



EXPLORE —  
— REFLECT  
APPLY —

# CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING GUIDE

2025-2026



**KOREA KENT  
FOREIGN SCHOOL**  
Explore | Reflect | Apply

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# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

## Our Mission Statement

To empower our students to be character-driven, mindful individuals who explore with curiosity, reflect deeply on their learning, and apply their skills with purpose within the diverse global community.

## Shared Values

This policy sets to align with the shared Student Learning Outcomes of the school;

- **Critical Thinking** - Students are taught to think critically about situations, recognize unsafe or inappropriate behaviors, and make informed decisions to protect themselves and others.
- **Creativity** - Students are encouraged to express themselves creatively while being mindful of safe boundaries, respecting others' rights, and promoting kindness and inclusion.
- **Mindfulness** - Students practice mindfulness to become more aware of their own feelings and surroundings, helping them to recognize unsafe situations, manage emotions, and seek help when needed.
- **Communication** - Students learn to communicate clearly and assertively, including how to report concerns, seek support from trusted adults, and advocate for themselves and their peers in a safe environment.
- **Cultural Empathy** - Students are guided to respect and value diverse perspectives, ensuring a safe, inclusive atmosphere where every child feels seen, respected, and protected from discrimination or harm.
- **Technology** - Students develop digital literacy skills, learning to navigate online environments safely, protect personal information, recognize cyberbullying, and report inappropriate content or behavior.

## Purpose

This policy sets out to ensure the safety of all of the students at Korea Kent Foreign School. Ensuring the safety of our students remains a fundamental aspect of our school and from which everything is built. This policy has been developed to provide faculty, staff, families, and students clear expectations for matters regarding the safety, well-being, and health of our students.

- The purpose of this policy is to provide KKFS staff guidelines by which to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of abuse and neglect and to understand their role in keeping children safe.
- This Policy will be reviewed annually and updated regularly in light of operational experience and in line with changes in legislation and associated policies.
- KKFS recognises that all staff and Trustees have a full and active part to play in protecting students from harm. The overall responsibility, implementation, and review of this policy rests with the Principal of KKFS

## Scope

- This policy covers all staff of KKFS who have direct or indirect contact with children. This includes those staff, paid or voluntary, employed directly by KKFS, as well as those professionals contracted or invited to provide services to children in the care of KKFS. This includes teaching and non-teaching staff.

## Key Contacts

<b>Designated Child Protection Officer</b>	Hyejin Kim	<a href="mailto:hyejinkim@kkfs.org">hyejinkim@kkfs.org</a>
<b>Senior Office Worker</b>	Supyong Chong	<a href="mailto:es@kkfs.org">es@kkfs.org</a>
<b>Counselors</b>	Alice Ko	<a href="mailto:aliceko@kkfs.org">aliceko@kkfs.org</a>
	Jenny Huh	<a href="mailto:jennyhuh@kkfs.org">jennyhuh@kkfs.org</a>

While everyone should be concerned about child abuse and neglect, certain professionals and other individuals are required by law to report suspected child abuse and neglect. Korea Kent Foreign School's Child Protection Policy is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of which South Korea is a signatory.

- Article 19 - Protection from abuse and neglect
  - *The State shall protect the child from all forms of maltreatment by parents or others responsible for the care of the child and establish appropriate social programs for the prevention of abuse and the treatment of victims.*
- Article 34 - Sexual exploitation
  - *The State shall protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse, including prostitution and involvement in pornography.*

Parents have a fundamental right to raise their children and our community presumes that parents and other responsible adults will act in the best interest of children. When parents and other responsible adults do not protect children from harm and put them at risk of abuse or neglect, the community has a responsibility to intervene to protect the health and welfare of children.

## Principles

- KKFS is committed to the prevention of abuse and to the well-being of children, young people and their families.
- All services provided by KKFS adhere to the principles of partnership, protection and participation; and the rights and responsibilities accorded by article 19 and article 34 of Korean Law.

## Recognizing Child Abuse

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), child abuse constitutes, *“All forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.”*

## Physical Abuse

Defined as any act which, regardless of intent, results in a non-accidental physical injury. Inflicted physical injury most often represents unreasonably severe corporal punishment.

Possible Physical Indicators:

Questionable Bruises and Welts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• On face, lips, mouth, torso, back, buttocks, thighs</li><li>• Injuries in various stages of healing</li><li>• Clustered injuries that form regular patterns, which reflect the shape of article (electric cord, belt buckle) used to inflict injury</li><li>• Injuries that seem to regularly appear after absence, weekend, or vacation</li><li>• Human bite marks</li></ul>
Questionable Burns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cigarette burns, especially on soles, palms, back or buttocks</li><li>• Immersion burns (sock-like, glove-like, doughnut</li></ul>

	shaped on buttocks or genitalia) patterned like electric burner, iron, etc <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rope burns on arms, legs, neck, or torso</li> </ul>
Questionable Fractures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To skull, nose, facial structure</li> <li>• Fractures in various stages of healing</li> <li>• Multiple or spiral fractures</li> </ul>
Questionable Cuts, Scrapes, Scratches, Lacerations or Abrasions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To mouth, lips, gums, eyes</li> <li>• To external genitalia</li> </ul>

Possible Child Behavioral Indicators:

- Uncomfortable with physical contact
- Wary of adult contacts
- Apprehensive when other children cry
- Exhibits behavioral extremes
- Aggressiveness or withdrawal
- Frightened of parents
- Afraid to go home
- Reports being injured by parents or other caretaker
- Complains of soreness or moves uncomfortably
- Wears clothing inappropriate for the weather to cover injuries
- Reluctant to change clothes
- May be a chronic runaway

## Emotional/Mental Abuse

A pattern of behavior by parents or caregivers that can seriously interfere with a child's cognitive, emotional, psychological or social development

Emotional abuse can be seen as a self-fulfilling prophecy. It is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child so as to cause severe and adverse effects on a child's emotional development. If a child is degraded enough, the child will begin to live down to the image communicated by the abusing parent or caretaker.

Possible Physical Indicators:

- May have frequent stomach aches, headaches or unexplained weight fluctuations
- May have speech disorders
- May lag in physical development
- May have a non-organic, failure-to-thrive medical diagnosis
- May have learning problems

Possible Child Behavioral Indicators:

- Exhibits age-inappropriate behaviors such as thumb sucking, biting, head banging or rocking
- Exhibits neurotic traits such as sleep disorders, inhibition of play
- Exhibits extreme behaviors such as over compliance, passivity, aggression, withdrawal or inappropriate affect for the situation
- Exhibits overly adaptive behavior such as inappropriate adult behavior
- Exhibits emotional or intellectual developmental delays
- Exhibits either general or self-destructive behavior
- Exhibits cruel behavior or may seem to get pleasure from hurting others and/or animals
- Exhibits delinquent behavior
- May abuse alcohol or drugs
- May have eating disorders

## Sexual Abuse

Acts of sexual assault and sexual exploitation of minors. Sexual abuse encompasses a broad range of behavior and may consist of many acts over a long period of time or a single incident. It involves sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that violates the laws of society.

Possible Child Physical Indicators:

- Has difficulty walking or sitting
- Has torn, stained, or bloody underclothing
- Has pain or itching in genital area
- Has bruises or bleeding in external genitalia, vaginal, or anal areas
- Has a sexually transmitted disease, especially in pre-teens
- Becomes pregnant at a young age

Possible Child Behavioral Indicators:

- Shows reluctance to change clothes for physical education classes
- Engages in highly sexualized play, which is different from age-appropriate form of exploration
- Demonstrates an extreme fear of males (or females)
- Has a sudden drop in school performance
- Has sleep problems or nightmares
- Bizarre or unusual sexual behavior or knowledge
- Detailed and age-inappropriate understanding of sexual behavior (especially younger children)
- Exhibits an older, more worldly appearance/behavior than peers
- Seems threatened or afraid of physical contact
- Receives unexplained money or "gifts"

- Sudden noticeable change in behavior
- Abuses alcohol or drugs
- Exhibits delinquent behavior
- May repeatedly set fires
- May attempt suicide or other self-injury behavior
- May have eating disorders

## Neglect

Failure to provide for a child's physical survival needs to the extent that there is harm or risk to the child's health or safety.

Possible Physical Indicators:

- Consistently dirty and has severe body odor
- Lacks clothing that is adequate for the weather
- Has unattended health or medical needs, such as dental problems, hearing problems, or vision problems
- May live in unsafe or extremely dirty homes
- Consistent lack of supervision, especially when involved in dangerous activities or for long periods of time
- Has been abandoned by parent or guardian

Possible Child Behavioral Indicators:

- Begs for or steals food or money
- Extended stays at school (early arrival and late departure)
- Demonstrates constant fatigue, listlessness, or falling asleep in class
- States there is no one at home to provide care
- Abuses alcohol or drugs
- Frequently absent from school

In order for children to grow up and become productive members of society, all children need discipline. Discipline is a learning process designed to teach appropriate behaviors. ***However, unlike discipline, abuse is not a learning process. It is designed to stop behavior through inflicting pain; it does not teach alternative, correct behavior. Therefore, abused children do not learn correct behavior. Instead, they learn to avoid punishment.*** Actions that are excessive or forceful enough to leave injuries may be considered abusive. Without detection, reporting, and intervention, these children may remain victims for the rest of their lives. Abused children don't just grow up and forget their childhood. They can carry physical and emotional scars throughout their lives and may repeat the pattern of abuse or neglect with their own children.



# Long-Term Impact of Unmitigated Child Abuse

Much research has established the correlation between long-term child abuse and the lifetime health and well-being of the victims of abuse, especially if the children do not get appropriate support to help them cope with the trauma. All forms of abuse have the potential for long-term impact on the victims and can affect the victim's ability to function in their daily lives as a human being. Abuse undermines the self-value and self-esteem of victims, rendering them helpless and hopeless to live a full life.

## Long-term impact of child abuse:

- Poor educational achievement
- Inability to complete responsibilities
- Inability to live according to plan/ability
- Inability to care for self
- Inability to coexist, cooperate or work with others
- Lack of self-confidence, prone to addiction
- Inability to express love/or accept love
- Inability to lead a family, constant health problems
- Prone to mental health problems
- Low self-esteem, depression and anxiety
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Attachment difficulties
- Eating disorders
- Poor peer relations, self-injurious behavior (e.g., suicide attempts)

## Roles and Responsibilities of Staff

### Procedures for Reporting Suspected Abuse

If there is cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, it is the responsibility of the staff member or any member of the community to report their suspicion to the counselor, sectional administrator, or the principal.

It is the **responsibility** of staff to be vigilant, have knowledge and awareness of the indicators of neglect, potential or actual abuse and to report any concerns, suspicions or allegations of suspected abuse immediately and ensure that the concern is taken seriously and reported.

KKFS is committed to supporting staff in their ability and confidence in reporting suspected child protection issues.

All KKFS staff will be informed of this policy, and their responsibility as a members of staff will be made clear through regular staff training and the staff handbook.

In all instances, suspected child abuse or neglect should be immediately reported to the designated child protection officer - HyeJin Kim. In her absence, issues should be brought to the deputy child protection officer: Supyong Chong, Alice Ko, or Jenny Huh

## Summary of Responsibilities

<b>Designated Child Protection Officer</b>	Hyejin Kim	To liaise with all stakeholders in cooperation with the Korean National Child Protection Agency. To develop and/or provide/oversee the annual training of all KKFS Staff. To review and adapt school practices and policies to reflect the purpose and scope of this policy
<b>Deputy Child Protection Officer</b>	Supyong Chong and Kelly Chung	To share the responsibilities of designated child protection officers and to act in their absence.
<b>All teaching/non-teaching staff</b>	Office Staff Teaching Faculty Bus Drivers Maintenance Staff Visitors Volunteers	It is the <b>responsibility</b> of staff to be vigilant, have knowledge and awareness of the indicators of neglect, potential or actual abuse, and to report any concerns, suspicions, or allegations of suspected abuse immediately and ensure that the concern is taken seriously and reported.

Once the Response Team suspects possible abuse, in accordance with the mandates of Korean Law, the Principal or the Executive Director will contact the National Child Protection Agency, who will launch an investigation.

## Child Protection Procedures

It is expected that all KKFS staff take any verbal disclosure from a student very seriously.

- Do not show judgment
- Do not make promises or keep secrets
- DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION
- Immediately report any disclosures to the DCPO

All decisions taken, including if the concern does not require notifying National Child Protection Agency must be recorded in writing and kept securely in a Child Protection file with the reasons clearly identified and explained. This is the responsibility and decision of the DCPO in collaboration with other staff and the school nurse and counselor.

Giving information to protect children better is not a breach in confidentiality. Wherever possible, the family should be kept informed of what information has been shared and to which agency, and for what purpose.

## **Preparing for Disclosures**

School personnel must understand and know how to respond appropriately, knowing that it is often very difficult for children to disclose abuse because of the fear of:

- **Memory:** Children often cope with their abuse by pushing it so far back in their minds that they “forget.”
- **Love of Love:** Children often worry that their parents or friends won’t love them once they know about their abuse because now they are “dirty.” Children also fear the separation of their family because of the telling. Offenders work hard to reinforce these feelings in order to keep the child silent.
- **Shame & Guilt:** Children either know or can sense that what happened, especially a sexual experience with an adult, is wrong. By telling someone and acknowledging that this happened, they fear the shame of the abuse.
- **Blame:** Children fear that they will be blamed for what happened and in case of sexual abuse that they somehow wanted it. Adults tend to be believed over the child and offenders often state that the child “asked” for the sexual touch or other abuse.
- **Harm:** Offenders often maintain control over their victims by threatening harm to them or their families if they tell.

## **Guidelines for Responding To a Child’s Disclosure**

- Do not let a child swear you to secrecy before telling you something. You may need to report, which the child will view as breaking your trust with them.
- If a child asks to speak with you, try to find a neutral setting where you can have quiet and few interruptions.
- Do not lead the child in telling. Just listen, letting him/her explain in his/her own words.
- Don’t pressure for a great amount of detail.
- Respond calmly and matter-of-factly. Even if the story that the child tells you is difficult to hear, it is important not to register disgust or alarm.
- Do not make judgmental or disparaging comments about the abuser - it is often someone the child loves or with whom he/she is close.
- Do not make promises to the child that things will get better.
- Do not confront the abuser.

- If the child does not want to go home, this should be considered an emergency. Report and handle immediately by contacting your school-based Support Team. Do not take the child home with you.
- Respect the child's confidence. Share with the Child Protection Team, but limit information from and with other staff.
- Explain to the child that you must tell someone else to get help.
- Try to let the child know that someone else also will need to talk with him/her and explain why.
- Empower the student by as much as possible allowing the child a part in the process.

## **To Who to Report and When**

Most cases will be handled by a school counselor, such as those involving:

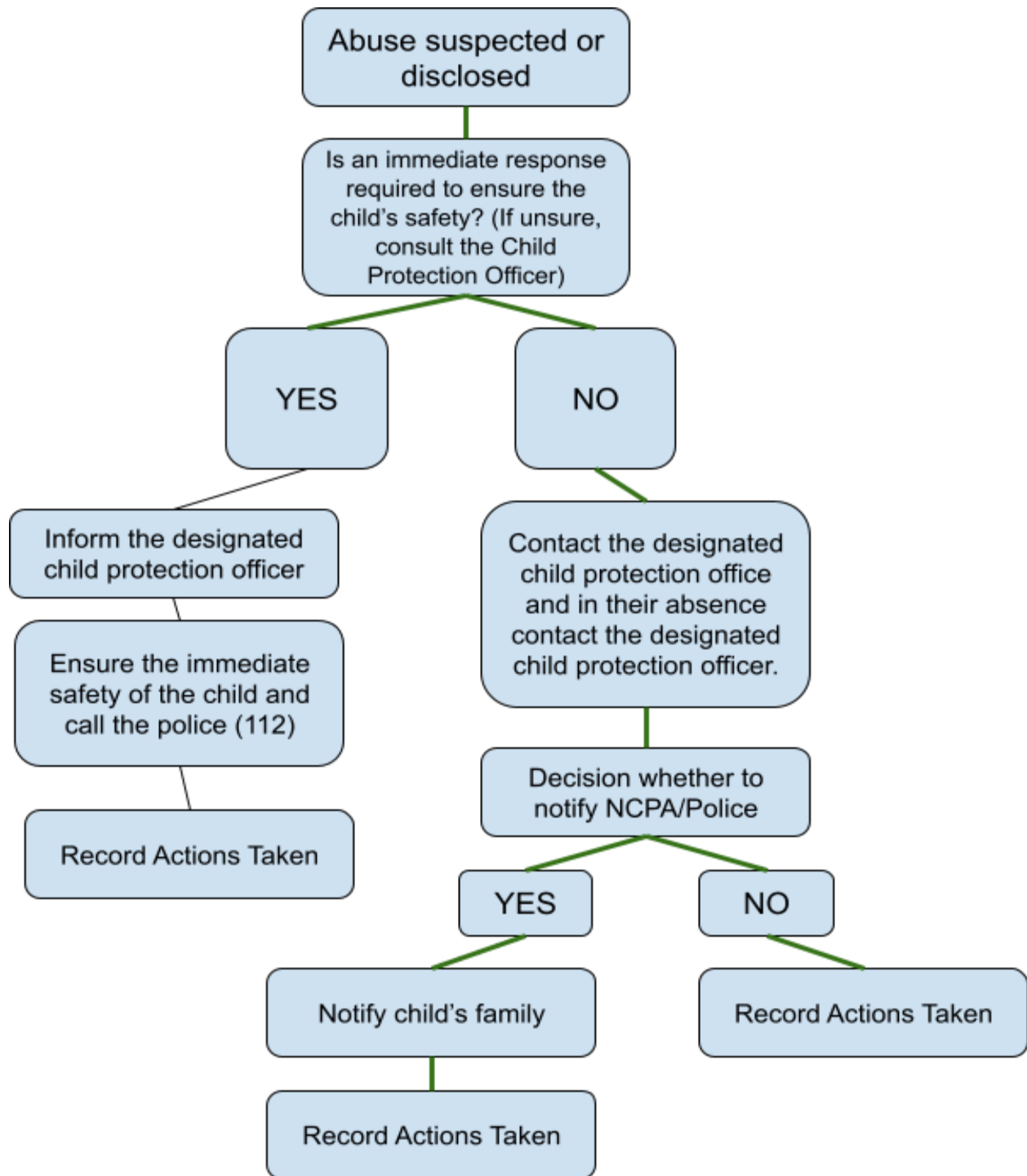
- Student relationships with peers
- Parenting skills related to disciplining children at home
- Student-parent relationships
- Mental health issues such as mild depression, low self-esteem, and grieving

Some cases will be referred to outside resources, for example:

- Mental health issues such as severe depression, psychosis, dissociation, suicidal ideation or attempts

Cases reported for investigation and outside resources:

- Severe and ongoing physical abuse or neglect
- Sexual abuse and incest



## Identity-based Harm

- A. The school acknowledges that targeting a person based on identity markers such as race, color, ethnicity, caste, religion, gender identity, gender expression, sexual identity,

national origin, citizenship status, socioeconomic status, age, language, or ability constitutes harm and abuse.

- B. The school recognizes that marginalized identities are at a particular risk for identity-based harm.
- C. The school recognizes that, within the same systems where identity-based harm operates, marginalized identities are at a higher risk of being targeted for sexual abuse.
- D. The school takes responsibility for preventing, interrupting, and correcting identity-based harm.
- E. Identity-based harm can manifest in many forms including, but not limited to, microaggressions, hate speech, online harassment, child-to-child abuse, physical violence, and social exclusion.
- F. Staff development will include training and resources on how to recognize and respond to identity-based harm as well as how to use restorative practices to address harm.
- G. The use of restorative practices may be a part of addressing identity-based harm, when appropriate. This approach is intended to maintain agency and dignity for the person who is targeted, as well as to build responsibility and accountability for the person who has committed the harm.

## **Safe Recruitment of Staff**

All appointments (permanent, fixed term, student, casual, or volunteer) to positions that have direct and/or frequent contact with children or young people will be conditional on a safety check. Further information regarding safety checking, including vetting and screening procedures, is found in the Employment Policy.

Before making any appointment, KKFS will undertake a series of checks to ascertain the candidate's suitability and safety to work in KKFS. These will adhere to the statutory obligations contained within the Korean legislation

In addition to our employment policy, KKFS will ensure the following are standard protocols in all employment procedures:

- Verification of identification will be undertaken.
- Verification of qualifications (and registration where appropriate) will be undertaken.
- Safety checks, which include police check and personal reference checks, followed by a structured interview or personal assessment process. Attitudes towards children and safety around them will be assessed during this process.
- Staff selection will be undertaken by a person knowledgeable and experienced in the field of child protection.
- Full records will be kept

## **Training of Staff**

All existing and new appointments (permanent, fixed term, student, casual or volunteer) to positions that have direct and/or frequent contact with children or young people will be conditional on a safety check. Further information regarding Safety Checking, including vetting and screening procedures, is found in the teacher handbook.

All staff will receive child protection training at the level appropriate to their role. The Designated Person(s) for Child Protection will undertake more intensive training in child protection.

All staff will update their child protection training every three years as a minimum.

Training records will be kept.

## **Safe Working Practice**

All staff are expected to behave in manners consistent with the Korea Kent Foreign School Code of Conduct.

A relationship between an adult and a child or young person cannot be a relationship between equals. There is a potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people. Adults have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

All staff are expected to behave in manners that maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behavior which might be misinterpreted by others.

All events or cases of unsafe working environments are to be reported to the DCPO. This includes cases of sexual/physical aggression between students or predicting future situations so that plans can be made to avoid any unwanted protection issues.

- Use of personal cell phones to contact students
- Use of video and photos
- Being alone with children
- The giving of gifts and rewards to children
- Personal relationships with past students
- Types of acceptable physical contact
- Transport of children

## Allegations Against Staff

Allegations, suspicions, or complaints of abuse against staff, volunteers, or representatives of other agencies must be taken seriously and reported to the DCPO who will deal with them immediately, sensitively, and expediently within the procedures outlined in this Section. Employment issues regarding an allegation will be the responsibility of the principal. All child protection issues raised from the allegation will be the responsibility of the DCPO.

As with any concern regarding child protection, allegations should be made as soon as possible, regardless of your confidence level. It is better to report than to ignore.

It is **NOT** the responsibility of staff to investigate allegations of child abuse. The DCPO will act on the information provided and devise a plan for investigation, if necessary.

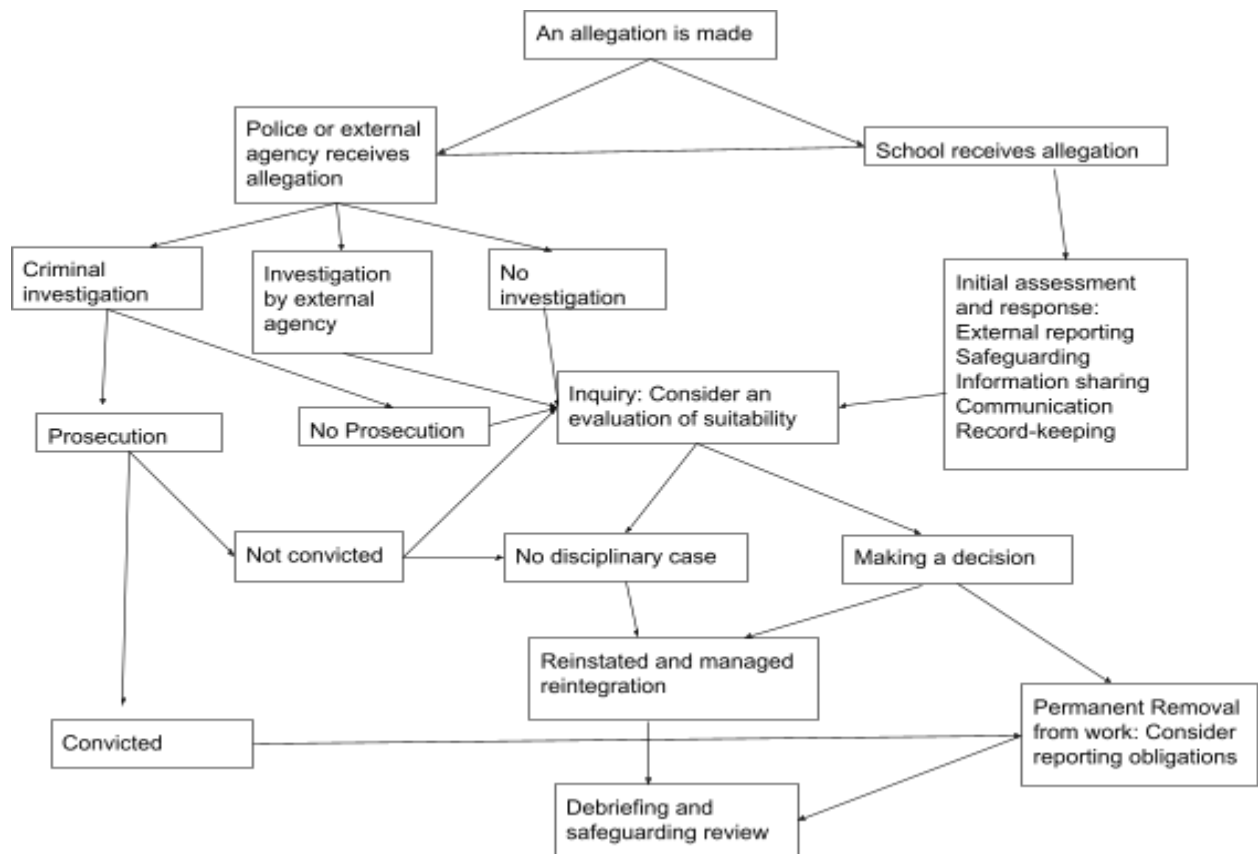
If the Police decide to undertake a criminal investigation, then the member of staff may be suspended, without prejudice, as a precautionary measure. **It is important that no internal investigation is undertaken, and no evidence gathered that might prejudice the criminal investigation.**

If the allegation is against the DCPO, it should be brought to the deputy DCPO or the Principal.

## Behavior Policies that will Protect Teachers from False Allegations

- Avoid situations in which you are alone with a child. This includes not transporting youngsters alone in your car. When it is necessary to speak privately with a child, find a space out of earshot but within sight of others for your conference.
- The privacy of children in situations such as toileting, showering, and changing clothes should be respected. When it is necessary to supervise children in these situations, at least two adults should be present and intrude only to the extent that the health and safety of the children require. Adult volunteers should preserve their own privacy in these situations also.
- Avoid touching areas that are normally covered by swimming suits: breasts, buttocks, and groin.
- When hugging is appropriate, hug from the side over the shoulders, not from the front. Sexual jokes, comments of a sexual nature, kissing, sensual massages, or sexual gestures are not appropriate behavior for an adult staff member or volunteer.
- When volunteering to supervise overnight activities, adults should not share sleeping quarters with children other than their own.
- Revealing personal information about one's sex life by an adult volunteer or staff member is never appropriate.
- Do not use corporal punishment in any form.
- It is the adult's responsibility to set and respect boundaries. When a child attempts to involve an adult in inappropriate behavior, the adult must reject the overture.





## Parent Communications

At Korea Kent Foreign School, we deeply value the bonds between all of our stakeholders and actively work towards maintaining positive relationships between them. Open, respectful communication is essential to maintaining a positive and supportive learning environment for our students. To protect the well-being, safety, and privacy of all of the members of our school community, we have established the following guidelines regarding parent communication.

### Communication Regarding Student Interaction

- Parents are not permitted to contact other students directly about school-related concerns, disputes, or incidents.
- If a parent has a concern involving another student, they must report the concern to a teacher, counselor, or member of the administration.
- The school will then investigate and respond appropriately in line with our school policies and our commitment to child safeguarding.

## Use of School Channels

- Parents are encouraged to use official school communication channels (Gmail, Google Chat, school landline) when reaching out to faculty or raising concerns.
- Informal messaging platforms (Kakao, Line, Instagram) should not be used to address conflicts or complaints regarding students or faculty.

## Expectations for Tone

- All communications should reflect our shared school values of respect, empathy, and mindfulness.
- Aggressive, accusatory, or disrespectful language directed toward our students and/or staff will not be tolerated and may result in further action.

## School Response

- If a parent breaches this policy, the school will take appropriate steps, which may include a warning, formal notice, and in severe cases, parent restrictions regarding access to certain communication tools or school activities.

We appreciate the partnership of all parents in creating a supportive learning environment where all of our students feel safe, respected, and able to learn.