



CHILDREN PROTECTION POLICY

1. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

- Provide Child Protection documentation that is appropriate to Nest International School and its context
- Provide the necessary definitions and assessment tools for clear identification and recognition of abuse/neglect situations
- Ensure an exemplary standard of child protection at Nest International School
- Ensure that prompt and adequate assistance is provided to a child in need of special care and protection
- Define procedures for staff members and establish clear reporting guidelines and mechanisms
- Outline processes and protocols for Nest International School in connecting to its local community, and to agencies for child protection support

This document outlines Nest International School's safeguarding and child protection policy. It applies to all adults, including volunteers, working in or on behalf of the school.

2. Aim of Policy

To ensure that all members of the Nest International School community help keep children and young people safe by:

- contributing to the provision of safe learning environments for children and young people
- taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe at school
- identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm
- communicating to the school and wider community our commitment to safeguarding children

This policy outlines how Nest International School will:

- provide parents, staff and learners with a developmentally-appropriate common definition of and understanding about child abuse (physical, neglect, sexual and emotional)
- create an environment where children and young people feel secure, have their viewpoints valued, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- continue to develop awareness in all staff of the need for safeguarding learner wellbeing in all aspects of their work and their responsibilities in identifying abuse, with particular care being taken with children with disabilities and learning needs
- ensure that all staff are aware of the referral procedures and Designated Safeguarding Leads within the school

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- provide a systematic means of monitoring all learners who have been identified as 'having protection needs'
- ensure that outside agencies are involved as appropriate
- ensure that key concepts of safeguarding are integrated within the curriculum
- ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried
- provide information for parents/carers outlining the procedures laid down by this policy
- ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of all staff and volunteers who work with children

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all members of the Nest International School community - all staff, learners, parents, and visitors to the school.

4. Policy Statement

Child abuse and neglect are concerns throughout the world, which can have serious short and long-term psychological and physical implications for victims. Child abuse and neglect are violations of a child's human rights and are obstacles to the child's education as well as to their physical, emotional, and spiritual development.

Schools fill a special institutional role in society as protectors of children. Schools need to ensure that all children in their care are afforded a safe and secure environment in which to grow and develop, both at school and away. Educators, having the opportunity to observe and interact with children over time, are in a unique position to identify children who are in need of help and protection. As such, educators have a professional and ethical obligation to identify children who are in need of help and protection, and to take steps to ensure that the child and family avail themselves of the services needed to remedy any situation that constitutes child abuse or neglect.

All staff employed at Nest International School must report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect whenever the staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered, or is at significant risk of suffering abuse or neglect. Reporting and follow up of all suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect will proceed in accordance with administrative regulations respective to this policy. Furthermore, cases of suspected child abuse or neglect may be reported to the appropriate child protection agency in the home country, and/or to local authorities.

Nest International School seeks to be a safe haven for learners who may be experiencing abuse or neglect in any aspect of their lives. As such, Nest International School will distribute this policy annually to all parents and applicants, will communicate this policy annually to learners, will provide training for all staff, will make every effort to implement hiring practices to ensure the safety of children, and will review the policy annually for compliance and effectiveness.

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In the case of a staff member reported as an alleged offender, Nest International School will conduct a full investigation following a carefully designed course of due process, keeping the safety of the child at the highest priority.

PROCEDURES

1. Reporting

It is a legal obligation for faculty, staff, and administrators, either as individuals or members of the institution, to report incidents of, or concerns about, physical or psychological violence, aggression, harassment, and physical or sexual abuse.

2. Wellbeing Team

The wellbeing teams in both the primary and secondary schools are responsible for the on-going proactive support for and monitoring of wellbeing in the school. Some, but not necessarily all, members of the wellbeing team will comprise part of the incident response team (see below).

3 Wellbeing Leadership Team - Whole School

This team provides the oversight and strategic leadership of the child protection provision in the whole school. It is led by the Designated Safeguarding Leads, reports to the Head of School and is responsible for the on-going monitoring, review and improvement of the child protection provision at Nest International School, including the following:

- Setting the schedule for lessons and other child protection tasks for the school year
- Identifying mandatory training requirements for staff and learners (i.e. annual training including bus drivers, park supervisors, parent volunteers, canteen staff, cleaners, building maintenance and ECA after school external providers.)
- Ensuring provision is up-to-date with research and current best practices
- Providing a group and venue where concerns can be discussed/assessed for suspected maltreatment to support teachers
- Addressing barriers to effective provision, such as teacher reluctance to report
- Providing emergency/after-hours contact points
- Interfacing with local social/medical/legal services and expertise
- Conducting annual review and internal audit of compliance and quality/effectiveness and analysis of policies and procedures every 2 years (including annual review by the school board)
- Collecting and collating brief descriptions of each case for ongoing research
- Ensuring access to resources in the community, Paris area, and beyond (perhaps via staff who are not on the team):

- o Legal/Social - social services, local police contacts, school or other e.g. lawyer o Education/Training/Advocacy - colleges, universities, schools, other providers of resources,
- o Research - colleges, universities, other schools, local/national associations e.g. children's health, general health
- o Medical/Psychological - external counselors/psychiatrists/therapists/doctors specializing in children's health; school nurses locally; local associations specialising in abuse or victims of abuse

4 Incident Response Team

When a child protection concern is reported, the Vice Principal of Wellbeing will inform the Head of

School and the Principal, and convene the response team. This team will be lead by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (i.e. VP Wellbeing) and will include the school counsellor, the school nurse, the relevant Head of Grade and the Principal.

GUIDELINES FOR AWARENESS, TRAINING AND PREVENTION

1. Parent/Community Awareness

It is vital that the school's commitment to the highest possible standards of safeguarding and child protection for all learners is communicated clearly to the variety of stakeholders who come into contact with the school.

- School safety goals and objectives are communicated regularly to all parents.
- Child Protection Policy and Procedures are available on request.
- The school's commitment to child protection is stated clearly on the school's marketing and communications materials -
- New families receive specific information regarding the school's policies and procedures as part of the 'New Parent Orientation'.
- A statement of intent and procedures to be followed are included in the learner/parent handbooks.
- Guidance and resources on learner safety issues and how parents can talk with their children are available from the counsellor and VP Learner Wellbeing and through regular learner information evenings.
- Safeguarding training is provided for all Class Reps and Parent Volunteers.

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2. Staff Recruitment

The school is committed to maintaining procedures to ensure the safe recruitment and selection of all teaching and non-teaching staff.

Screening and criminal background checks

One effective means of preventing child abuse is screening out potential abusers before they come to the school. All personnel, staff, teachers, volunteers, and other members of the community whose potential employment or volunteer service involves direct contact with, and/or the potential for unmonitored access to children (including any individuals who regularly provide transportation to children) are given thorough reference and criminal background checks.

Human Resources will be responsible for initiating and evaluating the applicants for positions. All positions whether short-term/permanent/part-time/full-time will require background checks. The elements of the comprehensive background check will include:

- A written application and a “statement of suitability” (eg. covering letter)
- The requirement for a signature on a document stating that the applicant knows of no reason or prior circumstance that would preclude him/her from working safely with children
- A personal interview, to include a question(s) regarding awareness and observation of professional boundaries; appropriateness of relationships with children; commitment to and evidence of taking action to protect children.
- Credential checks, including requested assurances regarding: awareness and observation of professional boundaries; appropriateness of relationships with children; commitment to and evidence of taking action to protect children.
- Criminal history background checks to be provided at the point of application, from all previous countries of residence over the last 10 years,
- Background checks, which will be re-done on a 5-yearly cycle, and will be administered for all staff returning from sabbatical or long-term leave of one year or more.
- Published procedures as to how and by whom criminal history records will be reviewed and evaluated (with criteria for disqualification) – including a description of the appeal process.
- A statement that all background screening accomplished by or on behalf of the organization will comply with relevant privacy laws.

It will be made clear to all applicants that any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in the information provided by the applicant, whenever discovered, may result in disqualification from, or termination of employment or volunteer service with the organization.

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All hiring practices with regard to background checks and suitability for employment adhere to French

Contractors and Service Providers

No contractors, vendors and service providers operating on-site during school operating hours will be left with unsupervised access to learners.

Further, when Nest International School enters into a contractual relationship with an external organization where that external organization will be bringing minor children onto its property (such as field trip venues, study centres, or sports facilities), these organizations will be required to provide evidence beforehand that the adults accompanying the minors have undergone the appropriate background and criminal record checks where possible.

4. Staff Training

Regular staff training is conducted to ensure staff feel confident about all aspects of child protection:

Awareness, types, signs/symptoms, prevention, policies and laws, reporting process, children's curricula, local authority support and resources available. Specifically:

5. Learner Awareness

Learners' own awareness of issues affecting their personal safety (including abuse) and strategies for dealing with difficult situations is vital. At NEST INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL learners are made aware of these through:

- An anti-bullying policy is publicized and implemented.
- Age-appropriate curriculum based on core elements and evidence-based practices is written and taught to learners annually.

6. Facilities and Security

School leadership ensures that all facilities are secure and appropriate to respect the safety and wellbeing of learners in accordance with French national laws. The Commission de Securite conducts reviews and inspections every 5 years.

All rooms into which learners are permitted have a window in the door, except the counselling office and the infirmary.

Learners are not permitted on-campus before school opening hours. End of day sweeps are made by a member of staff to ensure no learners are left in the buildings.

Off-site facilities are regularly reviewed in terms of safety and security.

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Crisis procedures (lock-down, evacuation, bomb/terrorist attacks, fire) are reviewed annually and drills are regularly conducted.

Security guards are present on both campuses at the school gates and entrances for the entirety of the school day. Security guards are required to conduct regular daily sweeps of the school premises and direct surroundings.

Terminology

Child Protection

...is a broad term used to describe philosophies, policies, standards, guidelines and procedures to protect children from both intentional and unintentional harm. In this document, the term “child protection” applies to the protection of children at NEST INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL.

Child Protection Policy

...is a statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to protecting learners from harm (to self and from others) and makes clear to all what is required in relation to the protection of learners. It serves to create a safe and positive environment for children and to demonstrate that the school is taking its duty and responsibility seriously. This handbook considers that NEST INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL will provide appropriate child safety classes supported with a well-defined curriculum to increase children’s ability to understand abuse prevention.

Child protection concerns

...include suspected, alleged, self-disclosed, or witnessed abuse of a child by anyone associated within or outside the school which must be investigated and followed by appropriate action.

Child Abuse

According to the World Health Organization, child abuse constitutes “all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.” **Physical abuse (child in danger)**

...may involve hitting, punching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, biting, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing intentional physical harm to a child. (These symptoms could also indicate harm to self, such as cutting and suicidal ideation).

Emotional abuse (child in danger)

...is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child so as to cause severe and adverse effects on a child's emotional development. It may involve: conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved; that they are inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person; age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children; causing children frequently to feel frightened; or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may also occur alone.

Sexual abuse and violence (child in danger)

...involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (i.e. rape) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the

Neglect (child at risk)

...is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or physiological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development.