

GSIS CHILD PROTECTION HANDBOOK

ACDEMIC YEAR 2022-2023

KSA

Ministry of Social Affairs

Executive Regulations of Child Protection Law

6.1 The relevant authorities shall ensure guarantee the Child's right to life and strive to protect him from all forms of abuse and negligence, and empower the child exercise his rights legally and systematically.

6.2 The Relevant Authorities shall propose appropriate preventive measures to apply the child's right of protection from abuse or negligence and implements what falls within its jurisdiction.

<https://youtu.be/YaoUT7O4grY>



GSIS Kindergarten students

INTRODUCTION

The GSIS Child Protection Handbook is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the KSA ministry of social affairs child protection law.

UNCRC

ARTICLE 19

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child. 2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programs to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

ARTICLE 33

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislative, administrative, social, and educational measures, to protect children from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances as defined in the relevant international treaties, and to prevent the use of children in the illicit production and trafficking of such substances

Article 34

States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes, States Parties shall in particular take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent:

- (a) The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;



KG Students in the kitchen

(b) The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;(c) The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

Our Role

Protecting and safeguarding children from intentional and unintentional harm is our first priority at GSIS. In this document the term “child protection” refers to protection of children in school.

“The true character of a society is revealed in how it treats its children.”

- Nelson

Mandela

Contact Us

GEMS SAUDI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Block 10, Al Muntazah District,
Dammam City 32234, Dammam
32234, Saudi Arabia

GSIS SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT STATEMENT

We are committed to safeguarding the welfare of all our children, staff, and all stakeholders. We will take all steps possible to promote safe practice and protect children from harm, abuse, and exploitation of any form.

We take very seriously our collective duty to act appropriately and swiftly in response to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse. Additionally, staff and volunteers are tasked with working together to develop a culture that wholly embraces our differences and diversity, and which respects and upholds the rights of children and adults.

Principles upon which the Safeguarding Commitment Statement is based:

- Our first priority at all times will be the welfare of children
- We will actively support the welfare of families
- We will respect and listen to the rights, wishes and feelings of children and their families
- To keep children safe from harm all people who work with children will share information
- People in positions of responsibility within the organization will work in the best interests of children and follow the GSIS Safeguarding Policy
- GSIS will ensure the application of this policy through clear management, governance, and quality assurance

CHILD PROTECTION TEAM

The purpose of this team is to respond to and manage all child protection reports. The team may consist of the following individuals on a needs basis:

- Principal
- Counselor

- Nurse
- Designated Child Protection Lead (DL)
- Homeroom Teacher
- Academic Director
- Superintendent

PHYSICAL ABUSE of a child is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction or lack of an interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power, or trust. There may be single or repeated incidents.

Possible indicators of physical abuse:

- Bruises, burns, sprains, dislocations, bites, cuts, etc.
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries/refusal to discuss injuries
- Injuries to the body in places that aren't normally exposed to falls, etc.
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted

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

Possible indicators of emotional abuse:

- Chronic anxiety; fear of new situations
- Diminished self-confidence
- Inappropriate emotional development
- Recurrent somatic symptoms (e.g., headaches, stomach aches, etc.)
- Social withdrawal; loss of interest/ enthusiasm
- Seeking approval/affection/attention

NEGLECT: a failure to provide for a child's basic needs within their own environment.

Physical neglect: failure to provide necessary food or shelter, or a lack of appropriate supervision. This includes a failure to provide proper adult guardianship such as leaving children unsupervised for extended periods of time.*

Medical neglect: failure to provide necessary medical treatment.

Emotional neglect: a pattern of actions such as inattention to a child's emotional needs, failure to provide psychological care, or permitting the child to use alcohol or other drugs, verbal humiliation or abuse, threats of violence, etc.

****GSIS** requires parents to notify the school in writing if both parents leave the country and provide guardian contact information during that time.

Possible indicators of neglect:

- Poor hygiene/nutrition
- Inappropriate dress
- Lack of attention of medical/dental/ psychological needs

- Lack of resources (lunch money, school supplies, etc.)
- Frequent absences/tardiness
- Limited parent involvement; lack of supervision/communication

SEXUAL ABUSE: involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (i.e. rape) or non- penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production or viewing of pornographic material or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Children involved in commercial sex work are victims of sexual abuse, whether they perceive themselves as victims or not.

Possible indicators of sexual abuse:

- Sexual behavior or knowledge inappropriate for child's age
- Trouble walking or sitting, complaints of genital pain
- Suffering from what seem to be physical ailments that can't be explained medically
- Showing fear or distrust of a particular adult/older child
- Special attention from an adult/older child or a new "secret" friendship with an adult/older child
- Withdrawal from/refusal to continue with school or usual social activities

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION: signs of possible child exploitation may include suspected intimate relations with an adult/ older child; inappropriate online presence; significant changes in appearance and behavior.

It is important to note that the above indicators in and of themselves do not constitute abuse or neglect. Together with other behavioral concerns they may warrant attention from the Designated Lead and/ or school nurse.

Designated Child Protection Lead (DL): A faculty member assigned by the principal on an annual basis to take the lead responsibility for all safeguarding and child protection related matters at their scho

GSIS CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

All staff at GSIS schools are **mandated to report** all cases of suspected abuse, neglect, or self-harm involving students to the site administrator within 24 hours. The principal will immediately report the alleged incident to the Superintendent and will begin to investigate and document the suspected abuse in accordance with this policy.

GSIS will communicate this policy annually to all parents, applicants and students and will review the policy annually for compliance and effectiveness. GSIS will also make every effort to implement recruitment



practices to ensure the safety of all children. All staff will stay current with child protection and safety regulations.

As a measure of prevention and of setting clear expectations, all GSIS personnel will be expected to read and sign the GSIS Code of Conduct Agreement Form. The GSIS Code of Conduct Agreement Form applies to all faculty and staff who represent the school and who interact with students in both a direct and/or unsupervised capacity. The intention of the GSIS Code of Conduct is to always maintain a safe environment for students, employees, parents and community members.

IDENTIFYING, REPORTING AND DOCUMENTING SUSPECTED ABUSE

Identifying when to report: if an employee has ‘reasonable cause’ or ‘reasonable suspicion’ based on his/her knowledge of the student or personal experience with children, the employee should act in good faith and report the concern to their site administrator.

Reporting cases of suspected child abuse or neglect: it is obligatory for GSIS faculty/staff to report incidents of suspected abuse, neglect, or self-harm to their principal and Designated Lead **within 24 hours** by completing the GSIS Child Protection Reporting Form. The site administrator will adhere to the following procedure in accordance with the policy below and in the flowchart to follow:

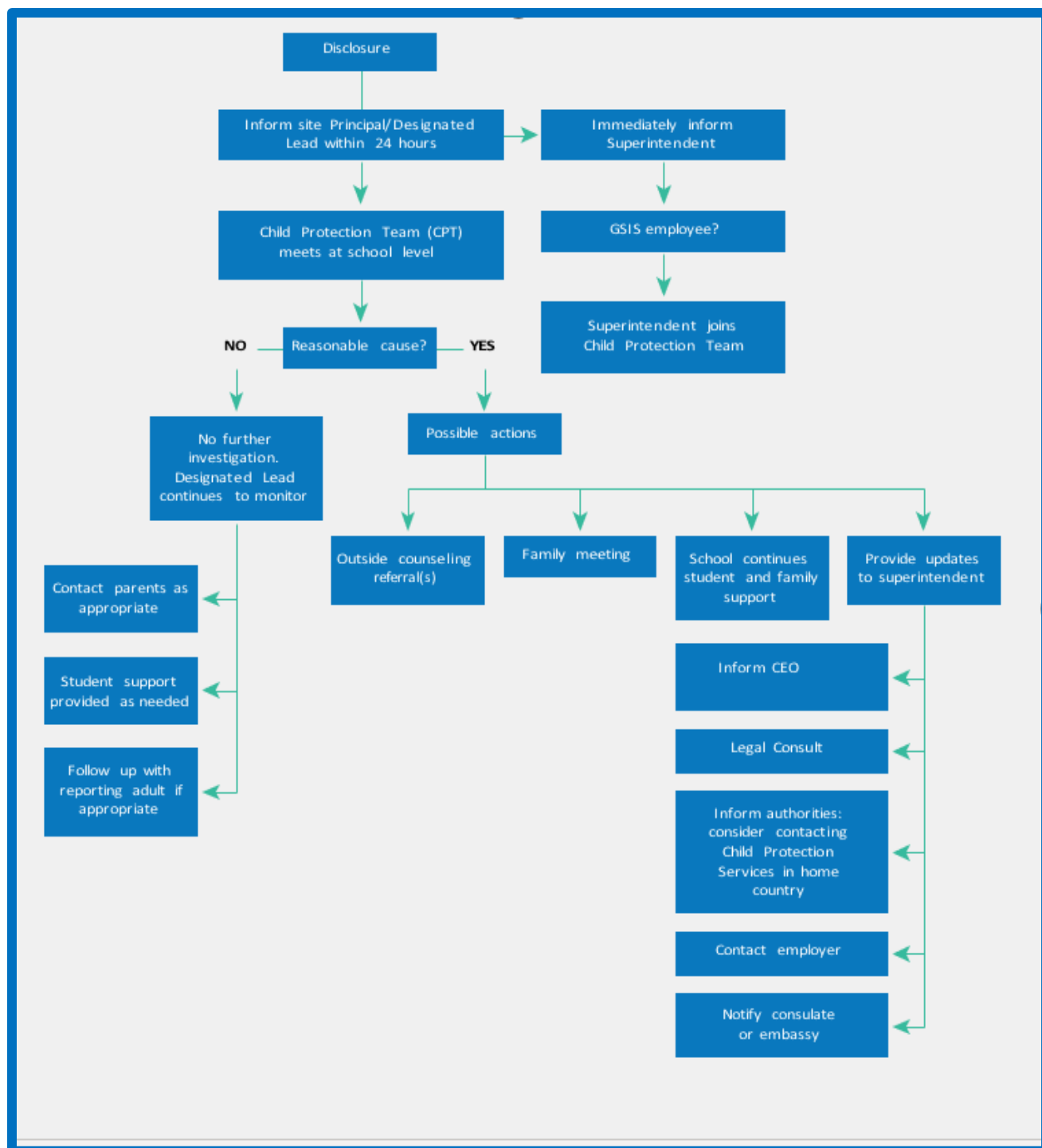
1. The site principal will immediately inform the Superintendent of the report.
2. The principal will convene the Child Protection Team (CPT) to review any and all relevant information. (if the report involves a GSIS employee, the Superintendent will become an active member of the CPT. If the report involves the Superintendent, the CEO will replace the Superintendent on the CPT).
3. The CPT will develop an action plan to determine if there is reasonable cause to substantiate the report. Such actions may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:
 - Confidential meeting with student(s) involved
 - Confidential parent notification/ meeting with parents
 - Confidential meeting with others pertinent to the case, including the alleged abuser
 - Physical injuries reviewed and documented by nurse
4. If the CPT determines that there is reasonable cause, the principal will determine next steps in consultation with the Superintendent. Possible actions which may take place in include but are not limited to:
 - Family meeting and on-going family support from school
 - Referral for outside counseling
 - Referral for medical evaluation
5. In some cases, it may be necessary to consult with or report to outside agencies. Before reporting any case of child abuse to authorities or employers, the Superintendent will notify the CEO. Cases of abuse may be reported to the appropriate employment sponsor, to the respective embassies, to the appropriate child protection in the home country, or local authorities.

At all times, every aspect of the investigation (including verbal conversations and all resulting actions) must be documented in writing. Documentation will be maintained by the principal in confidential file stored in a

secure location throughout the student's enrollment at GSIS. Upon the student's withdrawal, the documentation will be kept for five years from the date of withdrawal.



REPORTING FLOWCHART



STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

GSIS is committed to the safety and protection of students. We are at all times aware of the responsibilities that accompany our work, including providing safe and healthy environments for all students. The GSIS Code of Conduct applies to all faculty, staff, employees, and volunteers who represent the school and who interact with students in both a direct and/or unsupervised capacity.

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to:

- Ensure the health, welfare and safety of our students and other members of our school community.
- Define and clarify the parameters of behavioral expectations and practices with regard to our schools.
- Assure our parent and community stakeholders, accreditation agencies, and others of the accountability of the adults who work at our schools.

The following is not an exhaustive list of unacceptable or inappropriate behaviors but is intended to provide guidance and raise awareness of the importance of maintaining professional boundaries between staff and students:

Professional Boundaries

Staff should be aware of their own and other people's vulnerability, especially when working alone with students, and be particularly aware that they are responsible for maintaining physical, emotional, and sexual boundaries in such interactions. Any covert or overt sexual behaviors directed toward students is prohibited. This includes seductive speech or gestures as well as physical contact that exploit or harass students.

Physical Contact

Staff must show prudent discretion before touching students and be aware of how physical touch will be perceived or received, and whether it would be an appropriate expression of greeting, care, concern, or celebration. Physical contact with students can be misconstrued both by the recipient and by those who observe it and should occur only when completely nonsexual and otherwise appropriate, and never in private. Staff are prohibited at all times from physically disciplining a child.

One-to-One Student Interactions

One-to-one interactions with a student are best held in a public area or in a room where the interaction can be (or is being) observed (such as a room with an open door or window that provides visibility).

Another staff member should be informed of any one-to-one meetings with students. Staff and students should never be in a room with a locked door (where access/egress is prohibited). The same prudence should be applied for after-school activities.

Social Contact with Students Outside of the Workplace

It is acknowledged that staff may have friendships and social contact with the parents of students, independent of the professional relationship. Staff are advised to inform their administrator of any regular social contact they have with a student which could give rise to concern or potential conflict of interest.

Communication with Students/Responsible Use of Technology

Verbal and/or written communication with students is governed by the key safety concept of transparency.

Additionally, the following steps will reduce the risk of inappropriate communications between staff and students:

- Email exchanges between staff and students are to be done using a school email address.
- Electronic communication that takes place over a school network may be subject to monitoring.
- Staff who use any form of online communication (including social media and text messaging) to communicate with students may only do so for activities involving school business.
- Staff should not seek to communicate/ make contact or respond to contact with students outside of the purposes of their work.

VIRTUAL SCHOOLING

- When teaching virtually, staff must use their GSIS email address to communicate with students and must communicate through student's GSIS school email addresses. No personal email addresses may be used for teacher and student communication.
- When teaching virtually, only GSIS approved platforms may be used: Microsoft Teams, PowerSchool etc. may be used
- When teaching or communicating virtually with students in a one-to-one situation, these must be done via a MS Teams and be recorded. These recordings will automatically be emailed to the teacher at the conclusion of the MS Teams
- When meeting virtually with students, professional attire must be worn and a professional location must be used, e.g., not a public café.

Profanity

Staff must not use profanity, blaspheme, or use any sort of offensive or inappropriate language in front of students, regardless of the setting.

Respect for the Rights of Others

Staff should not use language which is discriminatory or demeaning in relation to gender, religion, race, nationality, ethnicity, disability, physical appearance, or age. The use of sarcastic, demeaning, or insensitive comments towards students has the potential to be damaging and must be avoided.

Alcohol and Drugs

Staff must refrain from the illegal possession and/or use of drugs at all times, and from the use of tobacco products and alcohol when working with students. Staff are prohibited from furnishing or allowing students to consume tobacco, alcohol, illegal/ unauthorized drugs, or inappropriate/indecent material.

Confidentiality

Information about students and their families must be always kept confidential and only shared when legally permissible to do so and in the interest of the student. Confidential information should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need-to-know basis.

Transportation

Staff should not give a student a ride home without parent consent (except in the case of an emergency).

Gifts

There are occasions when students or parents may wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff and this is usually acceptable. However, it is unacceptable for staff to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value without informing their administrator. It is inadvisable for staff to give personal gifts to students or their families. Should staff choose to give gifts to students, they should be of insignificant value, given to all students equally, and with the knowledge of the parents/guardians and their administrator.





I promise to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in this Code of Conduct as a condition of my working with students at GSIS.

I will:

- Treat everyone with respect, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity and consideration.
- Always be visible when working with students. Avoid being alone with students at school activities.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than sarcasm, criticism, competition or comparison when working with students.
- Always maintain appropriate physical boundaries, and touch students - when necessary - only in ways that are appropriate, public and non-sexual.
- Comply with GSIS's mandatory reporting regulations and policy regarding suspected abuse.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse involving students.

I will not:

- Touch or speak to a student in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Inflict any physical or emotional abuse such as striking, spanking, shaking, slapping, humiliating, ridiculing, threatening or degrading students.
- Smoke or use tobacco products, or possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while working with students.
- Give any child who is not my own a ride home without the consent of parents and school administration (except in the case of an emergency).
- Accept gifts from / give gifts to students without the consent of their parents and school administration.
- Engage in private communications with students (via text messaging, email, or any forms of electronic or social media) except for activities strictly involving school business and sanctioned by GSIS.
- Use profanity in the presence of students at any time.

I understand that as a person working with and/or providing services to students under the auspices of GSIS, I am subject to a criminal history background check. My signature confirms that I have read this Code of Conduct and that as a person working with students, I agree to follow these standards. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from GSIS.

NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE

