



**MEF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

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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*.

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

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:

- **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.

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

- 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.
- 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:

- Two Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)
- Two Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL)
- The Principals and Assistant General Manager are kept up to date via the DST.
- The DST will meet regularly to strengthen the child protection work of the school.

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
- Collaborating with School Principals on all cases of child protection

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

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's
- 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

Identifying Child Protection Concerns

The first indication of concern about a child's welfare may not necessarily be the presence of a serious injury. There are multiple factors that can raise concerns, including:

- Physical Signs: Bruises or marks on a child's body
- Verbal Indications: Remarks made by the child, another child, a parent, or another adult
- Behavioral Observations:
 - Observations of the child's behavior
 - Unexplained changes in the child's behavior or personality
- Expressions of Abuse or Neglect
 - 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
- Attendance Issues: Suspicious unauthorized absence from school
- Parental or Environmental Factors: Information about the parent(s) or carer(s) of the child or their home background
- Misuse of Information Technology: Sexting, inappropriate comments on social media, cyber-bullying, etc.

Reporting Obligations and Procedures for Staff Members

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.

Taking Concerns Seriously

We take all concerns raised seriously. It is not the responsibility of 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.

Reporting Concerns about Staff Members

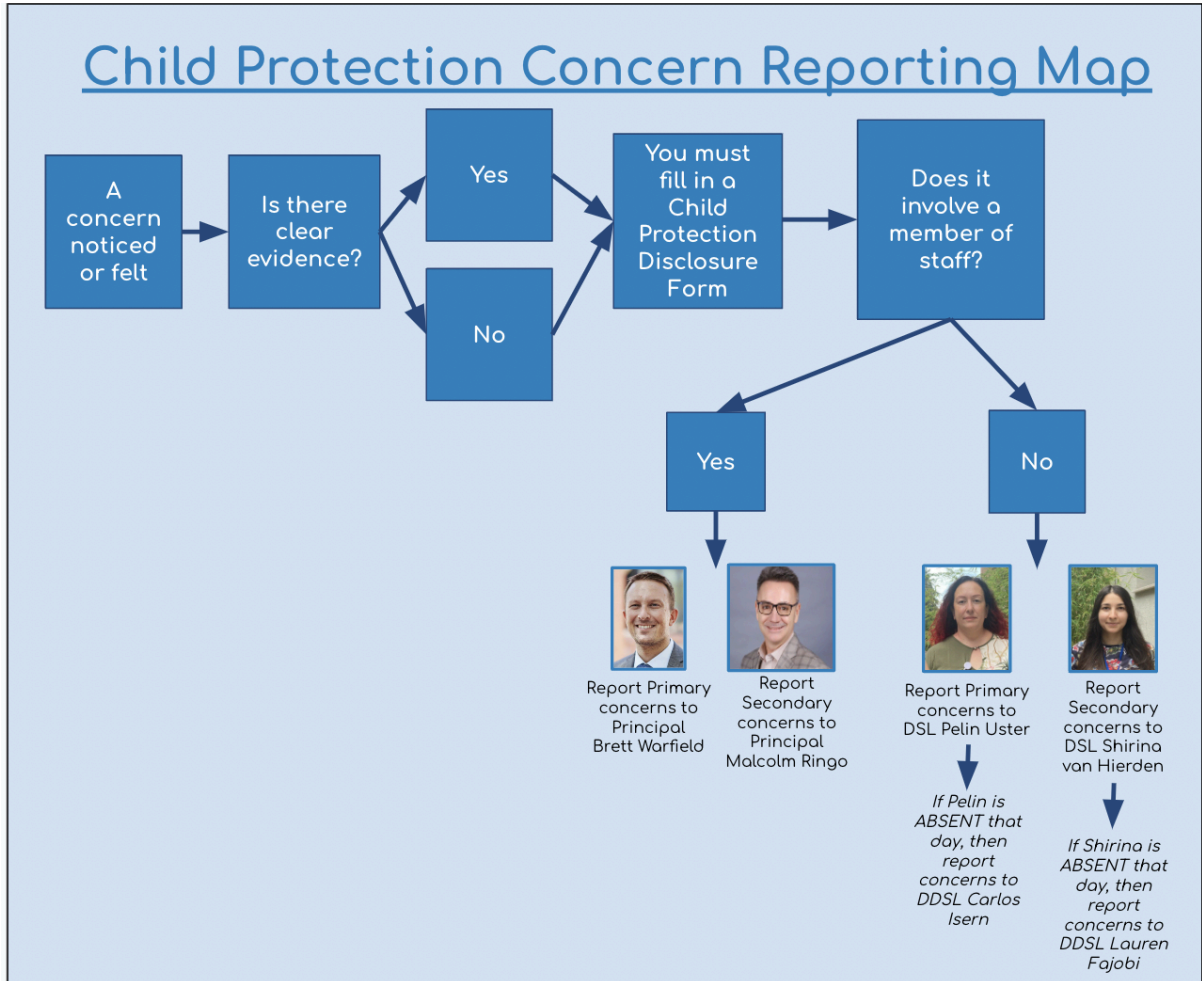
If a concern relates to a member of staff, it should be reported directly to a principal. If the concern relates to the principal, the referral should be taken to the Assistant General Manager.

Reporting Maps

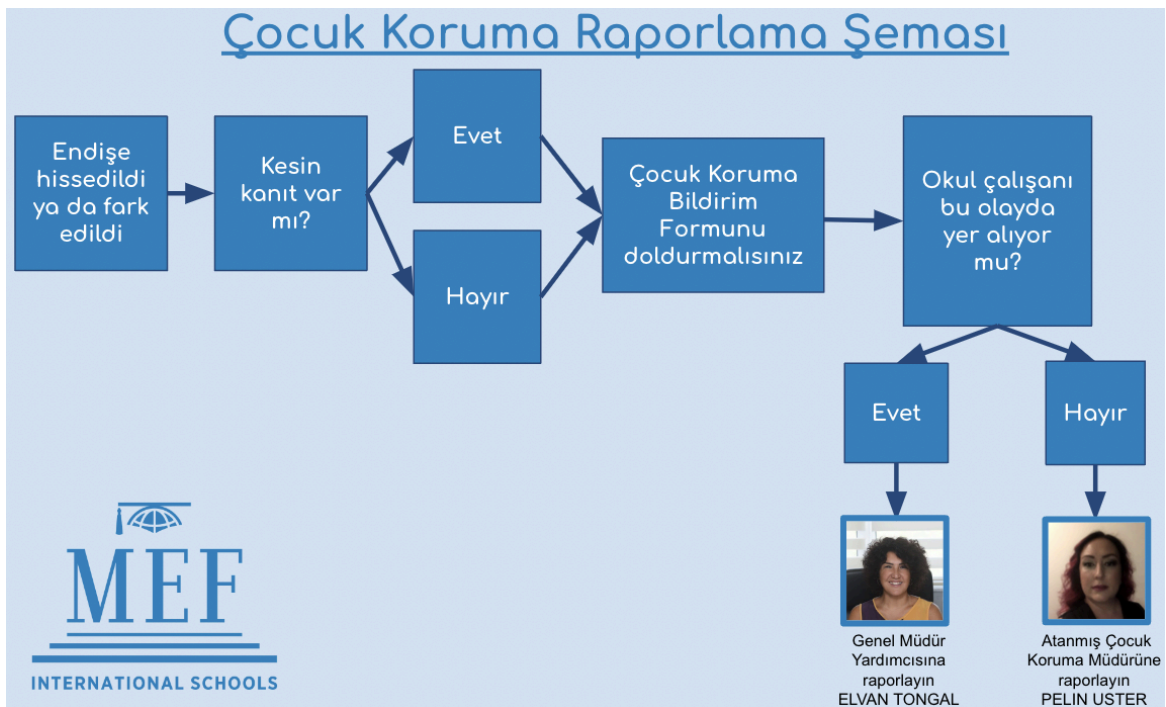
The Reporting Maps below show who any concerns relating to child protection should be reported to. The Turkish version enables non-English speakers of Turkish to disclose any information with ease.

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



Turkish Reporting Map



REPORTING METHODS

We take all concerns raised with utmost seriousness. It is not the responsibility of the person first hearing or encountering a case of alleged or suspected abuse to determine whether abuse has taken place; their responsibility is to promptly report the concern.

Disclosure by a Child

If a child comes forward to report any form of abuse, it is crucial to attentively listen, accurately record, and promptly report the information.

To effectively respond to a disclosure, you should:

- Be immediately receptive and approachable
- Listen attentively and at the child's pace
- Take the information seriously and validate the child's feelings
- Reassure the child that they did the right thing by speaking up
- Inform the child that the information must be shared with the appropriate personnel
- Make an accurate, handwritten record of the conversation, capturing the child's words verbatim
- Limit questions to those that clarify understanding, avoiding leading the child

After the discussion, the staff member should complete the Child Protection Disclosure Form (Appendix 2), using their notes as a reference. The form should include:

- A precise account of what the child shared
- The nature of the allegation, including dates, times, and other relevant details
- A distinction between facts, opinions, and hearsay
- A description of any physical injuries or bruising, marked on the body map on p2 of the form
- The staff member must promptly submit the completed Child Protection Disclosure Form to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL (DDSL).

When responding to a disclosure, you should NEVER:

- Take photographs or examine a child
- Investigate the disclosure or allegation
- Make promises to the child
- Speculate or accuse anyone
- Neglect to record the information
- Fail to share the information with the appropriate personnel

The staff member must not promise confidentiality but may assure the child that the information will only be shared with those responsible for ensuring child safety.

Concern Observed by Staff

If a staff member observes or senses something amiss, they must document this on the Child Protection Disclosure Form, including any observed behavioral changes and whether the concern is their own or someone else's. The completed form should be submitted to the DSL or DDSL.

The DSL/DDSL will handle the disclosure with sensitivity, maintaining confidentiality within the Safeguarding Committee and keeping the reporter informed of any actions taken.

Post-Reporting Procedures and Follow-up Actions

In all cases, follow-up activities will be conducted in a manner that ensures factual documentation and strict confidentiality.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will initiate steps to gather and cross-reference information related to the reported concern. They will report their findings to the Principal and Assistant General Manager (AGM). If needed, the school doctor may also be consulted. Individuals making a referral will receive appropriate feedback.

The following procedure will be implemented:

- Retrieve records related to individuals mentioned in the disclosure form.
- Conduct interviews with relevant staff members or children as appropriate, with the school counselor leading interviews for children.
- Utilize age-appropriate methods during child interviews, such as drawing pictures or playing with dolls, to gather more information.
- Arrange in-class observations of the child by the teacher, counselor, or administrator if necessary.

Based on the information gathered, follow-up actions will be determined, which may include:

- In-school counseling
- Meetings with the family to discuss the school's concerns
- Collaborating with families to develop an action plan
- Referring the child and family to external professional counseling
- Consulting with the consulate of the involved family's country
- Seeking legal advice through the school attorney or other resources
- Notifying the management of the sponsoring employer or the home-of-record welfare office about concerns with the child/family
- Consulting with local authorities
- Providing support for the child's teacher or the person who made the referral, if needed
- Involving the Turkish Child Police services
- Engaging Social Welfare Services in Turkey
- Coordinating with the consulate of the child's home country
- Involving the parent's employer
- Collaborating with the welfare office of the child's home country

Cases of Suspected Abuse or Neglect

Cases of suspected abuse or neglect will be taken seriously and responded to promptly by designated school staff. This includes situations such as:

- Student relationships with peers that involve physical or emotional harm, bullying, or discrimination
- Parenting concerns related to discipline or other forms of mistreatment in the home
- Student-parent relationships that involve abusive or neglectful behaviors
- Mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, self-harm, substance abuse, and trauma-related symptoms.

All cases will be handled with sensitivity and confidentiality, and appropriate support and referrals will be provided as needed. For mental health concerns, students and families will be connected with on- and off-campus resources that can provide counseling, therapy, and other types of treatment.

Some cases may require more specialized intervention, and will be referred to outside resources such as medical professionals, social services, law enforcement, or child protective services. Examples of such cases include:

- Severe or ongoing physical abuse or neglect that poses a risk to the child's safety or well-being
- Sexual abuse or incest involving the child or other family members
- Serious mental health concerns such as psychosis, dissociation, or suicidal ideation.

In cases where families are unwilling or unable to address the abuse or neglect, or when the child's safety is at immediate risk, reports may be made to relevant authorities such as:

- The consulate, if the family is from another country
- The employer, if the abuse or neglect is related to employment
- The home-of-record welfare office, if the family is receiving public assistance or support.

All school staff are expected to follow this policy and report any suspected abuse or neglect promptly to the designated school personnel. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action or legal consequences.

RECORD KEEPING AND CHILD PROTECTION MEASURES

Single Central Record (SCR)

The Designated Safeguarding Team (DST) will maintain a SCR containing all child protection data, including:

- Documentation of safer recruitment practices (reference checks and police checks)
- A database of Child Protection Professional Development completed by staff
- Notes, referrals, and actions related to any child
- Notes, referrals, and actions related to any staff member

These records will be stored securely, accessible only to the DST, Principals, and Assistant General Manager. A red sheet of paper will be placed in the school file of any student with a child protection concern as a discreet alert.

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 is committed to maintaining the highest standards of selection, recruitment, and verification in hiring practices to ensure children's safety and well-being.

Prior to extending an offer of employment, the Principal will conduct thorough reference checks, including two written and two phone references. These references will specifically address child protection concerns. For further details, please refer to the MEF IS Safer Recruitment Procedure, and review Appendix 4 for sample questions.

All potential staff members must provide a criminal background check from each country they have resided or worked in before their employment begins. Additionally, all employees must obtain a criminal record check from Turkey annually.

Staff Code of Conduct

All staff members are required to sign and adhere to a code of conduct, which confirms their understanding of and commitment to child protection policies (see Appendix 5).

To ensure proper identification, all staff must wear a lanyard (teachers and administrative staff) or MEF uniform (custodial, catering, or other staff) at all times.

Appropriate Physical Contact and Restrictive Physical Intervention Guidelines

At MEF IS, we believe that students should feel safe and understand appropriate behavior, trusting that adults around them can manage situations safely and confidently. Teachers should interact with children in a caring and affectionate manner while maintaining clear and supportive boundaries. In exceptional circumstances, restrictive physical intervention may be necessary, and only acceptable forms of intervention will be employed. For more information, refer to Appendix 6.

Bathroom Policy

MEF IS prioritizes student safety throughout campus, including in restrooms. Teachers are granted permission to perform restroom checks and enter the facilities in emergency situations. For more details, please refer to Appendix 7.

Chaperone & Field Trip Safeguarding Guidelines

For further information, consult Appendix 8.

Staff Education and Training

All staff members must participate in child protection training at the start of each academic year, either through face-to-face sessions or online courses. Training attendance is documented in the SCR, and no staff member should have a gap exceeding 24 months between training sessions. Special attention will be given to those who miss training due to sickness, maternity, or other leaves.

The Child Protection policy is reviewed and discussed during the Teacher Orientation Session at the beginning of each academic year. This discussion also includes the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The in-person briefing clarifies reporting procedures for all staff and highlights Appendix 6, which addresses Positive Touch and Restrictive Physical Intervention.

Allegations Against Staff

Safeguarding concerns about staff members are directly reported to the Principal, bypassing the DST. The Principal, in coordination with the AGM, will oversee the investigation process.

Records of any investigations or allegations against staff members, regardless of the outcome, are documented in the SCR and flagged in the employee's confidential folder in the Human Resources office.

In cases where a staff member is reported as an alleged offender, the school will conduct a comprehensive investigation. The employee will be placed on paid leave during the investigation. Immediate termination will occur in cases of serious misconduct, with incidents reported to the police in Turkey and the teacher's home country, as well as to external recruiting agencies.

Visitor Guidelines

The term "visitors" encompasses prospective families, parents and family members of students, outside friends of students, external workers, contractors, withdrawn families, interviewees, government officials, and others who need to visit the MEFIS campus for an appointment.

All visitors must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Sign in upon entering campus at the security gate with an ID card
- Wear a provided lanyard at all times
- Refrain from photographing children other than their own
- Use only adult restrooms
- Report any child protection concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Check in with the receptionist upon entering the MEFIS building and sign a visitor contract (Appendix 10)
- Ensure appointments are confirmed and staff accompaniment is arranged when necessary

** To ensure child protection, all visitors, including parents, must have an appointment to enter the MEFIS building and must be accompanied by a staff member when walking through the facility.

** Parents may register their cars to access the car park and will receive a sticker for each registered vehicle.

Student Education

Students will be informed and educated about their rights. Annually, Primary and Secondary School Counselors will incorporate the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into PSE or Homeroom lessons. Activities and learning opportunities will be age and developmentally appropriate, helping students understand their rights and actions to take when faced with problems.

Communication of Policy

The school communicates this policy annually to all teachers and the community, ensuring access via the school website and staff team drive at all times.

The school safeguards children by not sharing information or posting online details, such as children's names, locations, photographs, or case studies, without informed parental consent. Parents have the right to deny consent, and students will be recorded on a no-photos list accordingly.

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.

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

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

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:

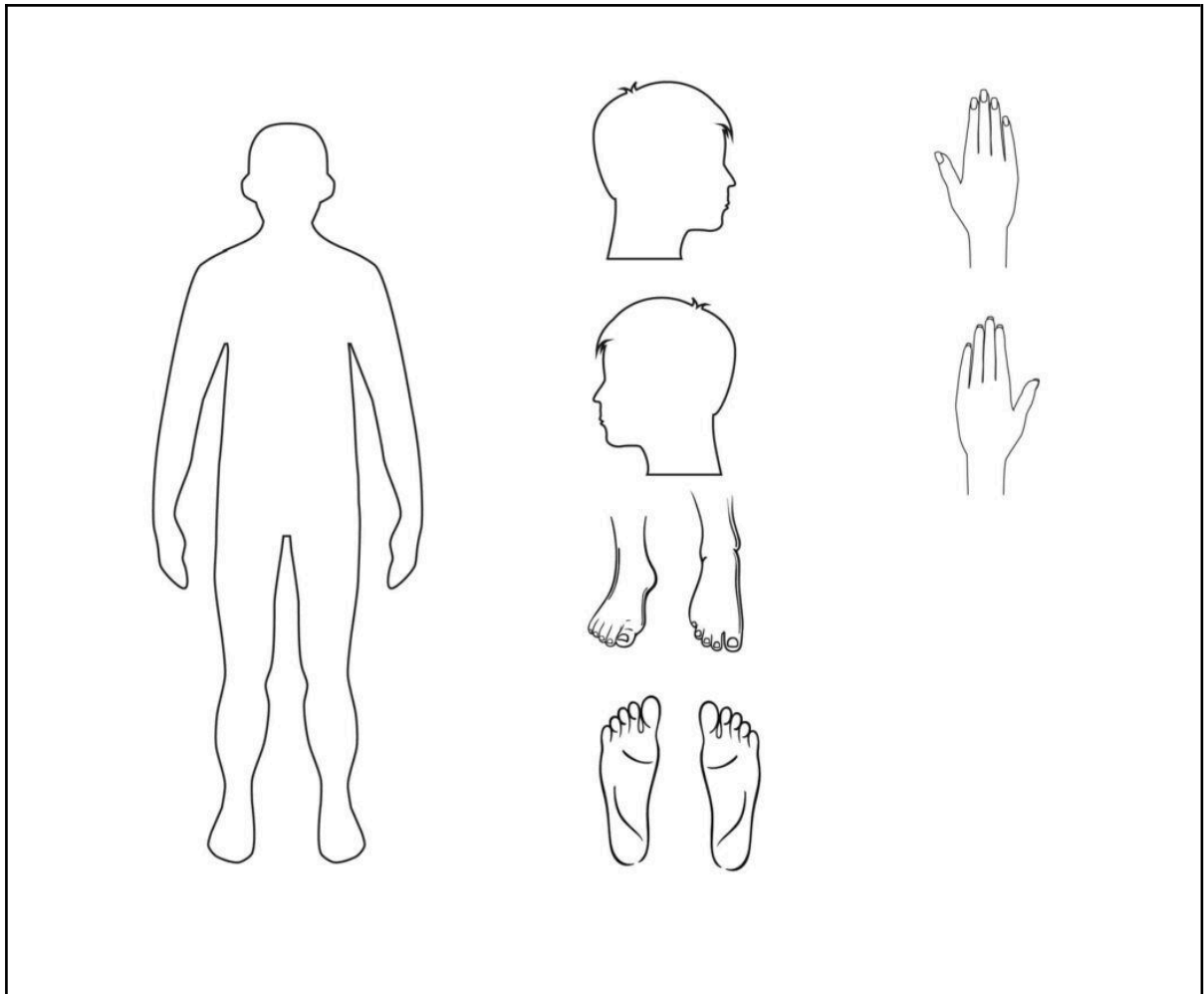
- health;
- education;
- emotional development;
- nutrition;
- shelter and safe living conditions.

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:	
<u>Record what was disclosed to you or what is concerning you</u>			
<div style="text-align: right;">Signature _____</div>			
<u>Annotate any injuries you observe</u>			



[Here](#) is the online version of Disclosure Form.



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.

PHONE REFERENCE CHECK FOR RECRUITMENT OF NEW STAFF

1. Can you please describe the strengths and areas for growth of this teacher?
2. Could you provide insights into the teacher's classroom performance and teaching style?
3. Can you discuss the relationships this teacher establishes with students, colleagues, parents, and leadership?
4. Do you have any concerns about this candidate working unsupervised with children?
5. In what ways does this person contribute to the school community, and how do they impact school morale?
6. How does the candidate perform with regard to meeting deadlines, punctuality, and other professional expectations?
7. Is this candidate receptive to feedback and open to continuous improvement?
8. Is there any additional information or insights you would like to share about this candidate that we haven't already discussed?

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL STAFF WORKING AT MEF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

All MEF International School staff must sign and adhere to this Code of Conduct.

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

Teachers and Staff must never:

- Hit, physically assault, or abuse children in any way
- Engage in physical or sexual relationships with children
- Develop exploitative or abusive relationships with children
- Act in ways that may be abusive or place a child at risk of abuse
- Use language, make suggestions, or offer advice that is inappropriate, offensive, or abusive
- Behave physically in a manner that is inappropriate or sexually provocative
- Invite a child/children with whom they are working to stay overnight at their home (does not apply to teacher parents hosting sleepovers for their own children)
- Spend excessive time alone with children away from others
- Take children to their home, especially if they will be alone with the child
- Share a room or bed with a child with whom they are working
- Perform personal tasks for children that they can do for themselves
- Condone or participate in illegal, unsafe, or abusive behavior involving children
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle, or degrade children, or perpetrate any form of emotional abuse
- Discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favor particular children to the exclusion of others
- Communicate with children, post photos, or share any other information about children on personal social media accounts
- Consume alcohol during school activities
- Add a student on their social media account within 3 years of that student graduating

This list is not exhaustive or exclusive. The principle is that staff should avoid actions or behaviors that may constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behavior.

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

- Be aware of and manage situations that may present risks
- Plan and organize work and the workplace to minimize these risks
- Be visible when working with children as much as possible
- Foster a culture of openness that allows for issues or concerns to be raised and discussed
- Establish a sense of accountability among staff to ensure that poor practice or potentially abusive behavior is challenged

- Talk to children about their interactions with staff or others and encourage them to voice any concerns
- Empower children by discussing their rights, acceptable and unacceptable behaviors, and actions they can take if problems arise

I agree to abide by this Code of Conduct. I understand that any breach of this code of conduct could result in the 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>)

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.

MEF IS Istanbul Bathroom Policy

Policy Overview

Child Protection is of utmost importance at MEF International School Istanbul. At MEF IS we want to ensure that students are safe, happy, and supported in all areas of school, including the bathrooms. To accomplish this, MEF IS has Child Protection regulations that all staff adhere to regarding the student bathrooms; these regulations help to ensure student safety.

Primary School

ECC	
Bathroom Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As part of the admission policy, all students are asked to be potty trained and be able to help themselves in the bathroom. - Students in Preschool and pre-Kindergarten may need assistance in the bathroom (i.e. with wiping themselves, with soiled clothes). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - T.A.s will assist these students. If a T.A. is unavailable and help is needed, then the janitor may be asked. (All parties received Child Protection training.) - When a trained adult is helping a student in the bathroom stall (ex. with wiping), the stall door is ajar/open. - Students in Kindergarten should be fully potty trained and able to help themselves in the bathroom; they should not need assistance in the bathroom. - Students may need support with changing. This support is done outside of the stall, ensuring the trained adult and student are in a visibly open space.
Bathroom Times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students may use the bathroom when they request it. - Students are sent to the bathroom one-at-a-time. Teachers monitor how long a student has been in the bathroom and if the time has been too long, the T.A. checks on the student. (The bathrooms are closeby, so students may also shout that they need help and a trained adult will support them.)
Bathroom Checks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As these students are young, they may need more adult support; therefore, ECC teachers, T.A.s, and janitors may enter the bathroom at anytime to check on a student
Bathroom Cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Janitors clean bathrooms throughout the day to ensure a hygienic situation; this cleaning is done when students are in their classes. - Janitors may enter the bathroom when a student is inside to help clean-up after any bathroom accidents.
Bathroom Door	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The outside door to the student bathrooms always remains open. - The individual doors on the bathroom stalls have a large space at the top and bottom; this allows the teacher to look over/under the stall in case the student needs support (ex. they have locked themselves in the bathroom).

Grades 1-5	
Bathroom Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As part of the admission policy, all students are asked to be potty trained and be able to help themselves in the bathroom. Students should not need adult support in the bathroom. <p><u>Bathroom Accidents</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If the student has a bathroom accident, then the teacher will ask whether they have an extra set of clothes. If they do not, then the Lost & Found or P.E. Department are checked for extra clothes the student can wear. If no extra clothes can be found, a close friend may lend their extra clothes to the student. If none of these options work, then the parent will be called to bring extra clothes for the student. - Students help themselves get dressed in clean clothes after a bathroom accident. - If a student stays in the bathroom during the bathroom accident, then another same-gender student will bring the extra clothes to them.
Bathroom Times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are asked to use the bathroom during the break times. - Students may ask, and receive, permission to use the bathroom during the lesson time. If this happens, then the student is sent one-at-a-time. The teacher monitors how long the student has been absent; if a large amount of time has passed, the teacher may ask a T.A., other adult, or (for grades 3-5) ask another child of the same-gender to check on the student.
Bathroom Checks	<p><u>One-Teacher Check</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers may check a student bathroom by standing at the entrance of the bathroom anytime during the day. The teacher must be of the same gender as the bathroom they are checking (<i>i.e. a female teacher may stand at the entrance of the female bathroom to check, but not the male bathroom; a male teacher may stand at the entrance of the male bathroom to check, but not the female bathroom</i>). - Teachers may turn their head into the doorway to have a proper visual check. - Teachers may only enter the bathroom if, during the check, it is deemed that there is an emergency situation (<i>ex. students are engaging in a physical fight, there is a medical emergency where the student is visibly injured and can't move to come out of the bathroom</i>). When the teacher enters the bathroom s/he should also call for help. - If the teacher observes students engaging in a non-emergency inappropriate behaviour (<i>ex. a student of the other gender is in the bathroom, students are misusing bathroom equipment, students are holding contraband, etc.</i>), then the teacher may not enter the bathroom. The teacher should ask the student to step outside of the bathroom to talk. <p><u>Two-Teacher Check</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To enter a student bathroom in a non-emergency situation (<i>ex. you are looking for a missing student, you want to do an inside-bathroom check, there was a complaint about something in the bathroom, etc.</i>) teachers must follow the two-teacher check. - Two teachers of the same gender may enter the same gender bathroom. (<i>ex. two female teachers may enter the female student bathroom; two male</i>

	<p><i>teachers may enter the male student bathroom)</i></p> <p><u>Emergency Procedure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If there is an emergency situation (<i>ex. a medical emergency, a fight, a physical fight</i>) that the teacher sees, hears, or is made aware of; then the teacher may enter the bathroom alone, regardless of the gender. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prior to entering the bathroom, the teacher should announce that they are entering. (<i>ex. "I am entering the bathroom" "I am coming in"</i>) - The teacher should also ask a bystanding student to call for help.
Bathroom Cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are both male and female janitors cleaning the bathrooms; each janitor has received Child Protection training. - A big cleaning is done before and after school (when students are unlikely to be present or to use the bathroom). - Bathrooms are cleaned and restocked throughout the day while the students are in lessons (to minimise the chance of students being in the bathroom). - Janitors know that they should leave the bathroom when a student is using it, and can continue to clean after the student has left.
Bathroom Door	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The outside door to the student bathrooms always remains open. - If the bathroom door is closed, then a teacher of the same gender may: knock, open it, and instruct the students that the door must stay open.

Secondary School

Bathroom Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All students should be able to help themselves in the bathroom. Students should not need adult support in the bathroom.
Bathroom Times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are asked to use the bathroom during the five-minute break between lessons and/or the longer brunch and lunch breaks. - Students may ask for permission to go during the lesson time; however, the teacher has the right to deny this request and say that the student should go during the five-minute break.
Bathroom Checks	<p><u>One-Teacher Check</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers may check a student bathroom by standing at the entrance of the bathroom anytime during the day. The teacher must be of the same gender as the bathroom they are checking (<i>i.e. a female teacher may stand at the entrance of the female bathroom to check, but not the male bathroom; a male teacher may stand at the entrance of the male bathroom to check, but not the female bathroom</i>). - Teachers may turn their head into the doorway to have a proper visual check. - Teachers may only enter the bathroom if, during the check, it is deemed that there is an emergency situation (<i>ex. students are engaging in a physical fight, there is a medical emergency where the student is visibly injured and can't move to come out of the bathroom</i>). When the teacher enters the bathroom s/he should also call for help.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If the teacher observes students engaging in a non-emergency inappropriate behaviour (<i>ex. a student of the other gender is in the bathroom, students are misusing bathroom equipment, students are holding contraband, etc.</i>), then the teacher may not enter the bathroom. The teacher should ask the student to step outside of the bathroom to talk. <p><u>Two-Teacher Check</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To enter a student bathroom in a non-emergency situation (<i>ex. you are looking for a missing student, you want to do an inside-bathroom check, there was a complaint about something in the bathroom, etc.</i>) teachers must follow the two-teacher check. - Two teachers of the same gender may enter the same gender bathroom. (<i>ex. two female teachers may enter the female student bathroom; two male teachers may enter the male student bathroom</i>) <p><u>Emergency Procedure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If there is an emergency situation (<i>ex. a medical emergency, a fight, a physical fight</i>) that the teacher sees, hears, or is made aware of; then the teacher may enter the bathroom alone, regardless of the gender. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prior to entering the bathroom, the teacher should announce that they are entering. (<i>ex. "I am entering the bathroom" "I am coming in"</i>) - The teacher should also ask a bystanding student to call for help.
Bathroom Cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are both male and female janitors cleaning the bathrooms; each janitor has received Child Protection training. - A big cleaning is done before and after school (when students are unlikely to be present or to use the bathroom). - Bathrooms are cleaned and restocked throughout the day while the students are in lessons (to minimise the chance of students being in the bathroom). - Janitors know that they should leave the bathroom when a student is using it, and can continue to clean after the student has left.
Bathroom Door	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The outside door to the student bathrooms always remains open. - The outside door may be removed if students continue to close it. - If the bathroom door is closed, then a teacher of the same gender may: knock, open it, and instruct the students that the door must stay open.



MEFIS Safeguarding Guidelines for Chaperones

1. All school rules apply on field trips. Chaperones are expected to comply with school policies, follow the directions given by the coordinating teachers, work cooperatively with other volunteers and school staff members, and model appropriate behaviors for students. The chaperone will follow the trip plan developed by the teacher.

In order to comply with school policy, before or during the field trip, chaperones:

- may not use smoke within the sight of students
 - may not administer any medications, prescription or nonprescription, to students.
2. Students must be supervised at all times while on a field trip. As a chaperone, you will supervise a small group of students, helping them learn and making sure they behave appropriately. Students must stay with you, their chaperone, at all times. Go over use of the buddy system with students under your care. Account for all participants regularly and before changing activities. Be sure you know when and where to meet the rest of your group at the end of the visit. **Chaperones must be readily available, be mindful of safety concerns, and respond to students' needs.** Do not use your cell phone for non-emergency or non-trip related purposes. We also ask that you refrain from chatting with other adults while you are supervising children.
 3. School rules related to student behavior apply. Go over rules and standards of behavior, safety rules, and any site specific rules with students. Ensure that students do not get involved in any extra activities not pre-approved by the teacher. While you are there to support appropriate behavior, **it is the responsibility of the teacher to discipline a student.**
 4. For the protection of both the student and the chaperone, **chaperones should not place themselves in situations in which they are alone with a student.**
 5. Siblings and family members may not participate in a school sponsored field trip.
 6. Only teachers should take photos of the students.
 7. All chaperones must leave with the group from school and return to school with the group after the trip. You cannot bring your child separately or leave separately. Safety is of paramount importance on trips and the supervising teacher is the final arbiter of any decisions that have to be made.

If any chaperone feels that he/she is unable to support our guidelines, please tell the classroom teacher immediately and another chaperone will be found to fill your place. Administrators will have a final decision to choose among the chaperons. We appreciate your cooperation.

I have read, understand, and will follow MEF International School Field Trip Guidelines.

Chaperone Name:

Chaperone Signature:

Date:

Appendix 9

External contacts

Child Protection External Agencies

Police Support			
Organization	Contact Person	Contact Information	Purpose
Beşiktaş District Police Department Juvenile Office	Aytuğ Coşkuner (Mobile School Team)	Organization Phone Number: 0212 263 61 24 Aytuğ Coşkuner Phone Number: 0507 183 36 26	Crisis at school
Child Protection Centers/Units (Çocuk İzleme Merkezi)	Şişli Etfal Eğitim Araştırma Hastanesi	Phone Number: 0212 373 50 00	Sexual assault/ rape police station
School and Family Support			
Organization	Contact Person	Contact Information	Purpose
Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services	General Directorate of Child Services Ali Fuat Karaman (Provincial Director)	Phone number: +90 (212) 511 42 75 E-mail address: istanbul@ailevecalisma.gov.tr	
Istanbul Social Services Department Child Protection and Coordination Unit		Phone Number: 0212 449 07 07 Children's Services extension number: 1173 Emek Bey	
*District Social Services Department Child Protection and Coordination Unit (Beşiktaş is under Sarıyer District Social Services)	Ms. Büşra	Phone Number: +90 (212) 218 50 70 - 90 Children's Services extension number: 116 Fax : 0(212) 518 50 10 sariyer.shm@aile.gov.tr Online help: 183 Ms. Büşra: 0542 84810 60	Reporting and asking for help in investigation

General Directorate of Special Education and Guidance Services		0312 213 13 56	Getting official permission
Beşiktaş Guidance and Research Center		0212 227 22 56	Getting support
Istanbul University Child Protection Application and Research Center			Children who are exposed to sexual, physical abuse, and neglect are evaluated and necessary medical, social, and psychological support is provided to children and families.
Psychological Support for Victim			
Organization	Contact Person	Contact Information	Purpose
Istanbul University Medicine Faculty of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Department	Prof. Dr. Behiye Alyanak (Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Specialist)	Phone Number: 0212 414 20 00	Hospital psychiatrist
Marmara University Medicine Faculty of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Department	Dr. Neşe Perdahlı Fiş (Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Specialist)	Phone Number: 0216 777 55 00	Hospital psychiatrist
ÇAPA Medicine Faculty of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Department	*Prof. Dr. Ayşe Kılıç Child Protection Department	*Phone Number: 0532 641 01 82 Email: draysekilic@gmail.com	
Support from Consulates			

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 Bakka
19/8/2022	English Reporting Map updated. Turkish Reporting Map updated.	Pelin Uster
7/11/2022	Bathroom Policy added. MEFIS Safeguarding Guidelines for Chaperons added.	Pelin Uster Shirina van Hierden
12/12/2022	Final Updates done after Child Protection Committee Meeting	Pelin Uster Shirina van Hierden
14/06/2023	Final Updates after CIS visit	Pelin Uster Shirina van Hierden
16/08/2023	Reporting map updated	Pelin Uster Shirina van Hierden



MEF International School Istanbul

Child Protection Visitor Contract

All MEF International School visitors 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.

Child Protection Rules at MEF IS Istanbul that a Visitor Must Follow:

- ☐ Visitors must use the bathrooms labeled as “adult” or “staff”.
- ☐ Visitors must never enter a student bathroom.
- ☐ Visitors are expected to be accompanied by a MEF IS staff member on campus and/or stay in the assigned areas. Visitors should not roam the campus independently without permission.
- ☐ Visitors should never hug, pat the back of, or touch a child (*unless the visitor is a parent and the child is their own*).
- ☐ Visitors must wear their visitor ID visibly at all times while on campus.
- ☐ Visitors should not use language that is offensive, discriminatory, or vulgar on campus.
- ☐ Visitors should never take photographs, videos, or audio recordings of students (*unless the visitor is a parent and their child is participating at a school event*).
 - ☐ Parent visitors should never share photographs, videos, or audio recordings on Social Media of students who are not their own child; unless the parent has received explicit permission from the other student’s parent to do so and/or the faces of the other students are edited so they are blurred or blocked.
- ☐ Visitors should not be in a room alone with a student or a small group of students. If there is a teaching happening with a small group of students, then the door of the room must remain open (*unless another MEF IS staff member is present throughout and gives permission for it to be closed*).

****If a visitor notices a Child Protection concern on campus, that visitor should notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead. For Primary School that is Ms. Pelin Uster (her counseling room can be found on the -1st floor). For Secondary School that is Ms. Shirina van Hierden (her counseling room can be found on the 2nd floor). If a Designated Safeguarding Lead cannot be found, please inform an administrator (i.e. Principal or Deputy Principal).**

As a Visitor at MEF IS Istanbul, I agree to abide by this Code of Conduct.

First & Last Name

Signature

Date