



XLIS

XI'AN LIANGJIATAN
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

2023 - 2024

**XI'AN LIANGJIATAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

Xi'an Liangjiatan International School Child Protection Policy

At Xi'an Liangjiatan International School our goal is to enable confident, open-minded global citizens through life-long learning and a sense of community. For this to occur we desire to create a safe learning environment for all our students and guests.

Our goals are to:

- Define what child abuse is
- Clearly communicate the reporting process
- Outline how the school is training staff and its associates

Definitions and Signs of Abuse and Neglect

Child abuse and neglect refer to any act or failure to act that results in harm or risk of harm to a child. At XLIS, we take child protection very seriously, and we define child abuse and neglect as follows:

- **Physical abuse:** Any intentional physical injury or harm caused to a child, such as hitting, kicking, burning, shaking, or otherwise harming a child
- **Emotional abuse:** Any behaviour that harms a child's emotional development, self-worth, or social skills, such as belittling, criticising, or threatening a child, or withholding love, support, or attention
- **Sexual abuse:** Any sexual activity with a child, including sexual touching, sexual assault, or sexual exploitation
- **Neglect:** Failing to provide a child with the basic needs, including food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education, or supervision
- **Medical neglect:** Failing to provide a child with necessary medical treatment, which may result in serious harm or death
- **Abandonment:** Leaving a child without proper care or supervision

We recognise that child abuse and neglect can occur in any family, regardless of ethnicity, income, education, or religion. We are committed to preventing child abuse and neglect and to responding quickly and appropriately if we suspect that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

Possible Signs of Physical and Sexual Abuse

It's important to note that behavioural indicators alone do not necessarily constitute abuse at XLIS. However, if they are observed alongside other indicators, they may signal a need for further investigation. Being vigilant and aware of behavioural indicators is crucial for preventing potential abuse at XLIS. However, we always use them in conjunction with other indicators and investigate thoroughly before drawing any conclusions.

Possible Signs of Abuse:

- Unexplained bruises and welts on any part of the body
- Bruises of different ages (various colours)
- Injuries reflecting the shape of an object used (e.g., electric cord, belt, buckle, ping pong paddle)
- Injuries that regularly appear after an absence or vacation
- Unexplained burns, especially to the soles, palms, back, or buttocks
- Burns with a pattern from an electric burner, iron, or cigarette
- Rope burns on arms, legs, neck, or torso
- Injuries inconsistent with information offered by the child
- Immersion burns with a distinct boundary line
- Unexplained lacerations, abrasions, or fractures
- Venereal disease in a child of any age
- Evidence of physical trauma or bleeding to the oral, genital, or anal areas
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Refusing to change into PE clothes
- Child running away from home and not giving any specific complaint
- Pregnancy with no history of peer socialisation
- Sexual knowledge, behaviour, or use of language not appropriate to age level

Child Protection Team Roles and Responsibilities

The child protection team comprises of the Head of School, Child Protection Officer (CPO), Division Principals, School Counsellor and School Doctor. The CPO is responsible for receiving allegations, keeping a record of the process and ensuring annual training takes place. The child protection team evaluates all allegations and decides what the appropriate actions will be in the best interests of the child.

Recruiting and Hiring

Recruiting initially seeks to deter dangerous individuals from working at the school. This is done by asking three scripted child protection questions in every interview. It is believed that an individual looking for an easy place to harm children would immediately be deterred by these questions.

The school conducts a through reference check of each candidate where an email is sent to four to five referees. Every referee is asked as to whether the candidate is safe to work with children. The school accepts references from senior leaders and not heads of departments or teachers. The current Head of School is always required. At least two reference calls must take place as part of this process.

Steps for Reporting

The following steps are to be taken when either a staff member identifies a case of suspected abuse or receives information from an individual that raises concerns of abuse.

1. Any incident or suspicion of child abuse must be reported to the Child Protection Officer through email to brian.lalor@xalis.com
2. In the case of physical injury, the student is checked by health centre staff to determine if emergency treatment is required
3. Divisional principal and Head of School are immediately informed
4. Divisional principal and school counsellor determine if immediate intervention is to be implemented
5. Divisional principal and counsellor start the investigation
 - a. Conduct strictly confidential interviews with pertinent staff members
 - b. Review student's history at school

One or more of the following actions may be taken:

- The school counsellor and child will have age appropriate discussion in order to gain further information
- Divisional principal, counsellor and/or teacher observes child in class
- If there is considerable evidence to support cause for concern, head of school and divisional principal will initiate a response team to address reported abuse
- Response team will include school counsellor, division principal and school doctor. Other staff members involved in the child protection committee may join the response team at the discretion of the divisional principal
- Child to have continued sessions with counsellor as needed
- The situation will be continually monitored for further evidence or additional reports of abuse

Training plans

Every member of staff is trained on child protection annually. After the training has taken place the staff member is sent the XLIS Child Protection Code of Conduct to sign, through the school's OA system. Every associate who works with students at XLIS also goes through this process annually. This includes bus monitors, drivers, cafeteria staff, cleaners and extracurricular activity teachers.

Prevention

At XLIS we understand that one of the best forms of prevention is education. Students in all programmes participate in age-appropriate curricular instruction on health and safety topics relevant to their age and stage. Our curriculum standards guide students to understand their rights to assert limits over what happens to their bodies and to give them the tools necessary to communicate effectively if someone violates those boundaries.

Local Chinese Law

The laws in China related to child protection include the Law on the Protection of Minors, Criminal Law, and Education Law. The Law on the Protection of Minors provides comprehensive protection for children under 18 years of age and covers issues such as child abuse, child labour, child trafficking, and child neglect. It also outlines the responsibilities of parents, guardians, and other individuals in protecting minors.

The Criminal Law of China criminalizes acts such as child abuse, child trafficking, and child pornography, with severe punishment, including imprisonment and even the death penalty in some cases. The Education Law of China mandates compulsory education for children aged six to 15, and places responsibility on schools and teachers to protect children from harm and abuse.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

China signed and ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on September 29, 1990, and March 2, 1992, respectively. As a signatory, China is obligated to protect and promote the rights of children, including their right to survival, development, protection, and participation.

Article 17 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) outlines the prohibited conduct of parents or guardians that can be harmful to children. This includes abuse, neglect, illegal adoption, and domestic violence. Abuse can be physical, emotional, or sexual, while neglect refers to a lack of adequate care and support. Illegal adoption occurs when legal procedures are not followed, and domestic violence refers to any abuse inflicted by a family member or intimate partner. The Chinese government's commitment to protecting children is reflected in these laws, which aim to ensure that children can grow and develop in a safe and nurturing environment.

Online Safety

XLIS has policies to provide a safe and secure environment for students, ensuring the appropriate and safe use of digital devices, computers, and technology. The school has a Technology Acceptable Use Policy, which defines cyberbullying as the use of digital devices and technology to bully, harass, intimidate, or humiliate another person. Anyone who experiences or witnesses cyberbullying should report it immediately to their homeroom teacher or the school's Child Protection Officer. The school takes all reports seriously and will investigate them promptly. The consequences of cyberbullying include disciplinary action such as suspension, expulsion, or legal action. The school promotes responsible digital citizenship through education on the risks and consequences of cyberbullying and encourages parents to have open conversations with their children about online behaviour and expectations. The policy aims to protect students and staff members from harm and promote a culture of academic integrity.

Child-On-Child Abuse

At XLIS it is important for all staff, parents, and students to understand what constitutes child-on-child abuse and how to address such situations. Child-on-child abuse refers to any form of abuse, including physical, sexual, emotional, or verbal abuse, that is perpetrated by one child against another. XLIS believes that addressing child-on-child abuse is an essential part of our child protection policy.

XLIS recognises that child-on-child abuse can have serious and long-lasting effects on the well-being and development of children. We are committed to preventing and addressing child-on-child abuse in all its forms, and we expect all members of the XLIS community to be vigilant and proactive in identifying and addressing such situations.

Examples of Child-on-child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Physical abuse, such as hitting, punching, kicking, or biting
- Sexual abuse, such as inappropriate touching, fondling, or other sexual acts
- Emotional abuse, such as bullying, teasing, or name-calling
- Verbal abuse, such as using derogatory or abusive language

Addressing Child-on-child Abuse

All staff members of XLIS are responsible for identifying and addressing child-on-child abuse. They must be vigilant and proactive in identifying situations where a child may be at risk of abuse, and they must take appropriate action to protect the child.

If a staff member or parent becomes aware of any incident or suspicion of child-on-child abuse, they must immediately report it to the designated Child Protection Officer. The Child Protection Officer will then take appropriate action to investigate the incident and ensure that the child is protected from further harm.

XLIS will take appropriate action to address child-on-child abuse, which may include:

- Supporting the child who has been abused
- Providing counselling or other support services to the child who has been abused

- Disciplining the child who has engaged in abusive behaviour, in accordance with school policies
- Informing parents of the children involved
- Reporting the incident to the appropriate authorities, if necessary

Training and Reporting

All staff members of XLIS will receive appropriate training on identifying and addressing child-on-child abuse. Staff members must report any incident or suspicion of child-on-child abuse to the designated Child Protection Officer, who will then take appropriate action to investigate the incident and ensure that the child is protected from further harm.

Appropriate Touch and Safe Touch

The purpose of this section with our Child Protection Policy is to ensure that all staff, parents, and students of XLIS understand how to touch or not touch a child in school and to protect children from harm. We believe that every child has the right to feel safe and protected in school, and it is our responsibility to ensure that they are protected from all forms of abuse, including physical abuse.

Appropriate touch is defined as touch that is safe, non-threatening, and respectful of a child's boundaries. Safe touch is touch that is intended to comfort, reassure, or protect a child from harm.

All members of XLIS, including staff, parents, and students, must understand and adhere to the following guidelines:

- No staff member or student should touch another child in any way that makes the child feel uncomfortable, embarrassed, or frightened
- No staff member or student should touch a child in a private area, such as the genital area, buttocks, or breasts, except in the case of a medical emergency or in a manner that is medically necessary
- Staff members should use appropriate language and tone when speaking to children and should not use derogatory or abusive language

- Physical punishment, including hitting, spanking, or slapping, is not allowed under any circumstances
- Parents and students are encouraged to report any concerns or suspicions of abuse to the designated child protection officer or another appropriate member of staff

Staff members will receive appropriate training on child protection and appropriate touch, and they will be required to attend refresher training sessions when organised by the school. Parents and students will receive information on child protection and appropriate touch through parent-teacher meetings, school assemblies, and other communication channels.

XLIS is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all its students., so it is important the XLIS community understand how to touch or not touch a child in school and to protect children from harm.



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