

Istanbul Child Protection Policy

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Rationale

All children have the right to be protected from violence, exploitation and abuse. Yet, millions of children worldwide from all socioeconomic backgrounds, across all ages, religions and cultures suffer violence, exploitation and abuse every day. Millions more are at risk¹. MEF School aims to ensure that all students are given a safe learning environment by maintaining appropriate practices and supervision in the school so that children can play, learn, develop and achieve.

The school will establish appropriate procedures to ensure proper reporting of suspected child abuse which may have occurred in or out of school. Such reporting is the responsibility of any employee who suspects that a child/youth may have been abused and must also include provisions for self-reporting of abuse by students. This policy aims for students to feel safe and empowered to tell or communicate if they are being harmed in some way. The school will investigate all reports and will take appropriate action to ensure the safety of children in accordance with Turkish law and international safeguarding best practice.

MEF International School's Child Protection Policy is based on international law and on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which Turkey is a signatory² and MEF fully endorses. In particular, the two key articles which address protection to children are:

Article 19 – Protection from abuse and neglect: The State shall protect the child from all forms of maltreatment by parents or others responsible for the care of the child and establish appropriate social programs for the prevention of abuse and the treatment of victims.

Article 34 – Sexual exploitation: The State shall protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse, including prostitution & involvement in pornography.

Definitions on types of abuse can be found in *Appendix 1*.

Definition of a Child

For the purposes of this document, a "child" is defined as anyone under the age of 18 which is in line with the UN Conventions of the Rights of the Child. At MEF International School, any student who is over the age of 18, will still be included within this definition.

Key Responsibilities

We will meet our commitment to protect children from abuse through the following means:

¹ Unicef: https://www.unicef.org/protection/57929_57972.html

² United Nations Treaty Collection:
https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-11&chapter=4&lang=en

- **Awareness:** we will ensure that all staff and others are aware of the problem of child abuse and the risks to children.
- **Prevention:** we will ensure, through awareness and good practice that staff and others minimise the risks to children.
- **Reporting:** we will ensure that staff and others are clear what steps to take where concerns arise regarding the safety of children.
- **Responding:** we will ensure that action is taken to support and protect children where concerns arise regarding possible abuse.

In order to ensure that the above standards of reporting and responding are met we will ensure that we:

- Take seriously any concerns raised
- Take positive steps to ensure the protection of children who are the subject of any concerns
- Support children, staff or other adults who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns
- Act appropriately and effectively in instigating or cooperating with any subsequent process of investigation
- Are guided through the child protection process by the principle of the “best interests of the child”
- Listen and take seriously the views and wishes of children
- Work in partnership with parents and other professionals to ensure the protection of children.³
- All members of MEF School’s community are required to take reasonable precautions and/or measures to protect the safety and well-being of the school’s children and youth from bullying, neglect, and child abuse including physical, emotional or sexual abuse, and sexual or commercial exploitation.
- In summary, all school community members contribute to the school being a “safe haven” for children.

This is best accomplished through:

- Appropriate personal conduct whenever interacting with children and youth.
- Awareness or increased understanding of potential harmful conduct or behaviors in the prevention or mediation of potential abuse or neglect.
- Removal of a child or youth from an immediate dangerous situation.
- The reporting of inappropriate conduct, neglect, or abuse; or reasonable suspicion thereof.
- Children and youth should also exemplify respectful and dignified conduct toward one another and other members of the community in conjunction with the school’s code of conduct.

³ Save the Children; <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/2690/pdf/2690.pdf>

- In consideration of age and grade appropriateness, children and youth should receive training for appropriate/inappropriate conduct and the reporting of reasonable incidents/procedures.

Applicability

Members of the school community in which this policy applies include:

- All employees of MEF School and employees of the school's affiliated organizations.
- Individuals and entities with contractual relationships with the school.
- Board members/governors/owners and other school leaders.
- All students, parents, and legal guardians; in particular, with respect to upholding the school's code of conduct, respect for one another, and the reporting of incidents/reasonable suspicions.
- All school chaperones and volunteers who work with children and youth; or participate in school programs and activities involving children and youth.
- Visitors, vendors, or guests on school premises.

MEF School understands that "appropriate personal conduct" is also dependent on cultural expectations and the need to comply with the legal and ethical expectations and requirements regarding child/youth abuse within the country in which the school operates.

In this regard, and as noted in this policy, the school attempts to inform and train applicable community members with regard to these factors.

Child Protection Leadership

Child Protection is the responsibility of everyone.

Child protection is overseen by the Designated Safeguarding Team (DST), consisting of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and two Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL). The Principals and Assistant General Manager are kept up to date via the DST. The DST will meet weekly to strengthen the child protection work of the school. Additionally there is a child protection committee for ratifying changes in policy.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The role of Designated Safeguarding Lead is important for all members of the school community to know. They are responsible for:

- Ensuring all policies relating to Child Protection are up to date and being followed
- Keeping up to date with international best practice for Child Protection
- Maintaining a single central record (SCR) system where all records are kept up to date

- Coordinating action on child abuse within the school, ensuring all staff/volunteers are aware of their responsibilities in relation to child protection
- Ensuring Child Protection Training has been undertaken by all staff
- Ensuring Child Protection is a high profile topic in the school
- Referring individual cases of suspected abuse to the Principal and Assistant General Manager on all issues relating to child protection
- Ensuring records are shared when necessary.
- Supporting the development of Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

This role is responsible for 3 main tasks:

1. Deputising should the DSL be absent, especially long term absence.
2. Receiving Child Protection Disclosures

This means the DDSL's must understand and be able to do all the work of the DSL and should be provided with significant training to be able to do so.

At least one member of the DST must be able to:

3. Be the point person for Turkish speaking staff.

Many staff on campus do not speak English yet an office worker, custodian, cook or security guard may need to disclose at some point. They may find it difficult to approach a non-Turkish speaker and so having a Turkish Speaking point person is very important.

Child Protection Committee

This is comprised of:

The DSL

The DDSL's

The Principals

The Deputy Principal

The Assistant General Manager

School Counsellors

The School Doctor or Nurse

Together, they will review all relevant policies and be ready to support any child safeguarding needs when needed.

The Child Protection Committee will be convened to receive updates of practices, pressing situations or to ratify changes of policy.

Reporting Procedures

When to Raise a Concern

The first indication of concern about a child's welfare is not necessarily the presence of a serious injury. Concerns may be because of:

- bruises or marks on a child's body
- remarks made by the child, another child, a parent or another adult
- observations of the child's behaviour
- unexplained changes in the child's behaviour or personality
- evidence of disturbance or explicit detail about abuse or possible abuse in a child's writing or drawing
- evidence of neglect, failure to thrive or exposure to unnecessary risks
- unauthorised absence from school
- information about the parent(s)/ carer(s) of the child or their home background
- misuse of information technology e.g. sexting, inappropriate comments on social media, cyber-bullying etc.

Every staff member is obliged to immediately provide any information of a possible case of child abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Team. This information could be from a student who has disclosed, personal observation or any other source.

We take all concerns raised seriously. It is not the person first hearing or encountering a case of alleged or suspected abuse to decide whether abuse has taken place; it is their responsibility to immediately report the concern. Any adult who withholds information or covers up any kind of abuse is considered an accomplice.

If a concern relates to a member of staff, it should be reported directly to a principal. If the concern relates to the principal, the referral should be taken to the Assistant General Manager.

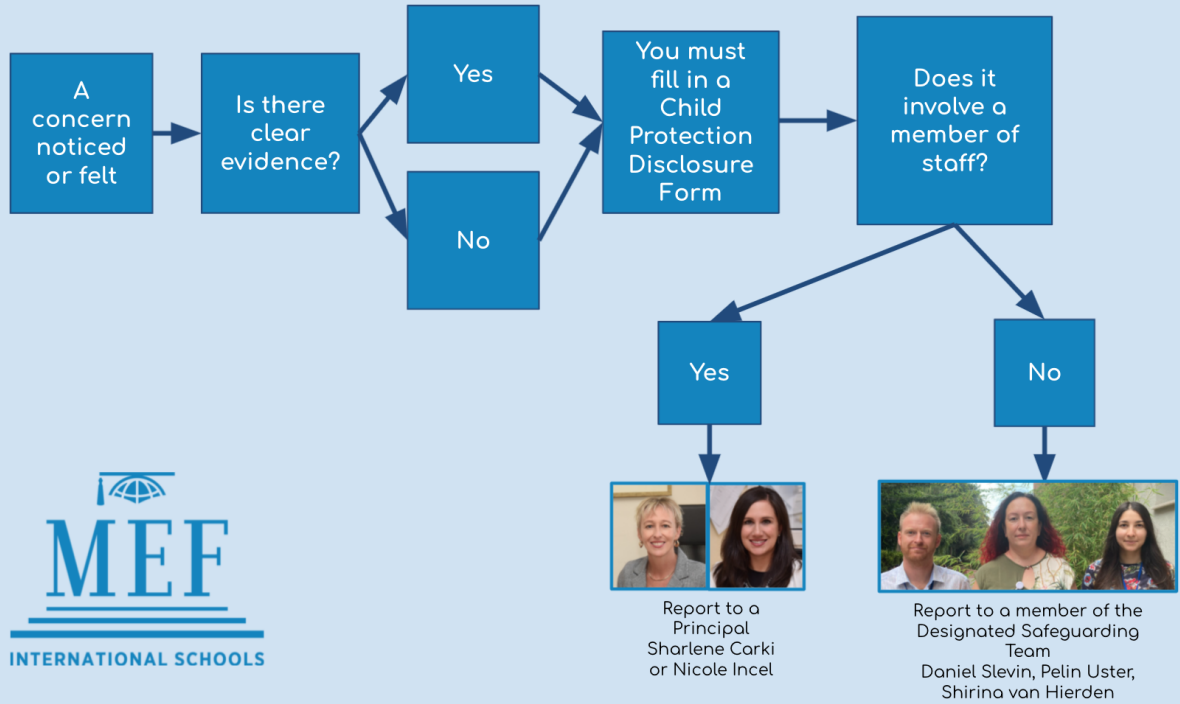
Reporting Maps

The Reporting Maps below show who any concerns relating to child protection should be reported to. The Turkish version enables non-English speakers of Turkish to disclose any information with ease.

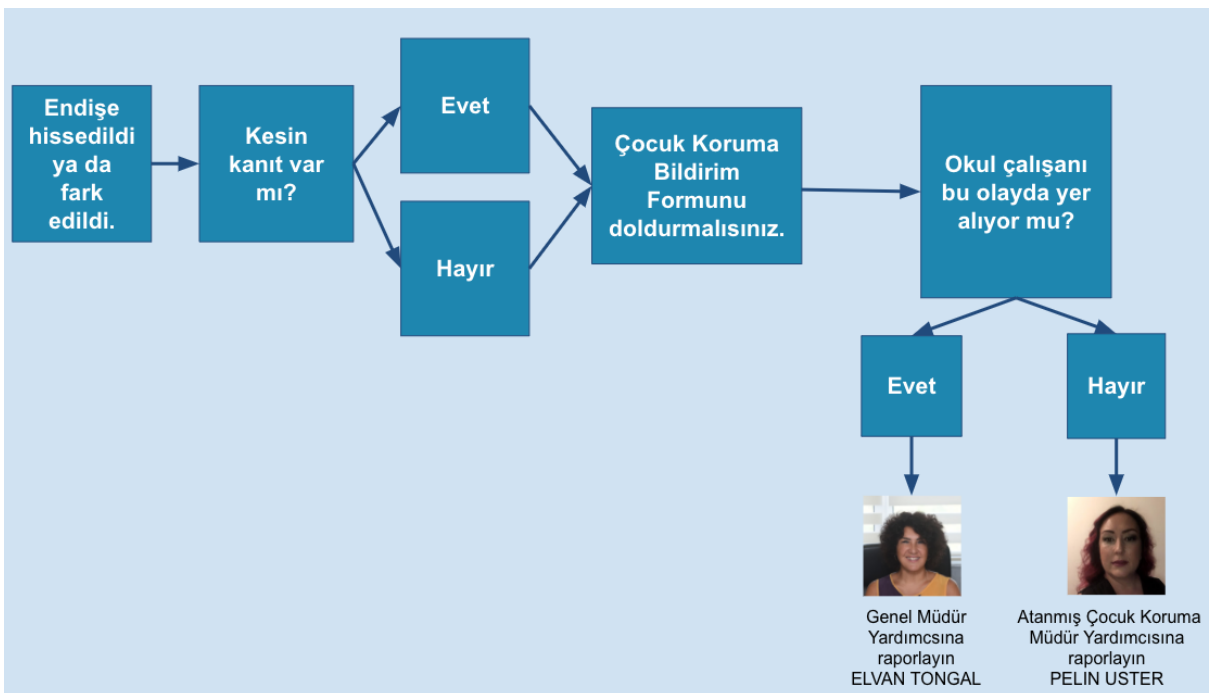
Reporting maps are displayed in places where staff and visitors may regularly see them to remind people to keep alert to child protection.

English Reporting Map

Child Protection Concern Reporting Map



Turkish Reporting Map



Different forms of Reporting

We take all concerns raised seriously. It is not the person first hearing or encountering a case of alleged or suspected abuse to decide whether abuse has taken place; it is their responsibility to immediately report the concern.

Disclosure by a Child

1. If a child has come forward to report any kind of abuse, then it is vital to listen carefully, so you can record and report it accurately.
 - Be open to listening immediately
 - Be available and amenable
 - Listen carefully and at the child's pace
 - Take what is said seriously
 - Reassure the child that they are right to tell
 - Tell the child that you have to pass this information on
 - Make a careful, handwritten record of what was said verbatim
 - Avoid too many questions, limiting them to clarifying your understanding of what the child is saying.
 - Any questions should be framed in an open manner so as not to lead the child.
2. The staff member should make notes of what was shared by the child immediately after the discussion and record them on the Child Protection Disclosure Form (*Appendix 2*). It is okay to take notes on the first piece of paper to hand and then transfer them to the form.
 - Write as closely as you can remember exactly what the child has said.
 - The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any other special factors or relevant information.
 - Make a distinction between fact (experience), opinion and hearsay,
 - Include a description of any physical injury or bruising and indicate these on the body map on p2 of the form.
3. The staff member must immediately deliver the Child Protection Disclosure Form to the DSL or DDSL.

You should NEVER:

- Take photographs or examine a child
- Investigate a disclosure or allegation
- Make promises to a child
- Speculate or accuse anybody
- Forget to record what you have been told
- Fail to pass the information onto the correct person

The member of staff must not promise to keep anything disclosed to them a secret. Instead they may assure the child that this information will only be shared with people in the school whose job is to make sure children are safe.

Concern Observed by Self

1. If a member of staff has observed or even felt something to seem not right, they must report this on the Child Protection Disclosure Form.
 - Include information about any behavioural changes.
 - State whether or not the person writing the notes is expressing their own concerns, or those of someone else.
2. The form should be delivered to the DSL or DDSL.

The DSL/ DDSL will not promise to keep the disclosure a secret beyond members of the Safeguarding Committee, however will be sensitive to whoever is reporting and will keep them informed of any steps that may need to be taken.

After Reporting

In all cases, follow up activities will be conducted in a manner that ensures that information is documented factually and that strict confidentiality is maintained.

The DSL will take initial steps to gather information regarding the information received and cross reference with any other information. They will report to the Principal and AGM. The school doctor may be asked to join if appropriate. Any persons making a referral will receive an appropriate level of feedback.

The following procedure will be used:

1. Records will be retrieved concerning the people included in the disclosure form.
 2. Staff members or children may be interviewed as appropriate
 - a. For children, this will be by the school counsellor.
 - i. Depending upon the age of the child, these discussions may include drawing pictures and playing with dolls to elicit more information as to what may have occurred.
 3. In-class observations of the child by the teacher, counselor, or administrator if appropriate.
3. Based on the information gathered, follow up actions will be decided.

Actions that may take place are:

- In-school counselling
- Meetings with the family to present the school's concerns.
- Developing an action plan with families.
- Referral of the child and family to external professional counseling.

- Consultation with the consulate of the country of the involved family for foreigners.
- The seeking of legal advice via the school attorney or other.
- Notification of the management of the sponsoring employer of the concern with the child/family, or to the welfare office at the home-of-record.
- Consultation with local authorities.
- Support for the child's teacher or referrer if needed.
- Referral of the student and family to external professional counseling.
- Involvement of the Turkish Child Police services
- Involvement of Social Welfare Services in Turkey
- Involvement of the consulate of the child's home country
- Involvement of the parent's employer
- Involvement of the welfare office of the child's home country

Cases of suspected abuse or neglect will be supported by school counselors, such as those involving:

Student relationships with peers

Parenting skills related to disciplining children at home

Student-parent relationships

Mental health issues such as depression, low self-esteem, grieving.

Some cases will be referred to outside resources, for example:

Mental health issues such as depression, psychosis, dissociation, suicide ideation.

Cases reported for investigation and outside resources:

Severe and ongoing physical abuse or neglect

Sexual abuse and incest.

In extreme cases when families do not stop the abuse or concerns remain about the safety of the child, reports could be made to:

- The consulate
- The employer
- The home-of-record welfare office

Record Keeping

Single Central Record

The DST will maintain a SCR of all child protection data. This includes:

1. Recording safer recruitment practices have been carried out (due diligence with regards to reference checks and police checks)
2. A database of all Child Protection PD undertaken by staff
3. All notes, referrals and action relating to any child

4. All notes, referrals and action related to any member of staff

All records will be kept in a fireproof safe. This information may only be accessed by the DST, the Principals and the Assistant General Manager.

Any students with a child protection concern will have a plain red flag (in fact, a red sheet of paper) inserted in their school file.

Students in Transition

Admissions

A confidential form (*appendix 3*) is sent to the previous school of all incoming students to ascertain if there are any safeguarding concerns. It is to be completed by the DSL, Principal, Head of School or Head teacher. This form is needed in order to enrol a child and every effort will be made to receive this information.

Leaving Students

If a child leaving the school has a red flag in their file, the primary or secondary assistant will inform the DSL that that child is leaving the school. The DST will then meet to review the safeguarding file of the child to determine if the information passes a threshold of significance to need to be passed on to the child's next school. If so, the DSL will contact the DSL of the child's next school and share any pertinent information. MEF will make every attempt to share this confidential information to protect the child and will do so along the most direct and appropriate channels.

Child Protection and Staff

Safer Recruitment

MEF International School will make every effort to implement the highest standards of selection, recruitment and verification in hiring practices to ensure the safety of children.

Before an offer of employment is made, the Principal will conduct reference checks. Two written and two phone reference checks will be made with specific questions relating to Child Protection included. See the MEF IS Safer Recruitment Procedure for more detail. *Appendix 4* shows the questions.

All staff will provide a criminal check before employment begins. A criminal check will be requested for each country that an employee has resided or worked. A criminal record check from Turkey will be required every year afterwards for all employees.

Staff Code of Conduct

All staff will sign and abide by a code of conduct confirming their understanding of, and commitment to Child Protection (*appendix 5*).

All staff will wear a lanyard (teachers and administrative staff) or MEF uniform (custodial, catering or other staff) at all times.

Positive Touch and Restrictive Physical Intervention

At MEF IS we believe that students need to be safe, know how to behave, and know that the adults around them are able to manage them safely and confidently. Teachers treat children with affection, but keep clear and supportive boundaries. Under exceptional circumstances restrictive physical intervention may be needed and on such occasions acceptable forms of intervention will be used. More information can be found in *Appendix 6*.

Staff Education and Training

All staff undertake child protection training at the beginning of each year. This may be face-to-face or an online course. Participation in training is recorded in the SCR. No member of staff should ever have an interval of over 24 months between training, so attention will be paid to missing this training due to sickness, maternity or other leave.

The Child Protection policy is shared and discussed at the beginning of each academic year during the Teacher Orientation Session. The UN Conventions of the Rights of the Child will be included as part of this discussion. The face to face briefing will explore this procedure, and ensure that the reporting systems are clear to all staff. Teachers will also attend Appendix Six of this document, discussing Positive Touch and the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention.

Allegations against Staff

Any safeguarding concerns about staff are taken directly by the Principal, bypassing the DST. The Principal in coordination with the AGM will carry out the investigation process.

Records of any investigations or allegations made against any staff member, whatever the outcome, are recorded in the SCR and a red flag is kept in the employee's confidential folder in the Human Resources office.

In the case of a staff member reported as an alleged offender, MEF School will conduct a full investigation. The employee will be asked to take leave with pay during the course of the investigation. Immediate termination will occur in the case of any serious misconduct. The incident will be reported to the police in Turkey and the teacher's home country as well as to external recruiting agencies.

Visitors

All visitors to:

1. Sign in when entering campus at the security gate with an ID card
2. Receive a lanyard to be worn at all times
3. Visitors to sign a safe code of conduct
 - a. Not take any pictures of children other than their own
 - b. Only use adult toilets
 - c. Wear a lanyard
 - d. Report any child protection concerns to the principal
4. Visitors to be accompanied by a member of staff at all times

Parents can register their cars to enter the car park. They will receive a sticker for each car registered.

Contractors

In addition to the above, contractors may not be left alone in an area where students may be.

Student Education

Students will also be informed and educated about their rights. Each year, the Primary and Secondary School Counsellors will take responsibility for focussing some learning time on the UN Conventions of the Rights of the Child through PSE or Homeroom lessons. The activities and learning opportunities will explore these rights, ensuring students have a good understanding of their rights, and what to do if there is a problem. The activities and language will be modified so that they are age and developmentally appropriate. Students will discuss what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is, and what to do when they feel something is not right.

Communication of Policy

The School communicates this policy annually to all teachers and the community. It is available on the school website and staff team drive so that the community and all staff have access to this policy at all times.

The school protects children by not sharing information or posting online information such as children's names, locations, photographs, or case studies without the informed consent of parents. Parents have the right to deny this, in which case students are recorded on a no-photos list.

Document History		
Date	Details	Responsible
2-4/9/2020	Previous Child Protection Policy and Child Protection Procedure merged and updated	Daniel Slevin
11/9/2020	Policy shared with and approved by the Child Protection Committee	Elvan Tongal, Sharlene Carki, Daniel Slevin, Nicole Incel, Pelin Uster, Shirina van Hierden
11/1/2021	Recording of safer recruitment practices added to SCR	Daniel Slevin
16-17/9/2021	Policy updated to include 2 principals and the introduction of a Designated Safeguarding Team	Elvan Tongal, Sharlene Carki, Daniel Slevin, Nicole Incel, Pelin Uster, Shirina van Hierden
10/12/2021	Leaving students section updated to include a review by the DST to determine if information needs passing on to a child's next school	CP Committee: Daniel Slevin, Pelin Uster, Shirina van Hierden, Elvan Tongal, Sharlene Carki, Nicole Incel, Kazim Bakkal

Appendices

Appendix 1

DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

According to the World Health Organisation, child abuse refers to “all types of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligence and commercial or other exploitation, which results 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.”⁴

Abuse is:

- Inflicting physical injury on a child by other than accidental means, causing skin bruising, burns, disfigurement, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function death; and/or
- Creating a substantial risk of physical harm to a child's bodily functioning; and/or
- Committing acts that are cruel or inhumane regardless of observable injury. Such acts may include, but are not limited to, instances of extreme discipline demonstrating a disregard of a child's pain and/or mental suffering; and/or
- Assaulting or criminally mistreating a child as defined by either the Turkish criminal code or school policy; and/or
- Engaging in actions or omissions resulting in injury to, or creating a substantial risk to the physical or mental health or development of a child; and/or
- Failing to take reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any of the above.

Most child abuse is inflicted by someone the child knows, respects or trusts. International school communities have a unique characteristic of which school personnel must be aware in terms of the individuals who are around our children. School personnel should be knowledgeable of the potential reasons why children may not be able to talk about any victimization they might have experienced.

To increase the MEF School’s awareness, this Policy focuses on the four main categories of abuse and provides basic information about the physical and behavioural signs associated with each type.

Physical abuse is:

Physical abuse of a child is defined as the intentional use of physical force against a child that results in – or has a high likelihood of resulting in – harm for the child’s health, survival, development or dignity. This includes hitting, beating, kicking, shaking, biting, strangling, scalding, burning, poisoning and suffocating. Much physical violence against children in the home is inflicted with the object of punishing.

⁴The World Health Organization definition of Child Abuse:
http://www.who.int/topics/child_abuse/en/

Sexual abuse is:

Sexual abuse is defined as the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared, or else that violates the laws or social taboos of society. Children can be sexually abused by both adults and other children who are – by virtue of their age or stage of development – in a position of responsibility, trust or power over the victim.

Emotional and psychological abuse is:

Emotional and psychological abuse involves both isolated incidents, as well as a pattern of failure over time on the part of a parent or caregiver to provide a developmentally appropriate and supportive environment. Acts in this category may have a high probability of damaging the child's physical or mental health, or its physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. Abuse of this type includes: the restriction of movement; patterns of belittling, blaming, threatening, frightening, discriminating against or ridiculing; and other non-physical forms of rejection or hostile treatment.

Neglect is:

Neglect includes both isolated incidents, as well as a pattern of failure over time on the part of a parent or other family member to provide for the development and well-being of the child – where the parent is in a position to do so – in one or more of the following areas:

- health;
- education;
- emotional development;
- nutrition;
- shelter and safe living conditions.

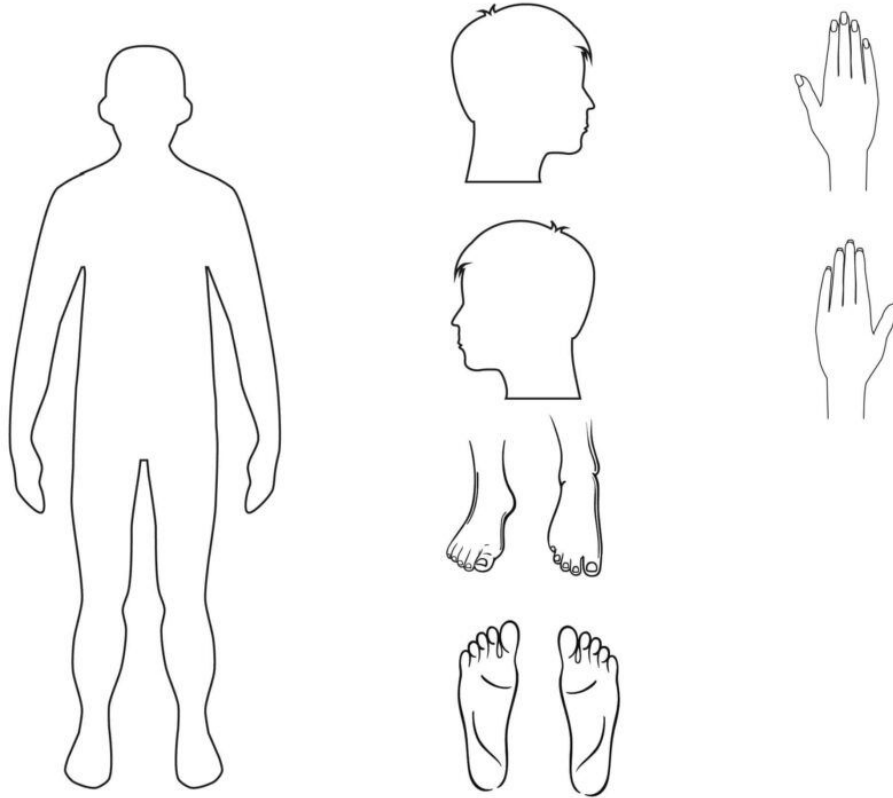
The parents of neglected children are not necessarily poor. They may equally be financially well-off.⁵

⁵ Source: The World Health Organisation - Preventing Child Maltreatment: a guide to taking action and generating evidence http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/43499/1/9241594365_eng.pdf

Appendix 2

Child Protection Disclosure Form			
Name of Child:		Name of referrer:	
Date:		Day:	
<p><i><u>Record what was disclosed to you or what is concerning you</u></i></p> <div data-bbox="742 792 842 875" data-label="Image">The logo for MEF International Schools, featuring the letters 'MEF' in a large, blue, serif font. Above the 'E' is a small icon of a building with a flag. Below 'MEF' are three horizontal blue lines, and at the bottom, the words 'INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS' are written in a small, blue, sans-serif font.</div> <p>Signature_____</p>			

Annotate any injuries you observe



Appendix 3



MEF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, Istanbul and Izmir

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING

At MEF International School we understand that schools play a vital role in the life of a child, and we have shared responsibility to safeguard and protect their physical and emotional wellbeing. Therefore it is a crucial requirement that we should be informed of any child protection issues that have arisen during each student's time at their previous school. We would therefore be grateful if you as the Principal/ Head teacher / Head of School / Designated Safeguarding Lead could complete and return this form to us in respect of the following student who has joined MEF International School.

Child's Name:

Previous school:

Does this child/youth have any child protection issues? Yes / No

IMPORTANT: If you have answered yes please provide further details to Mr Daniel Slevin, our Designated Safeguarding Lead. If there are any particular concerns, Daniel will be happy to discuss them in order that we can ensure that we provide appropriate support. Please contact him at slevind@mefis.k12.tr or by telephone on +90 212 362 26 33 (1377)

If you have answered no please sign and return this form to Daniel Slevin by email.

Name:

Position:

Date:

All information provided will be kept in the strictest confidence.

Appendix 4

PHONE REFERENCE CHECK FOR RECRUITMENT OF NEW STAFF

1. Can you please share the strengths and challenges of this teacher?
2. Could you please tell me a little about the teacher's performance in the classroom?
Teaching style?
3. Could you tell me about the relationships this teacher establishes with students, teachers, parents and leadership?
4. Do you have any reservations about this candidate working unsupervised with children?
5. How does this person contribute to the community? How do they affect school morale?
6. Does the candidate meet timelines, punctuality etc?
7. Is this candidate open to receiving feedback?
8. Is there anything else that I haven't asked that you would like to share with me?

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL STAFF WORKING AT MEF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

All MEF International School staff must sign and abide by this Code of Conduct.

Definition for Child: for the purposes of this document, a “child” is defined as anyone under the age of 18 which is inline with the **UN Conventions of the Rights of the Child**. At MEF International School, any student who is over the age of 18, will still be included within this definition.

Teachers and Staff must never:

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children
- Develop physical/sexual relationships with children
- Develop relationships with children which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive
- Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative.
- Have a child/children with whom they are working to stay overnight at their home (this does not apply for teacher parents whose own children have sleepovers)
- Spend excessive time alone with children away from others
- Take children to your home, especially where they will be alone with you.
- Sleep in the same room or bed as a child with whom they are working
- Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves
- Condone, or participate in behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse
- Discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others
- Communicate with or post photos or any other information of children on personal social media accounts.
- Drink alcohol during school activities
- This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. The principle is that staff should avoid action or behaviour which may constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour.

It is important for all staff and others in contact with children to:

- Be aware of situations which may present risks and manage these
- Plan and organise the work and the workplace so as to minimise these risks
- As far as possible, be visible in working with children
- Ensure that a culture of openness exists to enable any issues or concerns to be raised and discussed
- Ensure that a sense of accountability exists between staff so that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unchallenged
- Talk to children about their contact with staff or others and encourage them to raise any concerns
- Empower children - discuss with them their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can do if there is a problem.

I agree to abide by this Code of Conduct. I understand that any breach of this code of conduct could result in an immediate termination of my employment contract.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

This code of conduct has been adapted from Save the Children, Child Protection Policy
(<https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/2690/pdf/2690.pdf>)

Appendix 6

Positive Touch and The Use of Restrictive Physical Intervention

1. Introduction

At MEF IS we believe that students need to be safe, know how to behave, and know that the adults around them are able to manage them safely and confidently. Teachers treat children with affection, but keep clear and supportive boundaries. Under exceptional circumstances restrictive physical intervention may be needed and on such occasions acceptable forms of intervention will be used.

2. Acceptable forms of intervention/touch

Staff will have cause to have physical contact with students for a variety of reasons such as;

- To comfort a child in distress
- To gently direct a child
- For curricular reasons e.g. PE and Drama
- In an emergency to avert danger
- In rare circumstances when Restrictive Physical Intervention is warranted

When physical contact takes place staff should consider;

- The student's age and level of understanding
- The student's individual characteristics and history
- The location where contact takes place

3. Definition of 'restrictive physical intervention'

To use Restrictive Physical Intervention to prevent a child from doing or continuing to do any of the following

- Injuring themselves or others
- Causing damage to property
- Engaging in any behaviour that is prejudicial to maintain the good order and discipline at the school
- In the case of child committing a criminal offence

'Restrictive Physical Intervention' are interventions where bodily contact using force is used.

The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of an incident warrant it. The degree of force must be proportionate to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or consequences it is intended to prevent.

4. When the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention may be appropriate.

Restrictive Physical Interventions will be used only when all other strategies have failed.

Sometimes physical management may be necessary in a situation of clear danger or extreme urgency. In addition certain students may become distressed, agitated and out of control and need calming with a brief Restrictive Physical Intervention. The safety and welfare of all students and staff is an important consideration and the school's duty of care must be an overriding factor.

5. Who may use Restrictive Physical Intervention

All staff have a duty of care to keep children safe. In an emergency all staff should do whatever they think necessary in the situation they face. If they believe they are likely to face the behaviour again then under the school's duty of care they will be trained in Restrictive Physical Intervention.

6. The Use of Restrictive Physical Intervention

Staff will use the minimum force needed to restore safety and appropriate behaviour. The following principles will be followed;

- Restrictive Physical Intervention is an act of care and control, not punishment.
- It is never used to force compliance with staff instructions.
- It will only be used when staff believe that immediate action is necessary in the student's/other student's best interests.
- Staff will take steps in advance to avoid the need for Restrictive Physical Intervention through dialogue and diversion at the level of understanding of the child.
- Only the minimum force necessary will be used to prevent severe distress, injury or damage. Staff will be able to show that the intervention used was in keeping with the incident.
- Every effort will be made to secure the presence of other staff and these staff may act as assistants and/or witnesses.
- As soon as a pupil has regained control any intervention will be relaxed.
- Escalation will be avoided at all costs.
- The age and level of understanding of the student will always be taken into account.
- Consideration will be given to an individual pupil's circumstances and reference made to any Behaviour Plan in place and in the case of SEN students, their Individualized Educational Plan Following any incident support will be given to safeguard the emotional well-being of all involved.