go missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines.

It may also indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risks and to prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. All staff should be aware of BIS's unauthorized absence and children missing from education procedures, which are set out in section 9.

b. Child Criminal Exploitation

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate, or deceive a child into criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online.

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these.

All staff at BIS will be made aware of the indicators that may signal that children are at risk from or are involved with, serious violent crime.

Signs may include:

- Increased absence.
- Change in friendships.
- New relationships with older individuals or groups.
- A significant decline in performance.
- Signs of self-harm.
- Significant change in wellbeing.
- Signs of assault.
- Unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions.

These could indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

Indicators of Child criminal exploitation can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions.
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation.
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing.
- Misusing drugs and alcohol.
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late.
- Regularly missing school or education.
- Not taking part in education.

If a member of staff suspects CCE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

c. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity:

- a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or
- b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur using technology.

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive, but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of sexual exploitation.

Signs include:

- Underage sexual activity.

- Inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour.
 - Sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex.
 - Repeat sexually transmitted infections.
 - In girls, repeat pregnancy, abortions, and miscarriage.
 - Receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources.
 - Having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile.
 - Having unaffordable new things (clothes, a mobile phone, etc.) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs, etc.).
 - Changes in the way they dress.
 - Going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends.
 - Seen at known places of concern (e.g brothels).
 - Moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are.
 - Getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults.
 - Having older boyfriends or girlfriends.
 - Contact with known perpetrators.
 - Involved in abusive relationships, intimidated, and fearful of certain people or situations.
 - Hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers.
 - Associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation.
 - Recruiting other young people to exploitative situations.
 - Truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether.
 - Unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual, etc.).
 - Mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress.
 - Self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders.
 - Drug or alcohol misuse.
 - Getting involved in crime.
 - Police involvement, police records.
 - Involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership.
- Injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault

11. Honour-based Abuse: Forced Marriage (FM)

This is an entirely separate issue from arranged marriage. It is a human rights abuse and falls within the Crown Prosecution Service definition of domestic violence.

Young men and women can be at risk in affected ethnic groups. Evidence shows that the issue of forced marriage affects certain sectors of communities, typically girls in the age range of 14 – 16 years old originating from Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh (approx. 60% of the cases) together with a percentage of cases of children originating from the Middle East and African countries.

A signal of FM is the removal of the students from school and lengthy absence which is often unexplained. Other indicators may be detected by changes in adolescent behaviours. Whistleblowing may come from younger siblings.

Any member of staff at BIS with any concerns should report this immediately to the DSL, who should raise the concern with the Local Police Safeguarding Unit by email or phone. Never attempt to intervene directly as a school or through a third party. Whilst the onus of the investigation for criminal offences will remain

with the Police, the DSL should co-operate and liaise with the relevant agencies in line with current child protection responsibilities.

12. Honour-based Abuse: Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

There is a specific legal duty on teachers regarding FGM. If, during their work, a member of staff discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 years, then they must report it to the school's management. Although, in a country like Sierra Leone where the act of FGM is still acceptable by tradition, caution should be taken when attempting to address the issue. All staff at BIS will recognise this responsibility.

12.1 The 'One Chance' rule.

As with Forced Marriage, there is the 'One Chance' rule regarding FGM. This refers to staff potentially only having one chance to speak to a potential victim and thus may only have one chance to save a life. It is essential that the school takes action without delay.

12.2 What is FGM?

Female genital mutilation involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

12.3 Why is it carried out?

It is often based on a belief that FGM:

- Brings status/respect to the girl – social acceptance for marriage.
- Preserves a girl's virginity.
- Is part of being a woman/rite of passage.
- Upholds family honour.
- Cleanses and purifies the girl.
- Gives a sense of belonging to the community.
- Fulfils a religious requirement.
- Perpetuates a custom/tradition.
- Helps girls be clean/hygienic.
- Is cosmetically desirable.
- Is mistakenly believed to make childbirth easier.

All teachers at BIS will be made aware of FGM practices and the need to look for signs, symptoms, and other indicators of FGM. All teachers have a mandatory responsibility to report FGM if they discover it (through disclosure) to the school's management and informing the DSL immediately who will support (the Deputy DSL will take on this responsibility if the DSL is not available).

Circumstances and occurrences that may point to FGM happening include:

- The child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony.
- The child and their family taking a long trip abroad.

- The child's family being from one of the 'at risk' communities for FGM (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemen, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia, and Pakistan).
- Knowledge that the child's sibling has undergone FGM.
- The child talking about going abroad to be 'cut' or to prepare for marriage.

Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:

- Prolonged absence from school and other activities.
- Behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued
- Bladder or menstrual problems.
- Finding it difficult to sit still and looking uncomfortable.
- Complaining about pain between the legs.
- Mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about.
- Secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group.
- Reluctance to take part in physical activity.
- Repeated urinal tract infection.
- Disclosure.

13. Peer-on-peer abuse

All staff at BIS will be made aware that children can abuse other children (referred to as peer-on-peer). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying).
- Physical abuse such as hitting, biting, kicking, shaking, hair-pulling, or causing physical harm.
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration, and sexual assault.
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Up skirting, which is a form of abuse that has been high on school and court agendas for a number of years and is a criminal offence in its own right under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019. Up skirting occurs when someone takes a picture under a person's clothing, with or without underwear, without them knowing or without permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm. It is a common aspect of peer-on-peer abuse and can happen to any gender.
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery).
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

13.1 Children who harm other children (Peer on peer abuse)

BIS recognises that children can abuse their peers. Examples of this may include when children are violent or cause danger towards other children. It can also be when children sexually abuse or sexually harass other children – please refer to Appendix 2.

Where a student's behaviour causes significant harm to other students, staff should follow the child protection procedures for the school. The DSL will refer the child in line with the local area safeguarding protocol for these children.

13.2 Sexting

Your responsibilities when responding to an incident.

If you are made aware of an incident involving sexting (also known as ‘youth produced sexual imagery’), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must not:

- View, download, or share the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it. If you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL.
- Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it.
- Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL’s responsibility)
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves, or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.

You should explain that you need to report the incident and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

This policy on sexting should also be shared with pupils so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident.

14. Procedure for students identified as being ‘at risk’ or vulnerable to exploitation, child sexual exploitation; honour-based abuse (forced marriage and female genital mutilation), children who are at risk from or involved with violent crime and peer-on-peer abuse

Where risk factors are present but there is no evidence of a particular risk, the DSL at BIS will advise staff on preventative work that can be done within the school to engage the student into mainstream activities and social groups

The DSL may well be the person who talks to the student’s family where appropriate, sharing the school’s concern about the student’s vulnerability and how the family and school can work together to reduce the risk.

In this situation, depending on the level of concern and agreement with the parent and the student (as far as possible):

- The DSL can decide to notify the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children’s Affairs (MSWGCA) of the decision so that a strategic overview can be maintained, and any themes or common factors can be recognised; and
- The school will review the situation after taking appropriate action to address the concerns.

The DSL will also offer and seek advice about undertaking an early help assessment and/or making a referral to MSWGCA. If the concerns about the student are significant and meet the additional needs/complex need criteria. This includes concerns about a student who is affected by the behaviour of a parent or other adult in their household.

15. Children Missing in Education

All students, regardless of their circumstances or background, are entitled to full-time education that is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs and disabilities.

The school operates a strong attendance tracking system that is overseen by a member of the leadership team. The tracking and use of effective attendance management strategies enables the school to ensure each day that every child is accounted for.

The school takes a range of actions to tackle Persistent Absentees and completes official reports on children who are persistently absent from school.

- The school will only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. The principal, or Deputy in their absence, will determine the length of time that the child can be away from the school.
- The school recognises that some children seeking leave of absence are vulnerable to risk of abuse, neglect, or travelling to conflict zones, or at risk of FGM or forced marriage.
- Where this is identified, staff should alert the DSL and Head Teacher. The DSL will, as soon as a concern is established, alert the Local Authority.
- As a matter of course: student absence must be followed up on a daily basis – this must be a priority. Unless circumstances indicate that a student is at risk and immediate action is necessary, the Local Authority will be informed of every student who has a continuous period of unexplained absence of three days or more.
- The admissions register at the school is kept up to date and the Local Authority is informed of all students who are removed from the school roll when they: Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g home education.
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered.
- Have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period.
- Have been permanently excluded.

The local authority will be informed as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, in line with the local authority guidelines, but no later than at the point of deleting the student's name from the roll.

No student will be removed from a school roll until all safeguarding checks have been completed or the whereabouts of a student have been established.

16. Looked after children

All staff in BIS will have an awareness of issues around safeguarding Looked after Children. The leadership team will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge, and understanding necessary to keep looked after children safe.

Staff will be aware of the legal status of a looked after child's care arrangements. In particular, they will

ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a student's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They should also have information about the student's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will have details of the student's social worker.

The Principal will appoint a Designated Teacher to promote the educational achievement of students who are looked after and to ensure that this person has appropriate training.

17. Domestic Abuse

Domestic violence and abuse refer to any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children.

The school will ensure that it has up to date and relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable support to be given to the child according to their needs. DSLs should endeavour to alert relevant pastoral support staff as soon as possible where this is appropriate.

18. Online Safety

BIS's Online, E-Safety and Acceptable use of Technology Policies can be found on the school website or upon request. All staff will be made aware of the contents.

The E-safety Policy and related policies must be read alongside this document and in conjunction with the [DfE guidance: Teaching on-line safety in schools, 2019.](#)

Children must be safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. As such, the school ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place.

Online safety is included in our curriculum provision and ensures children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities. This may include covering relevant issues through a variety of lessons and learning opportunities.

Children increasingly use mobile phones, tablets and computers on a daily basis. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some adults and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. The Prevent Duty requires the School to safeguard vulnerable individuals from being radicalised or drawn into extremism through the internet or social media.

The School's e-safety policy is incorporated in the Student ICT Acceptable Use Policy. This explains how we try to keep children safe in School. Cyber-bullying and sexting by children, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other bullying-type behaviour and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures.

The following measures are in place to promote e-safety within the School:

- **ICT Acceptable Use Policy** - protects all parties by clearly stating what is acceptable and what is not. Children are expected to sign up to this at the start of each academic year and before access can be given to the School's ICT facilities.
- **Induction and Education** - all children are inducted in appropriate use of the School's ICT facilities and other aspects of this policy upon arrival. Subsequently, House Tutors remind children at the start of each academic year about their obligations and code of conduct. This is reinforced by a presentation in Houses about E-Safety.

Monitoring -the school will exercise its right to monitor the use of computer systems, including the monitoring of internet use, interception of e-mails and the deletion of inappropriate materials at all times. In circumstances where the school believes unauthorised use of the computer system is, or maybe taking place, or the system is, or may be, being used for unlawful purposes, the school reserves the right to inform appropriate authorities and provide documentary evidence. The computer network is owned by the school and may be used by children to advance and extend their knowledge and understanding.

Members of Staff also receive advice regarding the use of social networking and electronic communication with children, which follows the guidance given in the document '*Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People*' (DfE March 2009) and the school Communications Policy.

19. Opportunities to teach safeguarding

The school will ensure that children are taught about safeguarding. This may include covering relevant topics through learning in general but is covered particularly in Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education. This will be delivered through PSHE lessons. The subject of Relationships and Sex education is mandatory from September 2020.

19.1 Direction for Staff on e-safety

Staff should:

- ensure that personal social networking sites are set at private, and students are never listed as approved contacts;
- never use or access social networking sites of students;
- should not take photographs of students on their personal devices;
- should not give their personal contact details to students, including their mobile telephone number;
- only use equipment e.g mobile phones, provided by the school to communicate with children such as on field trips and expeditions;

20. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Staff at BIS have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with the DSL and potentially external investigating agencies, where possible, under the guidance of the DSL.

If a student confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the student sensitively that he/she has a responsibility to refer the matter to the DSL.

Accurate, signed, and dated written notes must be kept of all incidents or Child Protection concerns relating to individual students. If a teacher or any other staff have a child protection concern, they should inform the DSL or Deputy DSL as soon as possible. These will be kept on the student's Child Protection file.

Child Protection records must be retained securely. Arrangement for Child Protection documentations must comply with the schools Data Protection Policy together with data protection law and regulation applicable at the time. The DSL will ensure that all Child Protection records are held separately from other student records. Child Protection files and documents will be stored securely, by encryption and/or password protecting electronic files or ensuring that paper records are in a locked cabinet with restricted access. Information from child protection files will only be shared with relevant staff when it is necessary to do so and in a manner that is consistent with data protection law.

If the school receives a request for direct access to, or copies of, school documentation held on a Child Protection file, the Principal and DSL will be informed, and a decision taken on the appropriate way forward in accordance with the Data Protection Policy or further legal advice sought.

In the event of a student who is being dealt with under the school's child protection procedures transferring to another school, the school will:

- Find out the name of the receiving school (and, where appropriate, the Local Authority).
- Contact the relevant member of staff at that school to discuss the transfer.
- Securely send all information relating to the student to the receiving school (and, where relevant, the Local Authority).
- Check with the receiving school that the student has actually arrived there on the expected day (and inform all relevant agencies of the transfer).

Any external individual or organisation contracted by the school to work with school students must report any child protection incidents or disclosures from students to the Principal or DSL at the earliest opportunity. Such bodies will, as part of their contractual arrangements with the school, be required to work in accordance with the school's child protection and safeguarding policy. The school has in place data sharing agreements and complies with all relevant data sharing protocols.

21. Working with parents / individuals with parental responsibility

The British International School and Montessori Education recognises the importance of working, where appropriate, in partnership with parents and carers to ensure the welfare and safety of our students.

The school will therefore:

- Make parents aware of the school's statutory role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students, including the duty to refer students on, where necessary, by making all policies available on the website and on request.
- Work with parents to support the needs of their child.
- Consider the safety of the student and, should a concern arise, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has the responsibility to seek advice prior to contacting parents.
- Aim to help parents understand that the school has a responsibility for the welfare of all students and has a duty to refer cases to the Local Authority in the interests of the student as appropriate.
- Ensure a robust complaints system is in place to deal with issues raised by parents and carers.
- Provide advice and signpost parents and carers to other services where students need extra support.

22. Health and Safety

The principal will ensure that there is a robust, up to date Health and Safety Policy and Procedure to meet the statutory responsibility for the safety of students and staff at the school. The principal will identify and manage health and safety through the use of risk assessments, which are carried out:

- On an annual basis for the school learning spaces and environment in and outdoors.
- For all school trips and educational visits.
- For students travelling between locations during the school day.
- For all work-based learning on work experience placements.
- When a student returns, following an exclusion due to risky or violent behaviour.
- When there are any changes to the premises or practices.
- Following a serious accident in relation to staff and/or students.
- When there is a high-level risk associated with contact with parents.
- To maintain effective security of the premises including protection from intruders, trespassers, and/or criminal damage.

Visitors and contractors will be expected to:

- Report to the school reception on arrival.
- Provide proof of identity.
- Wear a name badge at all times.
- Receive suitable supervision by school staff when on site.
- Be made aware of the arrangements for safeguarding and health and safety.
- Comply with the relevant vetting checks specified through the school's recruitment process.

23. Site Safety and Security

The school's premises is an enclosed site, however once on the site the buildings allow access to all areas of the school during the school day. All members of the school's community are required to take responsibility

for site security and remain vigilant about trespassers. The School's Security Department provides oversight of the site and can be contacted 24/7 in the event of an emergency via Protec Customer Service and the School Operations team.

Visitors to the School, including contractors, are required to sign in at the main gate where they will be given a visitor badge on a lanyard with safeguarding information. Subject to their position and purpose, visitors should be escorted. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure that children in the school are kept safe.

24. Third Party use and off-site arrangements

The school's facilities, particularly the playground may be hired by Third Party Users (TPUs), and under these arrangements the school has no control over and assumes no liability for the conduct of individuals from TPUs. However, the School will ensure, as far as it is able, that TPUs have appropriate child protection and safer recruitment procedures in place. TPUs are also made aware of the school ground areas which are out of bounds, including specific parts of the building such as the boarding houses.

TPUs will be required to provide the school with a copy of the organisation's Child Protection Policy prior to approval being given for their use of the school's facilities and all TPUs providing activities, which involve children, will be required to sign a declaration to confirm that:

- the TPU has a child protection policy in place;
- safer recruitment procedures are followed for the TPU's staff and volunteers; and
- all staff and volunteers are appropriately trained in child protection and safeguarding procedures.

The Principal or the DSL will be informed of any child protection allegation or incident which takes place on the school premises during use by that organisation.

24.1 Procedure for dealing with an allegation of abuse by an individual or third-party user using the school's facilities

If an allegation of abuse is made about an adult in a TPU, the organisation's Safeguarding Officer must notify the Principal or the DSL on the same day as the incident occurred or the disclosure was made, or as soon as possible. The school expects the TPU to follow its own Child Protection Policy and they will require confirmation that appropriate action has been taken before further use of the School's facilities will be allowed.

25. External organisations who have responsibility for children on another site

When our children attend offsite activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, we will check that child effective child protection arrangements are in place, as outlined in the school's field trip risk assessments.

26. Photography and images on site

Most people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place.

To protect our children, we will:

- seek parental consent for photography of our students through the School's Terms & Conditions when children are admitted to the school.
- seek parental consent for photography of students which may be extraordinary e.g. photos of children in advertising, a staff member's portfolio of drama productions;
- demonstrate respect, care and caution when including photographs of students in Newsletters, Blogs and any other school publication;
- encourage children to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

27. Equal Opportunities

The British International School and Montessori Education and the Governing Body must take into account the Equality, Diversity, and Values Policy when discharging their duties under this policy. Please see the *Equal Opportunity Policy*.

28. Monitoring and Review of this Policy

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at BIS will monitor the working of this policy and will report as required to the Principal and the nominated governor. It will be reviewed annually.

The next review date for this policy shall be 1st September 2024

SEE APPENDIX 1,2 & 3 BELOW



Appendix 1 - Staff Guidance

1. Procedures in respect of Child Abuse

Child abuse exists where children have been physically or emotionally abused or severely neglected. Abuse of children is likely to be noticed by the school staff and Health Workers or Education Welfare Officers. It is essential, therefore, that all those whose work brings them into contact with children and their families know the signs of child abuse and are aware of the procedures that they must follow to safeguard the child.

The Guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 (UK) should be referred to for a list of those children who may be in need of safeguarding support.

BIS has the role of recognising and responding to potential indicators of abuse and neglect. All other action should be taken by those with statutory powers to help the child. Early contact and close liaison with such agencies are therefore regarded as essential by the school.

In the event of an actual or suspected case of child abuse by adults, parents, teachers, or any other adult, it is the responsibility of staff to report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for ensuring that the children are identified, and the appropriate agency is involved. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will attend any reviews called by the Local Authority may call on appropriate members of staff for reports. It is important that if staff overhear children discussing 'abuse' or 'neglect' that this information is relayed for investigation. Staff should not assume that somebody else will take action and must share information which might be critical in keeping children safe.

Staff leading school off-site visits, particularly residential ones, should provide a list of the students taking part to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), to ensure that they are made aware of all essential information relating to the students in their care. A confidential register will be maintained of all those students known to be at risk. Names will be entered on the register if it is confirmed by the Local Authority that the child is actually at risk.

2. Guidance for all staff on dealing with disclosure / suspected abuse / neglect / sexual harassment, sexual assault, violence, honour-based abuse (forced marriage and female genital mutilation), children who are at risk from or involved with violent crime and peer-on-peer abuse

I. Dealing with disclosures of abuse;

- Always listen carefully and quietly. Do not press for any evidence at all.
- Remain calm and reassuring. Do not dismiss the disclosure and do not show distress or concern.
- Do not refute the allegation.
- Show that you care through open and reassuring facial expressions and body language.
- Do not interrogate or ask leading questions (it could later undermine a case).

- Ensure you take a written verbatim account of the child's disclosure.
- Staff should be aware that written accounts could become part of a statutory assessment or criminal investigation.
- Where there is an online element, the key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child. Where viewing images is unavoidable, the following link provides advice on how to respond: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/759007/6_2939_SP_NCA_Sexting_In_Schools_FINAL_Update_Jan17.pdf

II. At this point, staff should take the following steps:

- Explain to the student that the disclosure must be reported – emphasise your trust in them.
- Do not promise to keep the allegation secret or that 'everything will be alright.'
- Reassure the student by telling them that they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not offer physical reassurance.
- Do not admonish in any way e.g. 'I wish you had told me sooner.'
- Inform the DSL initially verbally.
- Under no circumstances should you discuss the matter with any other person. If the allegations prove to be untrue, any such discussion would be deemed defamatory. Information to staff is on a 'need to know' basis at the discretion of the DSL.
- If the child agrees, and it is appropriate, take them with you to the DSL.
- With the DSL, prepare a detailed report itemising:
 - The information revealed by the student. It should not contain any opinion whatsoever.
 - Actions taken by yourself, including when the suspicions were reported, to whom the suspicions were reported, and follow-up action taken within the school.
- Date and sign any written record of events and action taken and keep confidential and secure.
- You must keep, in absolute confidence, a copy of the report, as will the DSL.
- The DSL keeps Child Protection records centrally and securely and are not kept in the child's file.
- All staff are under a duty to report all suspicions of abuse to the DSL.
- The DSL is responsible for passing on these concerns to Children's Services.
- Accurate records are essential in the event of further investigations.

III. If you see or hear something that is concerning:

- Don't ignore it or assume that it is someone else's responsibility to report it.
- Upload all information to the school's safeguarding systems and seek advice immediately from your DSL.
- Don't feel silly – if it worries you, someone else needs to know.
- If it is something related to safeguarding, but not a child whose safety is immediately at risk, inform the appropriate Pastoral Leader or safeguarding officer in person and follow up with a one-line email notifying the DSL that there is a safeguarding concern.
- If it is related to a child being at risk, see the DSL or Deputy DSL immediately and definitely before the child goes home that day where possible.
- All staff may raise concerns directly with Children's Services if they feel an incident is not being dealt with appropriately or they are unable to locate relevant staff.
- Concerns about adults in the school should be made directly to the Head Teacher.

Child Protection Procedures – Points of action;

1. If anyone discovers or suspects child abuse/peer on peer sexual violence or sexual harassment, they must inform the DSL. The DSL will, in the appropriate manner and according to procedures, assess the situation.
2. The DSL will, if appropriate, take the following steps:
 - Where there is a report of peer-on-peer sexual violence, the DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment in accordance with part five of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 (guidance for this can be found in Appendix 4).
 - Where there is a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
 - Where it is clear that a Child Protection Referral (significant harm) is needed, they will contact Social Services without delay.
Where the DSL is not sure whether it is a Child Protection issue, or where the DSL needs to check the Child Protection register, they may seek advice from the Sierra Leone Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children Affairs (MSWGCA)
 - Follow locally agreed protocols provided by the Local Authority.
3. The DSL or a delegated child protection officer will attend a Child Protection Conference. We recognise the importance of multi-agency working and will ensure that staff are able to attend all relevant meetings, case conferences, core groups, and strategy meetings. We will provide relevant training and support for staff required to attend any meetings.

Appendix 2 - Information on child abuse and categories of abuse

All BIS staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

1. Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children (peer on peer abuse).

In a situation where abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another peer, the child protection procedures outlined in this policy should be adhered to for both the victim and the alleged abuser. That is, it should be considered a childcare and protection issue for both children.

All abusers must be held accountable for their behaviour and work must be done to ensure that abusers take responsibility for their behaviour and acknowledge that the behaviour is unacceptable. If there is any conflict of interest between the welfare of the alleged abuser and the victim, the victim's welfare is of paramount importance.

Abusive behaviour that is perpetrated by peers must be taken seriously. It is known that some adult abusers begin abusing during childhood and adolescence, that significant numbers will have suffered abuse themselves, and that the abuse is likely to become progressively more serious. Early referral and intervention are therefore essential in line with paragraph 2 of this policy.

- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Up-skirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm.
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery).
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Please refer to the Department for Education advice:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools- and-colleges](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges)

- It could be through 'sexting' using online communications, text, or image messaging. Please refer to the online safety policy for further information. The Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre (CEOP) also provides further guidance on sexting at <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

2. Peer on peer abuse

Peer on peer can manifest itself in many ways. All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (referred to as peer on peer). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying).
- Physical abuse such as hitting, biting, kicking, shaking, hair-pulling, or causing physical harm.
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration, and sexual assault.
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Up-skirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm.
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery).
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

3. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child that causes severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunity to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploring or learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying) causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, exploitation, or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

4. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may include physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse as can other children.

5. Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic or physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

All staff and volunteers should be concerned about a child if he/she presents indicators of possible significant harm. Training will be provided to all staff on the 'signs of abuse.'

6. Signs of Abuse in Children

The following non-specific, broad signs may indicate something is wrong:

- Significant change in behaviour.
- Extreme anger or sadness.
- Aggressive and attention-seeking behaviour.
- Suspicious bruises with unsatisfactory explanations.
- Lack of self-esteem.
- Self-injury.
- Depression.
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour.
- Child Sexual Exploitation.

7. Risk Indicators

The factors described in this section are frequently found in cases of child abuse. Their presence is not proof that abuse has occurred, but they:

- Must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm.
- Justify the need for careful assessment and discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- May require consultation with and/or referral to Children's Services.
- The absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred. In an abusive relationship the child may:
 - Appear frightened of the parent/carers.
 - Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (though full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups).

The parent or carer may:

- Persistently avoid child health promotion services and treatment of the child's episodic illnesses.

- Have unrealistic expectations of the child, frequently complain about/to the child, and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism/low warmth environment). Be absent or misusing substances.
- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits.
- Be involved in domestic abuse.

Staff should be aware of the potential risk to children when individuals, previously known or suspected to have abused children, move into the household.

8. Recognising Physical Abuse

The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury.
- Several different explanations provided for an injury.
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment.
- The parents/carers are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury.
- Parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment.
- Repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a “cry for help” and if ignored could lead to a more serious injury).
- Family use of different doctors and A&E departments.
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries.

9. Bruising

Children can have accidental bruising, but the following must be considered as non-accidental unless there is evidence or adequate explanation provided:

- Two simultaneous bruised eyes (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive).
- Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally.
- Variation in colour possibly indicating injuries caused at different times.
- The outline of an object used e.g. belt marks, handprints, or a hairbrush.
- Bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe(s) indicating injury by pulling or twisting.
- Bruising around the face.
- Bruising on the arms, buttocks, and thighs may be an indicator of sexual abuse.

10. Bite Marks

Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3 cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child. A medical opinion should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite.

11. Burns and Scalds

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns and scalds and will always require experienced medical opinion. Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious e.g.:

- Circular burns from cigarettes (but may be friction burns if along the bony protuberance of the spine).
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements.
- Burns of uniform depth over a large area.
- Scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water of his/her own accord will struggle to get out and cause splash marks).
- Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation.

12. Fractures

Fractures may cause pain, swelling, and discolouration over a bone or joint. There are grounds for concern if:

- The history provided is vague, non-existent, or inconsistent with the fracture type.
- There are associated old fractures.
- Medical attention is sought after a period of delay when the fracture has caused symptoms such as swelling, pain, or loss of movement.

13. Scars

A large number of scars, scars of different sizes or ages, and scars on different parts of the body may suggest abuse.

14. Recognising Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also suggest the presence of other kinds of abuse.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Developmental delay.
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g. anxious, indiscriminate, or not appropriate attachment.
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach.
- Aggressive behaviour towards others.
- Scapegoating within the family, such as a parent blaming the child for something bad that happened to them (e.g. losing a job).
- Frozen watchfulness.
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence.
- Withdrawn or seen as a “loner” – difficulty relating to others.

The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse.

15. Recognising Signs of Sexual Abuse

Boys and girls of all ages may be sexually abused and are frequently scared to say anything due to guilt and/or

fear. This is particularly difficult for a child to talk about, and full account should be taken of the cultural sensitivities of any individual child/family. Recognition can be difficult, unless the child discloses and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioural.

Some behavioural indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct.
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play, or conversation, inappropriate to the child's age.
- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation.
- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self-mutilation, and suicide attempts.
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners.
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes e.g. for sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties).

Some physical indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Pain or itching of genital area.
- Blood on underclothes.
- Pregnancy in a younger girl where the identity of the father is not disclosed.
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising buttocks, abdomen, and thighs, and sexually transmitted disease

16. Sexual Abuse by Young People

The boundary between what is abusive and what is part of normal childhood or youthful experimentation can be blurred. The determination of whether behaviour is developmental, inappropriate, or abusive will hinge around the related concepts of true consent, power imbalance, and exploitation.

This may include children and young people who exhibit a range of sexually problematic behaviour such as indecent exposure, obscene telephone calls, fetishism, bestiality, and sexual abuse against adults, peers, or children. This may also include online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

It may include:

- Non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos.
- Sexualised online bullying.
- Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media.
- Sexual exploitation
- Coercion and threats.

Developmental sexual activity encompasses those actions that are to be expected from children and young people as they move from infancy through to an adult understanding of their physical, emotional, and behavioural relationships with each other. Such sexual activity is essentially information gathering and experience testing. It is characterised by mutuality and of the seeking of consent.

Inappropriate sexual behaviour can be inappropriate socially, inappropriate to development, or both. In considering whether behaviour fits into this category, it is important to consider what negative effects it has on any of the parties involved and what concerns it raises about a child or young person. It should be

recognised that some actions may be motivated by information seeking, but still cause significant upset, confusion, worry, physical damage, etc. It may also be that the behaviour is “acting out” which may derive from other sexual situations to which the child or young person has been exposed.

If an act appears to have been inappropriate, there may still be a need for some form of behaviour management or intervention. For some children, educative inputs may be enough to address the behaviour. Abusive sexual activity includes any behaviour involving coercion, threats, or aggression together with secrecy, or where one participant relies on an unequal power base.

17. Assessment

In order to more fully determine the nature of an incident and the presence of exploitation, the following factors should be given consideration:

- Equality – consider differentials of physical, cognitive, and emotional development, power and control and authority, passive and assertive tendencies.
- Consent – consider whether an incident appeared consensual or non-consensual,
- keeping in mind that consent means willing agreement. This requires consideration of all the following:
- Understanding that is based on age, maturity, development level, functioning, and experience.
- Knowledge of society’s standards for what is being proposed – awareness of
- potential consequences and alternatives.
- Assumption that agreements or disagreements will be respected equally.
- Voluntary decision.
- Mental competence.

18. Recognising Neglect

Evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time and can cover different aspects of parenting. Indicators include:

- Failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs e.g. adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene, and medical care.
- A child seen to be listless, apathetic, and unresponsive with no apparent medical cause.
- Failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss.
- Child thrives away from home environment.
- Child frequently absent from school.
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent.
- Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods
- Coercion – a young perpetrator who abuses may use techniques like bribing, manipulation, and emotional threats of secondary gains and losses that is loss of love, friendship, etc. Some may use physical force, brutality, or the threat of these regardless of victim resistance.

Appendix 3 - The School's Statutory Duty and Guidance Documents

This policy sets out how BIS will meet its statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of our students. It has been developed in accordance with the law and guidance found at <https://www.gov.uk/> that seeks to protect children.

Further guidance in relation to the safeguarding topics covered in this policy include:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Multi-agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation
- Teaching Online Safety in Schools
- Information about mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation
- Protecting Children from Radicalisation: The Prevent Duty
- Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales
- Inspecting safeguarding in maintained schools and academies
- Inspecting safeguarding in safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings
- Competence Still Matters: Safeguarding training for all employees and volunteers
- Preventing Youth Violence and Gang Involvement
- Safeguarding in Schools: Best Practice
- Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines
- Sexual Offences Act
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004 and The Education Act 2002
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools: Departmental Advice
- Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation
- Sexting in Schools, Aug 2016, UK Council for Internet Safety
- Learning together to be safe - a toolkit to help schools contribute to the prevention of violent extremism
- The Prevent Strategy: A Guide for Local Partners in England

*If anyone wishes to seek further information or guidance, they can refer to the above documents.

***Follow the link below to read the new Keeping Children safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023**

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1161273/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023_-_statutory_guidance_for_schools_and_colleges.pdf

Effective / Review Dates

This policy is effective from: 1st September 2023 and supersedes the previous Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

This policy is due for review and republication on: 1st September 2024

