

## Child Protection Policy

### Purpose of this Child Protection Policy

There are many purposes for this Child Protection policy. One is to establish clear guidance on how members of staff can respond if they sense that a student is suffering from abuse. Another aim of this policy is to set out clear guiding principles as to how members of staff should interact with pupils in a way that would be positive and contribute to their social, emotional and physical development and well-being. Overall, this policy has a goal of making explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures.

### Introduction

Our school policy has been developed in accordance with UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, which the Vietnamese Government is a signatory of, and which focuses upon all children who have the right to protection, regardless of age, religion, gender, race, culture or disability.

### School Commitment

Renaissance International School understands that high self-esteem, confidence, peer support and clear lines of communication with trusted adults helps all children, especially those at risk of or suffering from abuse. Our school recognises the contribution it can make to protecting and supporting our pupils. At Renaissance International School Saigon, we aim to provide our pupils with a safe and stimulating learning environment, one in which children can achieve their full potential. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to; that they know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Ensure that staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to Child Protection concerns.
- Include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

### Designated Member of staff for Child Protection

The role of the designated person includes the following responsibilities:

- To act as the sole point of contact for staff who have concerns that a child might be suffering from abuse.
- To ensure staff are familiar with and follow the Child Protection Policy.
- To promote best safeguarding practices across the school to both

- pupils and staff.
- To provide guidance on relevant matters to school staff.
  - To make any necessary referrals to the Head of School and in extreme cases, the police.
  - To ensure the school contributes fully to the child protection process.

### **Screening and Selection**

The Renaissance International School Saigon understands that the first step in creating a safe environment is careful screening and selection of those who might work closely with the children in the school. Before being approved for hire, all applicants must complete:

- A criminal Background Check.
- A Sex Offender Registry Check (if available in the country individual applicants are coming from).
- The Acknowledgment of Renaissance International School Saigon Child Protection Policies.

Renaissance International School Saigon will not employ or retain any person who has been convicted of any sexual offense or violent crime.

### **Education and Training**

People who are trained in abuse prevention are more likely to understand their role as protector, to recognise the signs that abuse is occurring, and to report suspicious or inappropriate behaviours. In order to educate employees how to detect the warning signs of abuse and deal with disclosures, all staff at Renaissance International School Saigon will be provided with an inset at the start of the new school year in order to best equip them on how to do this.

### **Staff Roles and Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of everyone to protect children by responding to child protection concerns. Education staff have a crucial role to play in helping to identify concerns, and indicators of possible abuse or neglect, at an early stage. Staff should be clear about their role and the procedure for reporting to the designated person. They should report:

- 1) any concerns that a child or young person is suffering or is likely to be suffering some form of abuse.
- 2) any allegations of abuse or unsafe practices against staff
- 3) any disclosures of abuse

### **Reporting and Responding**

It is important for every member of this school to participate actively in the protection of pupils. In the event that members of staff observe a concern involving a child, the child's family members, or another member of staff in school, it is their personal responsibility to immediately share their observations.



In all cases where teachers, or other members of staff, consider that they have good cause to suspect abuse – including neglect and emotional ill treatment – they should:

- 1) Report their concerns to the Designated Member of Child Protection, either in person or via email within 24 hours of the initial concern.
- 2) Fill out the *Cause for Concern Referral Form*, located in the Child Protection folder in the P drive.
- 3) Send the *Cause for Concern Referral Form* to the Designated Person for Child Protection, either via email or on hard copy.

The Designated Person for Child Protection will assess the severity before deciding the next steps. These might include:

- Making relevant staff aware that there is a concern with the child and they are in a vulnerable position.
- Discussing what actions have taken place.
- Evaluating the impact of these actions.
- Following up regularly on the situation of concern.

Once a concern has been expressed about the treatment of a student or an allegation of misconduct has been made, steps will be taken immediately to reduce any subsequent risk to the student, to any involved members of staff, and to the school.

### **Supporting pupils at risk**

Our school recognises that children who experience abuse or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in positive way. School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. For this reason, in the case of suspected abuse, the school would need to take the appropriate next steps that would be in the best interest of the child, and which would also work best within the context of an International British School in Vietnam

Renaissance International School Saigon has a commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's interest to do so. In the situation that there is a concern that proves to be a *recurrent pattern* of abuse or neglect, having *damaging* effects on the child, then the school would take a holistic approach in meeting with involved parties in order to come to a resolution that would be culturally sensitive yet best benefit the child.

In the case that an abuse is investigated and discovered to be of a *severe nature*, then the concern would be communicated to the local and appropriate authorities.

### **Record Keeping**

Record keeping is an important element of the child protection process. When filling out the Cause for Concern form, staff will be asked to include the following:

- The reason for the concern
- What was said or witnessed
- Dates and times of incidents
- Date and time when notes were made

- That the report should be signed

**Interaction, Practices and Code of Conduct**

A policy that clearly defines appropriate and inappropriate physical and verbal interactions between staff and pupils protects all parties.

**Physical Interactions**

The Renaissance International School Saigon policies for appropriate and inappropriate physical interactions are:

<i><b>Appropriate Physical Interactions</b></i>	<i><b>Inappropriate Physical Interactions</b></i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Side hugs.</li> <li>• Shoulder-to-shoulder or “temple” hugs.</li> <li>• Pats on the shoulder or back.</li> <li>• Handshakes.</li> <li>• “High-fives” and hand slapping.</li> <li>• Verbal praise.</li> <li>• Pats on the head when culturally appropriate.</li> <li>• Touching hands, shoulders, and arms. Arms around shoulders.</li> <li>• Holding hands (with smaller children in escorting situations).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kisses on the mouth.</li> <li>• Touching bottom, chest or genital areas.</li> <li>• Staff sleeping in bed with a child.</li> <li>• Touching knees or legs.</li> <li>• Wrestling.</li> <li>• Piggyback rides.</li> <li>• Any type of massage given by or to a child.</li> <li>• Getting undressed in front of pupils.</li> <li>• Compliments that relate to body development.</li> <li>• Any form of affection that is unwanted by the child or the staff.</li> </ul>

**Verbal Interactions**

The Renaissance International School Saigon policies for appropriate and inappropriate verbal interactions are:

<i><b>Appropriate Verbal Interactions</b></i>	<i><b>Inappropriate Verbal Interactions</b></i>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive reinforcement.</li> <li>• Appropriate jokes.</li> <li>• Encouragement.</li> <li>• Praise.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name calling.</li> <li>• Discussing sexual encounters or in any way involving children in the personal problems or issues of staff.</li> <li>• Shaming</li> <li>• Telling off-color or sexual jokes.</li> <li>• Telling secrets of an intimate and inappropriate nature.</li> <li>• Cursing.</li> </ul>
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**Discipline Practices**

A policy that clearly defines inappropriate discipline practices protects all parties. The Renaissance International School Saigon policies for inappropriate discipline practices are:

<b><i>Inappropriate Discipline Practices</i></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hitting.</li> <li>• Spanking.</li> <li>• Shaking.</li> <li>• Slapping.</li> <li>• Using physical exercise as a consequence.</li> <li>• Withholding food, light, or medical care.</li> <li>• Name calling.</li> <li>• Shoving.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pulling hair or ears.</li> <li>• Biting.</li> <li>• Pinching.</li> <li>• Shaming.</li> <li>• Using derogatory remarks.</li> <li>• Ostracizing.</li> <li>• Using mechanical, tape, or rope restraints.</li> <li>• Punishing for toileting accidents.</li> </ul>

**Contact Outside of Regular School Activities**

Under some circumstances, school personnel may find it beneficial to a student to spend time with the student outside of regularly scheduled school activities. The Renaissance International School Saigon policies for appropriate and inappropriate outside contact are:

<b><i>Appropriate Outside Contact</i></b>	<b><i>Inappropriate Outside Contact</i></b>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking groups of children out for dinner after a school sponsored event.</li> <li>• Taking groups of children to a sporting activity.</li> <li>• Attending functions at the child's home, with parents there. Home visits, with parents there.</li> <li>• Having groups of children in the home of an employee.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking one child on an outing without the parents' written permission.</li> <li>• Visiting one child in the child's home, without a parent being present.</li> <li>• Individual child spending the night with an employee.</li> </ul>
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### General Staff Code of Conduct

Our school is committed to creating an environment for children that is safe, nurturing, empowering, and which promotes growth and success for all who learn in our school. The Code of Conduct outlines specific expectations of staff and volunteers as we strive to accomplish this goal together.

1. Children will be treated with respect at all times.
2. Children will be treated fairly and with equal opportunities in all situations at school regardless of race, sex, age, or religion.
3. Staff will not swear or tell off-color jokes.
4. Staff will not discuss with children their sexual encounters or in anyway involve children in their personal problems or issues.
5. Staff will not use or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs in the presence of children.
6. Staff will not have sexually oriented materials, including printed or Internet pornography, in the presence of children.
7. Staff will not have secrets of an intimate nature with children.
8. Staff will not stare or comment on a child's body in an intimate and inappropriate nature.
9. Staff will avoid affection that cannot be observed.
10. Staff shall not abuse children in anyway including the following:
  - Physical abuse:* hitting, spanking, shaking, slapping, unnecessary restraints
  - Verbal abuse:* degrade, threaten, cursing
  - Sexual abuse:* inappropriate touch, exposing oneself, sexually oriented conversations
  - Mental abuse:* shaming, humiliation, cruelty
  - Neglect:* withholding food, water, shelter
11. Staff will report concerns or complaints about all children and staff, including members of senior management, to the Designated Person for Child Protection

Any type of abuse will not be tolerated and will be handled on an individual basis. Renaissance International School Saigon will fully cooperate with authorities if allegations of severe abuse are discovered and harmful to a child in the school.

**Confidentiality**

Staff cannot keep a disclosure of abuse confidential and must refer the matter on to the Designated Person for Child Protection. Any observations of questionable staff conduct must also be communicated in order to be addressed and resolved.

Other staff may need to be alerted to concerns about a child or young person, possibly in order to monitor the concern or to gather further evidence prior to a referral being made, or to assist in providing appropriate support to a child or young person after a referral has been made.

Information reported will be kept confidential and will only be shared on a strict need to know basis.

**Concluding Notes**

It is essential that members of staff at Renaissance International School Saigon understand this policy and the procedures it outlines. Having a sound understanding of this policy will ensure that teachers know the procedure to follow if they detect a child protection concern, and in turn help to best protect all children in school from anything that might cause them harm.

**Acknowledgement of Renaissance International School Saigon Child Protection Policies**

I have read and agree to follow the terms outlined in this policy.

Signature of Employee

Date

Printed Name of Employee

Date

This Policy will be reviewed annually by the Designated Member of Child Protection and the Head of School.