

APIS CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CHILD SAFETY

Child abuse, harassment, and neglect are concerns throughout the world. Child abuse, harassment, and neglect are violations of a child's human rights and are obstacles to the child's education as well as to their physical, emotional, and spiritual development. Asia Pacific International School [APIS]: Seoul endorsed the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*, of which our host country, South Korea, is a signatory.

Schools fulfill a special institutional role in society as protectors of children. Schools need to ensure that all children in their care are afforded a safe and secure environment in which to grow and develop, both at school and outside of school. Educators, who have the opportunity to observe and interact with children over time and for many hours during the day, are in a unique position to identify children who are in need of help and protection. As such, educators have a professional and ethical obligation to identify those children and take steps to ensure that the child and family avail themselves of the services needed to remedy any situation that constitutes child abuse, harassment, or neglect.

All staff employed at APIS must report suspected incidents of child abuse, harassment, or neglect whenever the staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered, or is at significant risk of suffering abuse, harassment, or neglect. The reporting and follow-up of all suspected incidents will proceed in accordance with administrative regulations respective to this policy. Furthermore, cases of suspected child abuse, harassment, or neglect may be reported to the appropriate employer, the respective consulate in Seoul, South Korea, the appropriate child protection agency in the home country, and/or local authorities.

APIS seeks to be a safe haven for students who may be experiencing abuse, harassment, or neglect in any aspect of their lives. As such, APIS will communicate the code of conduct guidelines and provide safeguarding training annually, will make every effort to implement hiring practices to ensure the safety of children, and will review policies and procedures annually for compliance and effectiveness.

In the case of a staff member reported as an alleged offender, APIS will conduct a full investigation following a carefully designed course of due process, keeping the safety of the child as the highest priority.

I agree to adhere to this code of conduct relating to maintaining a safe environment for all students. My signature denotes an agreement to follow staff expectations and standards for professional and appropriate interactions with students as outlined in the standards provided.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Code of Conduct Guidelines

Duty of Care

- Employees are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority, manage risk, use resources, and safeguard children.
- All employees have a responsibility to keep students safe and to protect them from abuse (sexual, physical, and emotional), neglect, and safeguarding concerns.
- Children have a right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity. It follows that trusted adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure their safety and well-being. Failure to do so may be regarded as professional misconduct.
- The safeguarding culture of a school is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring, and professional relationships between adults and children and behavior by the adult that demonstrates integrity, maturity, and good judgment.
- When individuals accept a role working in an education setting they should understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust involved in that role.

Making Professional Judgements

- This code of conduct cannot provide a complete checklist of what is or is not appropriate behavior. It does highlight, however, behavior that is illegal, inappropriate, or inadvisable.
- There may be occasions and circumstances in which employees have to make decisions or take action in the best interest of a child which may be contrary to guidelines in this policy
- Individuals are expected to make judgments about their behavior in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge and, in so doing, will be seen to be acting reasonably.
- These judgments should always be recorded and shared with the Principal or appropriate line manager. Adults should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe, and applied equitably.

Power and Positions of Trust and Authority

- As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all those working with children in a school or education setting are in a position of trust in relation to all students.
- The relationship between a person working with a child/ren is one in which the adult has a position of power or influence. It is vital for adults to understand this power; that the relationship cannot be one between equals and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence.

- The potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable children means that adults have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.
- Employees should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries, avoid behavior that could be misinterpreted by others, and report and record any such incident.

Confidentiality

- Employees may have access to confidential information about students and their families which must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when legally permissible to do so and in the interest of the child. Records should only be shared with those who have a legitimate professional need to see them.
- Employees should never use confidential or personal information about a student or her/his family for their own, or others' advantage.
- The information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the child.
- Confidential information should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need-to-know basis.
- In circumstances where the child's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously.
- There are some circumstances in which an employee may be expected to share information about a student, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected.
- In such cases, individuals have a responsibility to pass the information on without delay, but only to a Child Protection Officer or member of the Child Protection Team.
- If a child – or their parent/guardian – makes a disclosure regarding abuse or neglect, the employee should follow the procedures outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The adult should not promise confidentiality to a child or parent but should give reassurance that the information will be treated sensitively.
- If an employee is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential he or she should seek guidance from a member of the Child Protection Team.
- Employees are expected to maintain a positive climate of respectful communication and not engage in 'gossip' which could be damaging to individuals or the school.
- Employees should be aware of their surroundings and ensure that confidential conversations take place in an appropriate environment.

Sexual Harassment and/or Abuse

Sexual harassment and/or abuse are completely and absolutely prohibited. No one's position or role gives them the right to abuse it by pursuing personal interests of a sexual, emotional, or professional nature. All conduct of a sexual nature and other behavior based on gender that denigrates employees and students is disruptive. Sexual harassment is an infringement of personal integrity and the individual's right to privacy. Sexual harassment in school or within workplace contexts is not tolerated by APIS. Sexual harassment can take the form of words, gestures, and deeds.

This might mean:

- Insinuating and suggestive remarks about the appearance of a person.
- Sexist comments and jokes about sexual characteristics, sexual behavior, and the sexuality of women and men.
- Showing or displaying pornographic material.
- Issuing unwanted invitations with unmistakable intent.
- Unwanted bodily contact.
- Stalking in or outside the school (including online).
- Attempting to get close in a way that involves promises of advantage or threat of disadvantage.
- Sexual assault, coercion, or rape

Sexual Conduct

Any sexual behavior by an employee with/or towards a student is unacceptable. It is an offence for a member of faculty/staff in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a student at the school or a young person under 18 years of age and sexual activity with a student will result in criminal and/or disciplinary procedures.

Sexual activity involves physical contact, including penetrative and non-penetrative acts, however, it also includes non-contact activities, such as causing students to engage in online discussions of a sexual nature or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic material.

Physical Contact

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for faculty / staff to have physical contact with children, however, it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role and in relation to the student's individual needs. It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one student, in one environment, may be inappropriate in another, or with a different student. Employees should use their professional judgment based on the following:

- Physical contact should be in response to the child's needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development.
- Physical contact should take place only when it is necessary in relation to a particular activity.
- Physical contact should take place in a safe and open environment i.e. one easily observed by others and last for the minimum time necessary.
- Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority.
- If an employee believes that an action by them or a colleague could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed which is possibly abusive the incident and circumstances should be immediately reported to their direct supervisor and recorded.

Physical Intervention / Physical Restraint

Physical intervention/restraint can be an appropriate measure/action. However, great care must be exercised in order that adults do not physically intervene in a manner that could be considered unlawful.

Adults may reasonably intervene to prevent a child from:

- committing a criminal offense
- injuring themselves or others

Adults should:

- always seek to defuse situations and avoid the use of physical intervention wherever possible
- remove others from potential harm, send for support
- where physical intervention is necessary, only use minimum force and for the shortest time needed

Communication with Students (the use of technology)

In order to make the best use of the many educational benefits of technology, students need opportunities to use and explore the digital world. E-safety risks are posed more by behaviors and values than by the technology itself.

- Faculty/staff should ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviors.
- Communication with students both in the 'real' world and interactions in the 'virtual' world should take place within explicit professional boundaries and maintain the standards of a traditional student-teacher relationship
 - Faculty/staff should not request or respond to any personal information from students other than what may be necessary for their professional role.
 - Faculty/staff should ensure that their communications are open and transparent and avoid any communication which could be interpreted as 'grooming behavior'
 - Faculty/staff should not seek to communicate/make contact or respond to contact with students outside of the purposes of their work.
 - Faculty/staff should not give out their personal details unless pre-agreed for work purposes.
- Platforms: Faculty/staff should refrain from communicating with students on non-APIS sponsored platforms. Faculty/staff should make use of the GChat platform, which is within the school sponsored APIS server.

Use Of Images, Videos and Other Media

Many educational activities involve recording images or videos. These may be undertaken for displays, publicity, to celebrate achievement and to provide records of evidence of the activity. Whilst images are regularly used for very positive purposes adults need to be aware of the

potential for these to be taken and/or misused or manipulated for pornographic or 'grooming' purposes.

This means that adults should:

- only retain images/videos when there is a clear and agreed purpose for doing so
- store images/videos in an appropriately secure place defined by the school (most usually a shared Google Drive) and delete them from any personal device

This means that adults should not:

- take images/videos of students for their personal use
- display or distribute images/videos of students unless they are sure that they have parental consent to do so
- take images/videos of children that could be considered sexually suggestive, demeaning, or otherwise inappropriate in any way.

Finally, while adults often take pictures or videos of students for many different reasons at school, students should retain the right to express their concerns about images of themselves. If a student expresses uncomfortable feelings about themselves being recorded or pictured, APIS will hear their concerns and act as sensitively as possible in response.

Exposure to Inappropriate Images

Adults should take extreme care to ensure that children and young people are not exposed, through any medium, to inappropriate or indecent images. This means that employees should:

- Take proper precautions to avoid digital pop-ups or 'zoom bomb' type exposure to unknown people with potentially graphic content
- Ensure that any films or material shown to children are age appropriate. This means adults must screen material first before sharing it with students.

Under no circumstances should a school's equipment be used to access pornography. Personal equipment containing pornography or links to it should never be brought into or used in the workplace.

One-on-One Situations

Adults working in one-on-one situations with students, including visiting adults from external organizations, can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints. To safeguard both children and adults, a risk assessment in relation to the specific nature and implications of one-on-one work should always be undertaken.

This means that adults should:

- Ensure that wherever possible there is visual access and/or an open door in one-to-one situations
- Always report any situation where a pupil becomes distressed or angry
- Consider the needs and circumstances of the student involved