



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy at DISHA

1. Introduction and Scope

A child's fundamental right is to be able to participate in and learn in an atmosphere free from any kind of emotional or physical abuse or harassment. At Disha, we are committed to providing a safe and secure environment where children can learn, grow, and thrive. Our Child Safeguarding Policy outlines our dedication to protecting children from harm, ensuring their well-being, and promoting their welfare in line with international best practices. As part of the enrollment and re-enrollment process, all parents/caregivers acknowledge the safeguarding commitment DIIS has made to every student. This policy is readily available in the download section of our website. At Disha, we believe children have the right to be protected from all forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. They should be treated fairly, with dignity, and with respect. Adult decisions affecting children should be made with the best interests of the child as the primary concern. Secure documentation and confidentiality of sensitive information must be honored and in compliance with applicable laws. Core aspects of safeguarding in place at Disha and evolving best practices include maintaining clear roles and responsibilities of Safeguarding, performing risk management and risk reduction assessments for athletics, activities, and off-campus trips and events, maintaining secure documentation of concern, response, and case management of safeguarding concerns and cases, and systematic and ongoing case review and reflection to measure outcomes and improve practices and policies.

2. Definitions and Key Concepts

Child Safeguarding: This encompasses measures to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation, and other forms of harm against children. It involves creating a culture of vigilance, respect, and support for children's rights and safety.

Discriminatory Abuse: This refers to treating someone less favorably and causing them harm due to their age, gender, sexuality, disability, ethnic origin, or religion.



Psychological Abuse: This involves causing someone mental and emotional distress through threats, humiliation, control, intimidation, harassment, verbal abuse, etc.

Physical Abuse: Physical harm caused by actions such as hitting, pushing, kicking, or depriving liberty.

Emotional Abuse: This refers to persistent emotional maltreatment causing severe and lasting adverse effects. Examples include bullying (including cyberbullying), peer pressure, conveying to someone that they are worthless or inadequate, or denying them opportunities to express their views.

Bullying and Harassment: This refers to maintaining a zero-tolerance stance towards bullying and harassment. Disha Indian International School prioritizes the creation of a safe and inclusive environment for all students. This commitment extends to fostering respect, empathy, and understanding among students and staff alike. We believe in promoting positive relationships and communication channels to address any issues promptly and effectively.

Reportable Concern: It can be defined as physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional (psychological) abuse, neglect, and peer-to-peer abuse. These concerns may involve illegal behavior (e.g., sexual abuse) or inappropriate behavior or conduct.

3. Legal Framework and Responsibilities

The child protection policy of DIIS is firmly grounded in best practices and takes directions from conventions concerning child welfare and safeguarding. Within this framework, all staff members, including teachers, administrators, and support staff, bear a legal responsibility for ensuring the safety and well-being of students under their care. This duty of care extends to recognizing signs of abuse, promptly reporting concerns, and cooperating with child protection agencies as mandated by law. Upholding confidentiality and data protection principles is paramount, with staff expected to handle safeguarding information confidentially and in compliance with relevant data protection laws. Disha Indian International School emphasizes ongoing training and professional development to



equip staff with the knowledge and skills necessary for effective safeguarding, including recognizing signs of abuse and responding appropriately to disclosures. Collaboration with external child protection agencies is integral to DIIS's approach, ensuring a coordinated response to safeguarding concerns and access to support services for children and families. Regular review and updates of the child protection policy are conducted to ensure compliance with best practice standards, with all staff members expected to familiarize themselves with the policy and adhere to its guidelines consistently.

4. Safeguarding Procedures and Reporting Mechanisms

At Disha Indian International School, core aspects of student safeguarding are in place and will continue to evolve as we strengthen our efforts to improve best practices. These include:

- Maintaining clear roles and responsibilities for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (School Principal) to ensure effective coordination and oversight of safeguarding efforts.
- Practicing safe recruitment and hiring protocols for all employees, contracted vendors, and volunteers to prevent the potential risk of harm to children.
- Performing risk management and risk reduction assessments for athletics, activities, and off-campus trips and events to identify and mitigate potential safeguarding risks.
- Maintaining secure documentation of concerns, responses, and cases to ensure accountability and transparency in safeguarding procedures.
- Conducting systematic and ongoing case review and reflection to measure outcomes and identify areas for improvement in safeguarding practices and policies, fostering a culture of continuous learning and development in safeguarding efforts.

Any suspicion, disclosure, or evidence of child abuse, neglect, or harm is reported immediately to the designated Safeguarding Lead (School Principal). This may include



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observing a reason for concern related to abuse, receiving a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or having knowledge which leads to the belief that harm to a child has taken or will take place. The Safeguarding Lead(School Principal) follows procedures for documenting, investigating, and escalating safeguarding concerns. Support and appropriate referrals are provided to affected children and their families, ensuring their well-being and access to necessary services.

After a disclosure has been made or reported, or if there are personal concerns, individuals are encouraged to contact the School Principal. The Principal will conduct an initial evaluation and determine a course of action depending on whether there is a concern for the child's immediate safety or if community services may be required. If the allegation involves a school employee, the School Principal will automatically be informed and will lead the process.

Secure documentation of all actions and interventions will be collectively maintained, with all reports and documentation kept confidential in a secure location. Other staff members, such as nurses or teachers, may be called upon to become involved as part of the response team. The response team will immediately assess and ensure short-term safety for the child to the best of its ability, informing local authorities as required by law.

A response plan with recommendations/requirements will be developed and documented, which may include meetings with parents/students, internal/external referrals for support, safety contracts, and termination of employment if necessary. Throughout the reporting and responding stages, the response team will support students, staff, and parents by taking all concerns seriously, following policies and procedures, maintaining regular communication, ensuring secure documentation, and making referrals to outside agencies as appropriate. Follow-up and follow-up plans will be documented appropriately in the case file to ensure that our approach to safeguarding remains student-centered and in the best interests of the child.

5. Risk Assessment and Prevention Strategies



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At Disha, we prioritize the safety and well-being of our students through regular risk assessments. By systematically evaluating potential risks, we aim to preemptively address any threats to children's safety. Appropriate measures are then implemented to mitigate identified risks, including robust supervision, maintenance of a safe environment, and ongoing staff training. We are committed to maintaining a secure learning environment where students can thrive without compromise.

In alignment with our commitment to child safeguarding, Disha Indian International School has established comprehensive prevention strategies. These strategies are integral to our recruitment process and ensure that all potential employees undergo thorough vetting and screening procedures.

Specifically, our prevention strategies include:

- **Thorough Recruitment Practices:** We conduct 'live contact' interviews with potential candidates, ensuring that at least one question or scenario pertains to child safeguarding. This helps assess the candidate's awareness and commitment to maintaining a safe environment for children.
- **Reference Checks:** Reference checks are performed, including at least one verbal check from the candidate's most recent direct supervisor. These checks are tailored to inquire about the candidate's safety practices when interacting with children.
- **Documentation and Compliance:** Documentation of all recruitment and safeguarding measures is diligently maintained in personnel files. Additionally, all employees are required to read, understand, and agree to comply with the DIIS Safeguarding Policy as part of their terms and conditions of employment.

Furthermore, we enforce strict campus access control measures to further enhance child safety:

- **ID Badge Requirement:** All staff members are mandated to wear ID badges while on campus, facilitating easy identification and ensuring accountability.
- **Parent and Guardian Protocol:** During school hours, parents and guardians are expected to sign in and out with a specified purpose, enhancing supervision and security.



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Parents are also provided with visitor badges, which they are required to wear during all school activities on campus.

- **Visitor Management:** Visitors with appointments undergo a sign-in process and are issued Visitor Badges, confirming their permission to be on-site. To maintain a secure environment, all visitors are required to be accompanied while on campus unless deemed appropriate by a member of the administrative leadership team.

At Disha, safeguarding extends beyond the classroom to encompass all aspects of school life, including athletics, activities, and off-campus trips and events. To ensure the safety of our students in these settings, we perform comprehensive risk management and risk reduction assessments. These assessments are conducted systematically, considering various factors such as the nature of the activity, the location, and the participants involved. By identifying potential safeguarding risks proactively, we can implement appropriate measures to mitigate these risks effectively. For athletics and activities, our risk assessments include evaluations of equipment safety, facility conditions, and supervision protocols. We ensure that coaches and supervisors are adequately trained in child safeguarding practices and emergency response procedures. Additionally, student participation in athletic activities is contingent upon obtaining parental consent and providing medical information to address any health concerns or conditions. Off-campus trips and events present unique challenges, requiring meticulous planning and coordination to maintain student safety. Prior to any excursion, thorough risk assessments are conducted to identify potential hazards and develop appropriate risk mitigation strategies. This includes assessing transportation arrangements, accommodation facilities, and emergency communication protocols. Supervision ratios are carefully determined to ensure adequate oversight of students throughout the duration of the trip. By integrating risk management and risk reduction assessments into our planning processes for athletics, activities, and off-campus events, we prioritize the safety and well-being of our students in all aspects of their educational experience. Our commitment to proactive safeguarding measures underscores our dedication to providing a secure environment where students can thrive and explore their interests safely.

6. Training of Staff



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Mandatory, in-house training for all adults who come into contact with DIIS students is a vital component of the Safeguarding Program. Roles trained include direct employees (leadership, faculty, staff, teacher substitutes), contracted vendors (bus drivers, guards, maintenance and cleaning), and volunteers (PTA). Trainings are tailored to the role, awareness level, language, and specific responsibilities for student safety. They will be held bi-annually.

Content of the training includes, but is not limited to:

- What are indicators of abuse and how to spot them?
- What does it mean to be a mandatory reporter?
- How do you report concerns or disclosures?
- What are Japanese laws regarding child welfare?
- How do adverse childhood experiences impact academic achievement and social-emotional well-being?
- What are the adult behavioral and boundary expectations when working with students?

DIIS embraces the duty to safeguard students in its care, promoting their physical and psychological health, safety, and well-being, and reporting concerns of abuse, neglect, and/or maltreatment.

7.Safe Communications

At DIIS, we prioritize safe communication practices to ensure the protection and privacy of our students. We have established clear guidelines and norms around the use of various communication channels, including data privacy, email, chat, social media, photos, and videos. While photographs and videos of school activities and events are used to support the learning process and document student progress and achievements, it's imperative that these mediums are utilized responsibly and in accordance with safeguarding principles.



Employees utilizing social media for school-related purposes are advised to adhere to the following guidelines:

- **Maintain Professional Boundaries:** Never use phone calls, texting, social media, emails, google chat, or similar technology to communicate with students in ways that exceed their professional relationship and responsibilities with students. Never make their students friends on social media.
- **Responsible Posting:** Never upload or post defamatory, obscene, abusive, or harmful content on any social media platform. Never post school related posts from their personal accounts. They can reshare or like the official handle post.
- **Reporting Concerns:** Inform your supervisor immediately if you observe another member of the school community uploading defamatory, obscene, abusive, or harmful content.
- **Protecting Privacy:** Do not share sensitive information such as a student's full name or location.
- **Compliance with Legal Requirements:** Never ask students to use technology or social media in a manner that violates legal requirements or terms-of-service agreements.

Employees found in breach of the above guidelines may be subject to disciplinary actions in accordance with school policies and procedures.

By adhering to these safe communication practices, we uphold our commitment to maintaining a safe and respectful online environment for our students and the entire school community.

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8. Anonymous Reporting and Whistleblowing

DIIS upholds a culture of transparency and accountability, encouraging all stakeholders who have concerns about any aspect of the school's operation to come forward and voice their concerns without fear of reprisal.

We are unwaveringly committed to maintaining high standards of safety, ethics, and accountability in all of our operations. Therefore, we require employees to report any



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instances of unethical, unsafe, or illegal conduct using the safeguarding reporting guidelines. In return, we guarantee protection against retaliation for reporting, as long as the report is made in good faith and the reporting procedures are followed diligently.

Our whistleblowing policy encompasses disclosures related to serious malpractice, where the interests of employees, students, or the public may be at risk. These may include any of the following:

- A criminal offense
- A breach of any legal obligation
- A danger to the health and safety of any individual
- Environmental damage
- A deliberate attempt to conceal any of the above

By providing a safe and confidential mechanism for anonymous reporting and whistleblowing, we empower our community members to uphold our shared values of integrity, accountability, and safeguarding. Together, we work towards maintaining a safe and ethical learning environment for all.

9. Review and Evaluation Process

At Disha Indian International School, the safety and well-being of our students are paramount. To ensure that our Child Safeguarding Policy remains robust and effective, we have a comprehensive review and evaluation process.

Regular Assessment: Our Child Safeguarding Policy undergoes periodic reviews to assess its efficacy, relevance, and adherence to legal standards and best practices. These reviews are conducted by designated committee appointed by the school Principal.

Stakeholder Input: We value the perspectives of all stakeholders, including parents, teachers, staff, and students. Feedback from these individuals is solicited and carefully considered during the policy review process. This collaborative approach ensures that the policy reflects the collective input and concerns of our school community.



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Incident Analysis: Incident reports are meticulously analyzed to identify any gaps or areas for improvement in our safeguarding procedures. Lessons learned from past incidents inform policy revisions and updates, enabling us to continually enhance our safeguarding measures.

Monitoring Emerging Trends: We remain vigilant in monitoring emerging trends and developments in child safeguarding practices. This proactive approach allows us to adapt our policy in response to evolving threats or challenges, ensuring that our students are protected in all circumstances.

By adhering to this rigorous review and evaluation process, we demonstrate our unwavering commitment to providing a safe and secure environment for every student at Dish Indian International School.

