



## Child Protection Policy

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RELATED DOCUMENTS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Complaints Policy</li><li>– Staff Selection and Recruitment Policy</li><li>– Employee Code of Conduct Policy</li><li>– Risk Management Policy</li><li>– Access Equity &amp; Fairness Policy</li><li>– Privacy Policy</li><li>– Student Code of Conduct</li></ul>		
REFERENCES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017</li><li>– Child Safety (prohibited Persons) Act 2016</li><li>– Protective Practices for Staff Guidelines (DECD, CESA, AISSA)</li></ul>		
RELEVANT STANDARDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Education Standards Board (ESB)</li><li>– ELICOS National Standards</li><li>– Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000</li></ul>		
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POSITION:	PRINCIPAL		

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## PURPOSE

The Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 and the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016, place a duty of care on the organisation and all persons individually who deal with children under the age of 18 years of age whether in an employed or voluntary capacity. The safety, wellbeing and protection of students is a fundamental commitment of Adelaide International School.

The purpose of this document is to outline the roles and responsibilities of all AIS employees in relation to the protection of children and maintaining a child safe environment at AIS.

## POLICY

AIS is committed to creating a safe and healthy environment where children are kept safe through the prevention, identification and reporting of suspicion or risk to harm of any child.

AIS undertakes to take all reasonable steps to:

- Implement appropriate processes to protect children from inappropriate risk or harm
- Support vulnerable children
- Fulfil all obligations to promptly report child protection concerns
- Ensure that staff and volunteers have undergone relevant screening
- Have relevant and appropriate processes in relation to Child Protection issues

## SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- all persons employed by AIS or who are acting for, or on behalf of, AIS
- students and parents.
- Homestay parents / accommodation providers

## DEFINITIONS

**Staff member:** A person, either paid or working voluntarily in any capacity at AIS including through Homestay.

**Abuse:** For the purposes of this policy 'abuse' will include, but is not limited to, inappropriate behaviours such as:

- Inappropriate physical contact
- Inappropriate discussion
- Threatening behaviour
- Mental or physical cruelty/mistreatment
- Solicitous behaviour
- Taking images of children for any purpose other than those required for school purposes with prior written permission from the parent on file
- Discriminatory behaviours including harassment and bullying



**Acts:** The Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 and Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 or as amended from time to time.

**Children:** Persons less than 18 years of age who are enrolled at AIS, attending AIS as a part of a study tour or any other activity organised by AIS.

**Criminal History Check Assessment:** To work with children in South Australia and thus at AIS all must have a Working with Children Check (WWCC).

**Mandated Notification:** Legal requirement to report suspected cases of abuse or neglect. Reports of this nature are to be made to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL), either online or on 131478.

## **PRINCIPLES THAT SUPPORT THIS POLICY**

1. The School recognises that children and students have a right to feel safe and be treated with dignity and respect, free from emotional and physical danger, abuse and neglect.
2. Children and young people are entitled to their rights irrespective of their special needs, gender, race, sexual orientation or cultural, religious or family circumstances.
3. AIS undertakes appropriate risk management strategies to support the wellbeing of students.
4. AIS will, at a minimum, comply with all legal responsibilities in relation to child safety and child protection. This includes mandated notification to the Child Abuse Report Line on 13 14 78.
5. Maintaining children and young people's attendance at, and engagement with education and care environments is a key contributor to their long-term health, safety and wellbeing.
6. All staff members have a responsibility to care for children and young people, to positively promote their wellbeing and to protect them from any type of harm or abuse
7. Staff members work to develop strong, positive relationships with parents and students to support the wellbeing of children through their education.
8. All persons involved in situations where harm or abuse is suspected or disclosed will be treated sensitivity, dignity and respect.
9. The Principal must be kept informed of any issue relating to potential or actual risk to the protection of students and children
10. All persons who will or may have contact with minor children will be required to undertake a Working with Children Check (WWCC) from the Department of Human Resources (DHS) Screening Unit.
11. Appropriate confidentiality of information will be maintained.
12. All staff will undergo regular appropriate Child Safety training.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Principal**

1. Act as the Child Protection Officer of AIS including
  - Being the first point of contact to provide advice and support to children, parents, staff and other AIS stakeholders regarding child safety and wellbeing



- Maintaining up to date knowledge of Children's Protection issues
  - Acting as the information and procedural conduit between regulatory authorities, School Board, staff, children, and parents and other AIS stakeholders.
2. Maintain up-to-date policies and practices for all related areas including employment DCSI checks
  3. Provide staff members with reasonable support to fulfil their responsibilities
  4. As far as practicable, monitor the compliance of staff with respect to this policy
  5. Ensure staff undertake relevant and appropriate professional development in relation to child safety.
  6. Undertake mandatory notification as appropriate
  7. Maintain appropriate documentation about reports and incidents
  8. Periodically review practices to support compliance with this policy.

### **Director of Curriculum and Administration**

1. Support the Principal in the implementation of this policy
2. Show behaviours that are consistent with the expectations of this policy
3. Undertake mandatory notification as appropriate
4. Assist with the provision of relevant professional development for staff members

### **Teachers**

1. Show behaviours that are consistent with the expectations of this policy
2. Support students who show symptoms of abuse or neglect, or who report issues of abuse or neglect.
3. Inform the Principal about concerns for students
4. Undertake mandatory notification as appropriate
5. Undertake appropriate professional development in relation to this policy

### **Non-teaching staff**

1. Undertake appropriate child protection training
2. Inform the Principal about concerns for students
3. Show behaviours that are consistent with the expectations of this policy
4. Undertake appropriate professional development in relation to this policy

### **Students**

Children who access AIS's services will be:

- encouraged to make suggestions and provide their point of view, particularly with respect to issues that affect children
- provided guidance and support in reporting situations where they feel or are unsafe
- encouraged to raise concerns and be confident that those concerns will be acted upon.

### **External Providers**

When an external training provider is contracted to provide all or a portion of a program, AIS will ensure and have documented that the external provider:

- is competent
- has a compliant Criminal Screening Check Assessment process for any individual and/or entity acting on their behalf



- employees will evidence comprehensive understanding of Child Safe Environments and Mandated Notification requirements
- has the appropriate level of public liability insurance.

AIS will not sign any documents or disclaimers which absolve the external provider or any individual or entity working on their behalf from liability for negligent acts or abuse

END OF POLICY

## APPENDIX 1: PROCEDURES CONSISTENT WITH THIS POLICY

### Electronic Media

AIS will implement controlled access to the internet in line with “parental” controls and through restricting sites that are inappropriate and/or dangerous sites for children.

All AIS stakeholders should refer to the IT Internet Email policy and note in particular that it is prohibited for AIS stakeholders to access, download or in any way engage in pornographic or illicit sites, dispersing of emails containing such content including jokes, accessing Facebook and other social media that is not specifically designed for the support of learning by AIS.

### Pre-Employment

#### *Interview*

At interview all candidates for employment for any position or training contract work within AIS will be advised of the requirements for:

- evidence of current Child Safe Environment Training
- a Criminal History Check Assessment
- reference checks.

#### *Criminal History Check Assessment*

Prior to employment/engagement of new employees and/or contractors AIS will either:

- request and assess current Working with Children Check (WWCC) provided by the candidate/contractor

### External Providers & Partners

AIS will require all External Providers (including Homestay parents and accommodation) & potential Partners working with any minor AIS student(s) to:

- provide evidence that they comply with the Act
- have a current Working with Children Check (WWCC)
- provide evidence that they have relevant and active policies and procedures in place to support their claims
- allow AIS to review the above on a regular basis as may be determined by AIS.

### Employees, Contractors and Accommodation Providers

AIS will require all employees, contractors, and accommodation providers to provide continuous evidence in the first week of July of each year of current Child Safe Environment Training – updated every three years from date of first course.

AIS will conduct on a minimum rotation of 3 yearly Criminal History Check Assessments. Costs for current staff will be met by AIS.

AIS will ensure that employees who work with children have ongoing supervision, support, and training to ensure the promotion of a child safe environment in which they can develop.

### Homestay and Accommodation verification processes

AIS maintains its own register of approved homestay providers (short term and long-term stays) as well as using an external provider of homestay services.

The AIS Homestay Coordinator inspects every property prior to the placement of a child in homestay. Homestay venues can be sourced via official networks or word of mouth advertising, but no previous validation of the homestay will be accepted on face value. The homestay coordinator will inspect each home prior to the placement being approved.

Each home is visited annually by the Homestay Coordinator to maintain currency of the register.

## **Complaints Response**

Any complaint by students are investigated immediately by the Principal or the International Student Coordinator.

Where the homestay is found to be in breach of conditions (such as provision of meals or attempting to charge additional direct fees) the student will be moved as soon as possible.

Complaints by the Homestay provider about student behaviour will be investigated by the International Student Coordinator. Where students require additional support to meet disciplinary guidelines (meeting curfew times, respecting shared living arrangements) the Coordinator will work with the student, the homestay parents and in some cases the student's parents to resolve the behaviour issues and facilitate a resolution.

Child welfare is always the priority and where there is doubt introduced by a complaint, the response will always be in favour of securing the child's welfare.

Homestay placements found unsuitable for any reason are removed from the AIS list of possible placements.

## **REPORTING OF SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

### **Privacy and Confidentiality**

All reports of suspected issues must be treated with the highest confidentiality and in line with the AIS Privacy Policy and the Privacy Act 1988. The only persons privy to reports are:

- the person making the report – limited to the lodgement of their report only
- the parties involved – limited to their input only
- the Principal – all information provided from all parties
- Child Abuse Report Line and those delegated by law to investigate and conduct further proceedings.

Any person found to have breached the privacy and confidentiality of a report or a child or children's privacy will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Suspected Issue External to AIS**

All staff, contractors and other stakeholders must report immediately and directly to the Principal, Director, or the CEO any suspected or actual evidence of abuse or neglect of a child client by:

- verbally informing the Principal in the first instance



- The Principal or delegate will immediately investigate the evidence at hand and speak with the child
- where the Principal or delegate concurs with the suspicion or actual evidence:
  - document in an objective and fair manner the situation and evidence
  - file the documentation and evidence in a sealed envelope and fix at the back of the student file. This information may only be retrieved by the Principal, Director, CEO or the person making the report in the event that they are called on by law to give evidence or clarify points
  - ensure a report is made to the Child Abuse Report Line 13 14 78.

### **Suspected Issue Internal to AIS and/or its Partners**

In all instances of suspected of harm or risk of harm, the child or children's responses will be taken to be valid and will be the catalyst for actions. This does not mean that AIS will judge the alleged perpetrator as guilty prior to complete investigation. AIS will take the actions it finds most appropriate to protect all parties with student welfare being the highest priority

Under Child Safe legislation a mandated reporter has an obligation to report when there is suspicion of child abuse.

Where it is considered appropriate, AIS will conduct an investigation that is respectful, fair and open in manner, applying the laws of natural justice and complying with relevant legislation. Advice will be taken from a Child Abuse officer to determine if an internal investigation is appropriate.

All staff, contractors and other stakeholders must report immediately and directly to the Principal or Director any suspected or actual evidence of abuse or neglect of a child client by any member of AIS staff or its stakeholders.

If appropriate in relation to other police investigations, the Principal or delegate will immediately commence investigation:

- speaking with the child or children in question
- where the Principal or delegate determines the possibility of veracity to the suspicion the alleged perpetrator will be immediately suspended, without judgement, pending further investigation
- where the Principal or delegate determines that the report was in error the person having made the report may be provided with additional Child Safe Environment training
- where the Principal or delegate determines that the report is justified, and that harm has occurred a report will be made immediately to Child Abuse Line 13 14 78 (even if a report has previously been submitted by another person)
- Where the Principal or delegate determines that the report was maliciously or frivolously made without substance the person having made the report will face disciplinary action which at its fullest extent may include termination of employment or contract.
- **If in doubt, make a report.**



## **STAKEHOLDER INVESTIGATION OR CHARGED WITH SERIOUS CRIMINAL OFFENCE**

### **Investigation**

Where an AIS stakeholder is under investigation for a serious criminal offence AIS will require that the individual or entity to immediately suspend all work or services, without payment, until the matter is resolved. The suspension of work or services does not indicate AIS's judgement of the individual or entity.

### **Allegations Not Upheld**

Where allegations are not upheld and AIS has reasonable and serious concerns that the alleged perpetrator may have conducted themselves in an inappropriate manner, AIS reserves the right to terminate the individual entities employment, contract, or services.

Where allegations are not upheld and AIS has reasonable unsupported concerns that the alleged perpetrator may have conducted themselves in an inappropriate manner, AIS reserves the right to reinstate the individual or entities employment, contract or services with the condition of close monitoring/supervision for a period to be decided by AIS. Payment for the suspension period will be back paid in this case.

Where allegations are not upheld and AIS is sufficiently convinced that the alleged perpetrator did not conduct themselves inappropriately AIS will reinstate the employment, contract, or services of the individual or entity. Payment for the suspension period will be back paid in this case.

Where allegations are upheld, i.e. charges are laid, please refer to Charged with Serious Criminal Offence below.

### **Charged with Serious Criminal Offence**

Where an individual or entity representatives are charged with a serious criminal offence AIS will maintain suspension of employment or services, without pay, until such time as the issue has been resolved.

Where charges are not upheld and AIS has reasonable and serious concerns that the alleged perpetrator may have conducted themselves in an inappropriate manner AIS reserves the right to terminate the individual entities employment, contract, or services.

Where allegations are not upheld and AIS is sufficiently convinced that the alleged perpetrator did not conduct themselves inappropriately AIS will reinstate the employment, contract or services of the individual or entity. Payment for the suspension period will be back paid in this case.

## **CHILDREN'S COMPLAINTS PROCESS**

Children may make a complaint verbally and directly to any AIS staff member with whom they feel most comfortable to do so.

The staff member will:

- immediately advise the Principal or delegate of the allegations;
- then assist the child or children and their parent(s) to access and formalise the AIS complaints process. Please refer Complaints Policy.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### Employees & Contractors

It is the responsibility of all employees to:

- ensure that they and others in direct contact with children always conduct themselves in an appropriate and respectful manner
- abide by the Code of Conduct – Employees
- ensure that they abide by the requirements of the Acts regarding suspected reportable situations
- to comply with this policy and provide AIS with evidence of currency the first week of July each year along with their Professional Development evidence
- to immediately report to the Principal or delegate their suspicions that a participant may harm themselves or others, or that the participant is suffering from serious/critical personal issues
- to immediately report to the Principal or delegate their suspicions that an External Provider or Partner is not meeting their obligations under this Policy.

### External Provider and Partners

It is the responsibility of External Providers and Partners to ensure that they meet the requirements of this policy and in particular:

- compliance with the Acts
- maintaining relevant and active policies and procedures in place to support their claims.

### Principal

It is the Principal's responsibility to:

- determine whether a breach in privacy is justified to ensure the safety and wellbeing of a minor child and make a report for external intervention under Mandated Notification.
- ensure that all employees, contractors, external providers, and partners meet the obligations of this policy and the Acts.
- AIS does not breach the provisions of this policy or the Act and acts within Mandated Notification requirements.
- Maintain currency of knowledge of the Act

### Students

It is the responsibility of all students, minor or adult, to:

- abide by the Student Code of Conduct.
- immediately report any instance of abuse by any stakeholder to any person by informing the person with whom they feel most comfortable doing so.