



Colegio Escandinavo

POLICY – SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

The Scandinavian school of Madrid fully recognises its responsibility to students and staff in our care. Safeguarding and child protection is everyone's responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, including any volunteers, working in the school.

This policy is based on the document published on www.gov.uk: Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018, and Working Together to Safeguard Children, July 2017, and has been adapted according to Spanish legislation.

1. Roles and Responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the school's counselor, Millad Salehivand. The DSL will take lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding at the school. During term time, the counselor will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. When the counselor is absent, the Head of school will act as cover.

The role of the Head of school is to:

- Ensure that the school has an effective policy
- Ensure that the Ministry of Health and Welfare (Consejería de Igualdad y Bienestar Social) guidelines are complied with
- To support the school community with the implementation of the policy

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead is to:

- Ensure that the child protection procedures are followed within the school, and to make appropriate, timely referrals to external agents if required.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of and have read the school's child safeguarding protection policy.
- Ensure that the Head of School is kept fully aware of any concerns.
- In conjunction with the Head of school, decide upon an appropriate level of response to specific concerns.

- Ensure that accurate safeguarding records are kept according to policy.
- Provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support.

2. Safe recruitment practices

The school is committed to the safe recruitment of staff. The Management team is responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes. To ensure all staff have been vetted, the following processes are in place:

- Display a clear statement of safeguarding on the school's website
- Always ask the following two questions in interviews:
 1. Have you been involved in any disciplinary issues throughout your time in education?
 2. Have there been any issues raised about your ability / suitability to work with children?
- Require referees to answer the above 2 questions in written format
- Investigate any employment gaps in applicant's CV
- Collect references from the current Head of school if the applicant is employed by a school
- Make at least one formal phone call and speak to one referee over the phone to ensure people are who they say they are
- Ensure all staff have submit a "delitos sexuales" before commencing employment. Where possible, a police clearance from each country of work will be requested.
- Store recruitment references in the individual's personnel file.

The school works towards securing that at least one person conducting any interview for a post at the school has undertaken formal safer recruitment training.

3. Recognising the need for intervention

Abuse

All staff and volunteers should be aware that the main categories of abuse are:

- Neglect
 - Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

- Abuse
 - Maltreatment of a child. Refers to both the inflicting of harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse can take place wholly online. Children might be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. The child may or may not be aware of what is happening. Abuse includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

Children develop and mature at different rates, so what may be a cause for concern in a younger child, might be normal behaviour for an older child. If a child looks or acts a lot older or younger than their age, this could be a cause for concern. However, if a child develops more slowly than others of a similar age and there is not a cause such as physical or learning disabilities, it could be a sign they are being abused

Signs of abuse in under 5s:

- Does not cry or respond to parent's presence or absence from an early age
- Reaches developmental milestones late, such as learning to speak, with no medical reason
- Significantly underweight but eats well when given food

Signs of abuse in 5-11 year-olds:

- Becomes secretive and reluctant to share information
- Reluctant to go home after school
- Reluctant to bring friends home
- Poor school attendance and punctuality, or late pick ups
- Parents show little interest in child's performance and behaviour at school
- Parents are dismissive and non-responsive to professional concerns
- The child knowing more than he or she should about sex
- The child is reluctant to get changed for sports etc.

Signs of abuse in 11-16 year-olds

- Drinks alcohol regularly from an early age
- Is concerned for younger siblings without explaining why
- Becomes secretive and reluctant to share information
- Talks of running away
- Shows challenging/disruptive behaviour at school
- Is reluctant to get changed for sports etc

Neglect

Neglect can be extremely difficult to identify, making it hard for professionals to take early action to protect a child. Having one of the signs or symptoms below does not necessarily mean that a child is being neglected. However, if a child shows notice multiple, or persistent, signs then it could indicate the presence of a serious issue

Signs of neglect include:

- The child is often left home alone or with strangers
- The child shows poor attachment with a parent
 - Appearing frightened of parent/s or other household members
- The child is violent towards other children
- The child lacks social skills and has few or no friends
- The child displays an insufficient sense of personal 'boundaries'.
- The child appears wary of adults in general
- The child shows signs of regression (losing skills they had before)
- The child shows sudden drop in school performance
- The child shows signs of poor appearance/hygiene:
 - Arrive at school unwashed or dirty
 - Have unwashed clothes
 - Have inadequate clothing, e.g. not having a winter coat
 - Seems hungry
 - Have frequent and untreated nappy rash in infants
- The child shows signs of health and development issues, such as:
 - Untreated injuries, medical and dental issues
 - Repeated accidental injuries caused by lack of supervision
 - Explanations for injuries that are unlikely, inconsistent or bizarre
 - Has injuries to areas of the body that usually are protected, such as the inside of the legs and arms, the back, the genitals and buttocks
 - Skin sores, rashes, flea bites, scabies or ringworm
 - Thin or swollen tummy
 - Faltering weight or growth and not reaching developmental milestones
 - Poor language, communication or social skills.
- The child shows signs of housing and family issues:
 - Left alone for a long time
 - Taking on the role of carer for other family members.

Please note that the above lists are not exhaustive, and staff should always use their professional judgment and discuss any concerns with the DSL.

4. Actions to be taken by staff

If a child discloses that s/he has been abused, the member of staff should:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is being said
- Allow the child to talk freely
- Reassure the child, but not make promises which might not be possible to keep
- Not promise confidentiality – it might be necessary to seek advice from the local authorities
- Reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell
- Listen, only asking non-leading questions when necessary to clarify
- Not criticise the alleged perpetrator
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told
- Report the concern to the DSL
- Seek support: dealing with a disclosure from a child, and safeguarding issues can be stressful. The member of staff should, therefore, consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the DSL or school psychologist.

Staff who, through their interaction with students, find reasons to suspect abuse or neglect should not wait for the child to say something but speak with the DSL as a matter of urgency.

The school will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to social services with the parents or guardians unless doing so could place the child at greater risk of harm and/or impede a criminal investigation.

5. Support to students who have been abused

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavor to support the pupil through:

- a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of belonging
- ensuring that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, but the pupil is valued and is not blamed for any abuse which has occurred

6. Provide a safe environment in which children can learn and develop

The school recognises that, because of their day-to-day contact with children, school staff is well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried
- ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to Child Protection Officer
- ensure that guardians have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by publishing this policy
- implement links with relevant authorities as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters
- keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately
- ensure all records are kept securely and in locked locations

Below is a set of guidelines that staff should take on board when dealing with individual/small groups of children. It is important to be mindful at all times of your behaviour in relationship to individual/small groups of children and of the potential risk of an allegation. Staff should take necessary precautions in order to minimise the opportunity for an allegation to be made against them. This is generally about exercising common sense, but all staff should specifically take note of the following:

- Whenever possible, try not to be alone in a room with a child, regardless of gender. If you are on your own with a child, leave the door open and inform a colleague if possible. Always keep an appropriate distance between you and the child.
- Do not engage in conversations about your personal life with children.
- Keep boundaries very clear between you and children, particularly if the conversation involves relationships, emotions and sexual content.
- Do not exchange mobile phone numbers with children. If possible, do not have your mobile phone out when dealing with an individual child.
- If a child wishes to disclose personal information to you, ensure that they understand that you cannot guarantee confidentiality. Avoid giving advice to children about their relationships.
- PE changing rooms:
 - From Åk 4/Y5 Adults should leave the room whilst children are changing and avoid repeatedly going in and out without good reason.

- o It should not be necessary for adults to remain in the room in order to maintain good behaviour; being in close proximity and pupils being aware of this should be enough.
- o Pupils should know that adults will enter the room if necessary – in response to a disturbance, for example.
- o If there is a need for an adult to enter the room, it is recommended that they alert pupils to this by announcing it to give pupils the opportunity to cover up if they want to.
- Toilets preschool:
 - o Staff members should leave the door open if alone in the toilet area with a child/children unless the door has a window that allows visibility from the outside.

7. Dealing with concerns and allegations

Any suspicion of child abuse or neglect should be reported to the DSL without delay. If an allegation is made against the DSL, the suspicion should be reported to the Head of school without delay. If the concern relates to both the DSL and Head of school the relevant person in NABSS or the local authority should be contacted. A suspicion can be reported orally or in writing.

The DSL will discuss all concerns with the Head of school as soon as possible and always within 24 hours or receipt. The DSL and Head of school will agree appropriate course of action.

8. Staff allegations

Staff at the Scandinavian school of Madrid is privileged to be able to work closely with children and their families, forming a warm and caring relationships. However, because of the nature of their work, staff are also vulnerable to allegations of child abuse. By having appropriate policies and procedures in place and following the principles of good practice the provision not only protects the children in their setting, but also the adults.

If a staff member is suspected of child abuse:

- An immediate and thorough investigation will be conducted by management, and, if appropriate the Board, supported by appropriate external agencies.

- In the case of an allegation being made against a member of the management team, an immediate and thorough investigation will be conducted by the rest of the management and, where appropriate, the Board, supported by appropriate external agencies.
- The staff member against whom the allegations have been made will be suspended pending further investigation. Also refer to “False Allegation” below.
- The matter will be referred to the local authority and all staff must co-operate in any investigation by Police and social services.
- The child's parents will be kept fully informed throughout the process by the management team.
- Staff will work with the child and his/her family to offer them support and rebuild trust
- The staff will be supported throughout by management.

As a result of the allegation, a comprehensive, confidential report will be compiled and circulated to the parents and management members as necessary. It will include:

- A description of the allegation
- A diary of events
- Accounts of any meetings with parents
- Details of the internal provision's investigation and the subsequent involvement of any professionals/agencies
- Any action taken
- The steps taken to support the child and family
- Any lessons learnt from the allegation and resulting investigations
- Details of any resulting changes to be made in the provision's procedures/policies.

False allegations

Where, following initial consideration, the DSL believes an allegation is without foundation, he/she should:

- Consider in consultation with relevant parties, whether the child might have been abused by someone else
- If the allegation involves a member of staff, they will be informed at a formal meeting that no further action is to be taken under disciplinary or child protection procedures

- Consider whether counselling and/or informal professional advice to the employee is appropriate and the form either might take
- Inform the parents of the child/children of the allegation and the outcome
- Consider appropriate counselling and support for the child/children and parents particularly where a false/malicious allegation has been made. The need for disciplinary action against the child should also be considered at this stage
- Prepare a report, to be copied to the employee, recording that the allegation is without foundation with reasons.
- Documents relating to an investigation should be retained with a written record of the outcome.

9. Key contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Millad Salehivand, Counselor at the Scandinavian school of Madrid
Head of school	Jenny Dettmann
Directora tecnica	Nuria Arrese
School psychologist	Isabel Naeve
Policia tutorial	agentetutor@aytoalcobendas.org 636 605 318