



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Approved: Dec. 2016



BEIJING CITY INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
北京乐成国际学校

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The BCIS Child Protection Policy

As part of our overall educational programs and specific to our shared responsibility to educate children, to protect them, and to learn and grow in a safe environment, BCIS will:

- 1) Provide age appropriate lessons for all grade levels to help students understand personal safety, needs and rights.
- 2) Provide materials and information sessions to help parents better understand our programs and policy.
- 3) Regularly train faculty to recognize and report issues of abuse and neglect.

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Dear Parents:

The Beijing City International School Board of Trustees, in keeping with the BCIS mission and philosophy, has adopted a Child Protection Policy to guide our staff and families in matters related to the health, safety and care of children in attendance at our school. This policy is so important to BCIS that, as your Head of School, I am required to send this letter to parents at the beginning of each school year reminding our community about this truly critical issue.

The BCIS Child Protection Policy is based upon the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Minors (2012 Amendment) and on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which China is a signatory. The two key articles we wish to draw your attention to are:

Article 19 - Protection from abuse and neglect

The State shall protect the child from all forms of maltreatment by parents or others responsible or 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.

By enrolling your child at BCIS, you agree to work in partnership with the school and abide by the policies adopted by the BCIS Board. All of us at BCIS want you to know that we genuinely value our partnership with you in providing for the safety and care of your children. It is for this reason that Beijing City International School has endorsed a Child Protection Policy that defines the standards by which all BCIS students will be treated with respect and dignity at all times.

The BCIS Child Protection Policy:

As part of our overall educational programs and specific to our shared responsibility to educate children, to protect them, and to learn and grow in a safe environment, BCIS will:

- 1) Provide age appropriate lessons for all grade levels to help students understand personal safety, needs and rights.
- 2) Provide materials and information sessions to help parents better understand our programs and policy.
- 3) Regularly train faculty to recognize and report issues of abuse and neglect.

We will work together with you at home to ensure that our children are safe and are knowledgeable about their rights and responsibilities to themselves and to each other so that they can grow and learn free of fear in a safe and supportive environment. I thank you for your support of our efforts and invite you to contact your school Counselor or Principal regarding any specific questions, you may have in this regard.

Sincerely,



Chris Akin
Head of School

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Preface

BCIS's child protection policy is based upon the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Minors (2012 Amendment) and on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which China is a signatory.

Article 19- Protection from Abuse and Neglect

'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

'Protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse, including prostitution and involvement in pornography'

When a child is enrolled at BCIS, parents agree to work in partnership with our school and will abide by the child protection policy adopted by BCIS. The Child Protection Policy has been created to ensure all stakeholders in our community are fully aware and understand our commitment to providing a safe learning environment and community.

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Aims and Objectives of the Child Protection (CP) Policy

The Child Protection policy at BCIS incorporates the guiding mission and philosophy of the school. The main aims of the CP policy are:

- To protect all students from possible harm, abuse, exploitation, and neglect.
- To create a safe learning environment.
- To appropriately screen all new BCIS staff during recruitment.
- To ensure that all members of staff have appropriate training in the protection of children.
- To outline the roles and responsibilities of key members of staff designated to the protection of children at BCIS.
- To ensure all employees at BCIS take responsibility for the safety of all students. This is a shared responsibility of which all members of staff must abide.
- To educate all students regarding their own personal safety (including safe use of digital media, appropriate touch, and what to do when worried about these issues).

Statement of consequences for breach of policy

Given child protection is central to our school mission and of the highest priority to all stakeholders, those who abuse or neglect a child will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

Appendix 1

Staff Training in Child Protection

To ensure that all members of staff feel confident in understanding their roles and responsibilities with regards to protecting children, all employees will receive mandatory training in child protection. Training will be conducted in-house if the expertise is available. Alternatively, an external agency will be sought to train all faculty staff members.

i) New Staff

All new BCIS staff and supply staff will receive appropriate training in child protection as part of their induction to the school. This training will include at least the following:

- How to identify abuse and what to do if abuse is suspected.
- When to consider referring a case and who to refer to. (See established communication pathways)
- Knowledge of what the school Child Protection policy is and who the Designated Person or persons (DP) is.

ii) Returning Staff

For staff currently employed within BCIS, all staff will attend any relevant or refresher training courses. As a minimum, all staff will need to attend refresher training every 2 years at BCIS.

iii) Non-Teaching Staff

All non-teaching staff must be trained in basic child protection as child protection is everyone's responsibility. This includes cleaners, property management, and administration staff. Training will be completed in Chinese for non-teaching local staff.

Child Protection Program and Student Awareness of Abuse

As part of the Child Protection Program provided by BCIS, students are taught about being safe, relationships, recognizing and reporting abuse and understanding protective strategies. The core message communicated in the BCIS Keeping-Safe Program is that we all have the right to be safe, and that we can help ourselves to be safe by talking to people we trust. These are skills that help students to protect themselves and to develop an awareness of what to do if they are ever concerned about how others are treating them and their bodies.

Definitions and Indicators of Neglect and Abuse

1. a Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is defined as any sexual offense to be committed against a child. This includes intentionally touching, either directly or through clothing, the genitals, anus, or breasts of a child other than for other than hygiene or child care purposes or for medical purposes by accredited medical personnel. Sexual exploitation is an element of the definition of sexual abuse and includes allowing the child to engage in prostitution or allowing and encouraging or engaging in obscene or pornographic photographing or filming.

Possible indicators of Sexual Abuse may include, but not limited to:

- Sexual knowledge, behaviors, or use of language not appropriate for the student's age.
- Unusual interpersonal relationships, venereal disease, and evidence of physical trauma or bleeding to the oral, genital, or anal areas as well as difficulty in walking or sitting.
- Refusing to change into PE clothes

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- Not wanting to be alone
- Pregnancy
- Regressive behaviors, bed wetting or stranger anxiety
- Showing fear or distrust of a particular adult
- Any indicators of emotional abuse (on page 12) which may also show possible sexual abuse

2. Grooming

Grooming is defined as behavior in which a person deliberately tries to befriend a child, make an emotional connection, and manipulate them with the purpose of sexually abusing them. This is often a long deliberate process that is hard to detect, as the behavior can appear in the early stages to be caring and protective. Grooming can also occur online through digital technologies with the intention of gaining a young person's trust before engaging in sexual abuse.

Sexual offending by an adult against a child is rarely a random act by a stranger. It is commonly based on a relationship with the child that has been formed over time. The abuse is commonly well thought out and planned in advance.

Offenders may take time to 'groom' their victim, often over a lengthy period. They will also often 'groom' the child's care givers or others who might otherwise protect them from the abuse. This occurs so that the child and his/her care givers will trust the offender and not suspect any intended wrongdoing. The establishment of a relationship of trust which is then misused is often very confusing and damaging to the child, who may not even immediately recognize what is happening to them as abuse.

Grooming behavior is unlikely to be recognized when observed as a one-off event, but a pattern of grooming of the intended victim and/or the intended victim's care givers is likely to be recognized. Grooming will tend to develop in intensity over time. It will also tend to include elements of secrecy and concealment.

It is important to be aware of the types of behaviors that can be used in the process of grooming a child or young person, while remembering that some of the behaviors might equally reflect normal interactions based on genuine motives of care and concern. This is the reason that, for staff members, the observance of clear professional boundaries and transparency in the declaration of potential conflicts of interest is a vital part of the protection of children and of the professional integrity of staff members themselves.

Possible indicators of 'grooming' behavior may include, but not limited to:

- befriending a vulnerable student;
- giving the student special attention;
- treating the student more favorably than others, for example with school work or in extracurricular activities, individual coaching;
- giving gifts to, or doing favors for, the student;
- sharing secrets with the student;
- arranging opportunities to be alone with the student;
- sending email or SMS messages of a personal nature;
- making personal comments to the student about sexuality or relationships;
- directing suggestive jokes, remarks or actions towards the student;
- acting as a substitute parent or confidant of the student;
- befriending the student's family and visiting the family home;
- offering to babysit or provide transport; or
- offering individual coaching or special help to the student.

3. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is intentional physical injury to the child and can include but is not limited to striking, kicking, burning, or biting the child, or any action that results in a physical impairment of the child.

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Possible indicators of Physical Abuse may include, but not limited to:

- Injuries that appear to be intentional or where a student has unexplained bruising
- Welts, burns or lacerations
- Anxiety about being in certain places
- Refusal to discuss or improbable excuse given to explain injuries

Physical abuse also includes committing acts that are cruel or inhumane regardless of observable injury.

Such acts may include, but are not limited to:

- Instances of extreme discipline demonstrating a disregard of a child's pain and/or mental suffering
- Assaulting or criminally mistreating a child as defined by either the criminal code or school policy
- Engaging in action or omissions resulting in injury to, or creating substantial risk to the physical or mental health or development of a child
- Failing to take reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any of the above.

4. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is any behavior that impairs the child's emotional development, sense of self worth, or self esteem such as constant criticisms, threats, verbal rejection, name-calling, insults, ignoring, isolation on a regular basis.

Possible indicators of Emotional Abuse may include, but not limited to:

- Delayed physical, social and emotional development and/or speech disorders
- Self harm, sucking, rocking, head banging,
- destructive, inhibited or aggressive behavior or play
- Attention seeking or overly compliant behavior
- Reports of humiliation, intimidation and bizarre punishment
- Anxiety about being in certain places
- Social withdrawal
- Psychosomatic complaint headaches, nausea, abdominal pain
- Substance abuse

5. Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or physiological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect includes any instance where a parent or guardian fails to provide for a child's basic needs within their own environment. This includes physical needs such as lack of food, shelter or appropriate supervision. This includes failure to provide adult guardianship such as leaving children unsupervised at home for extended periods of time. Neglect also includes failure to provide necessary medical or mental health treatment or permitting the child to use alcohol or other recreational drugs.

Possible indicators of Neglect may include, but not limited to:

- Cognitive and academic delays and difficulties with attention
- Extreme lack of personal hygiene and medical care
- Fatigue and hunger
- Both parents are absent from Beijing and do not notify the school or provide information of guardianship in their absence
- Parents cannot be contacted in an emergency.
- Child may stay at school after hours or not want to go home

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Accountability of the School

The Principals and Counselors are responsible for ensuring the appropriate policies and procedures are in place regarding the protection of children and promoting the welfare of students. They are not expected to be experts on child protection but are expected to take responsibility for the BCIS child protection policy, practice, procedures and professional development.

Ultimately, the Head of School is accountable for ensuring that a comprehensive child protection policy is communicated, an educational program for all students and faculty are in place, and reporting procedures for all faculty are followed.

The Principal and Counselor are available as resources to help guide staff.

Responsibilities

- To ensure all members of staff are aware of BCIS child protection procedures.
- To ensure the child protection policy is updated and reviewed annually.
- To liaise with outside agencies and where appropriate, build effective relationships with them.
- To have the skills to recognize and deal with child protection issues.
- To support the HOS in referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies
- To initiate established protocol for reporting and investigation on any allegations of members of staff.
- To act as a source of advice, support, and expertise with regards to child protection within the school and/or refer to additional resources.
- When students leave the school, Principals ensure their file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible. If there is evidence that there is likely ongoing danger to the child, BCIS will share that with future schools.

The Head of School will...

- Ensure the child protection policy is reviewed and updated annually.
- Communicate the school child protection policy to all stakeholders annually.
- Report on progress in child protection efforts at BCIS to all stakeholders annually.

Communicating Concerns

It is the responsibility of all staff, faculty, and administrators to report suspicion that child abuse or neglect is occurring. Concerns should be raised with the Principal, Counselor or Designated Persons. In all cases, the Principal will be notified and it is the responsibility of the Principal to inform the Head of School of any suspected case of child abuse or neglect. (See Reporting Procedures)

Procedures for reporting suspected cases of child abuse or neglect

In all cases of allegations/suspicions of abuse:

- All suspicions of abuse/neglect must be made to the Principal or Counselor as soon as possible no later than 24hrs of an identified concern.
- A written report [see appendices] will be produced based on concerns raised by reporter and subsequently Principal and Counselor.
- The report along with all subsequent documentation of the investigation will be kept in the child's confidential counselor file.
- BCIS will seek legal advice should a member of the school be approached on any case of child protection involving former students.

Step 1: Information gathering

- When an individual reports abuse or there is reasonable cause to believe that abuse is occurring, the individual must seek advice from the Principal or Counselor as soon as possible, no later than 24hrs.
- The individual reporting will complete an incident report form detailing the disclosure or observation after meeting with the Principal or Counselor

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(appendix 1). The individual should refrain from interviewing the child.

- Principal and Counselor will take initial steps to gather information regarding the reported incident.
- Observations of the child by the Counselor, Principal or the designated student advocate may occur.
- Principal and Counselor may form a school based response team with appropriate representatives (e.g. medical professional, homeroom teacher/ advisor).
- Further investigation may be conducted to ensure that information is documented factually and distributed exclusively for the response team.
- Staff members may be interviewed and information documented. Any substantiated conflicts of interests or declared interests should be disclosed at this time.
- Regular status reports will be provided by the Principal to the HOS of BCIS.

Step 2: Action Plan

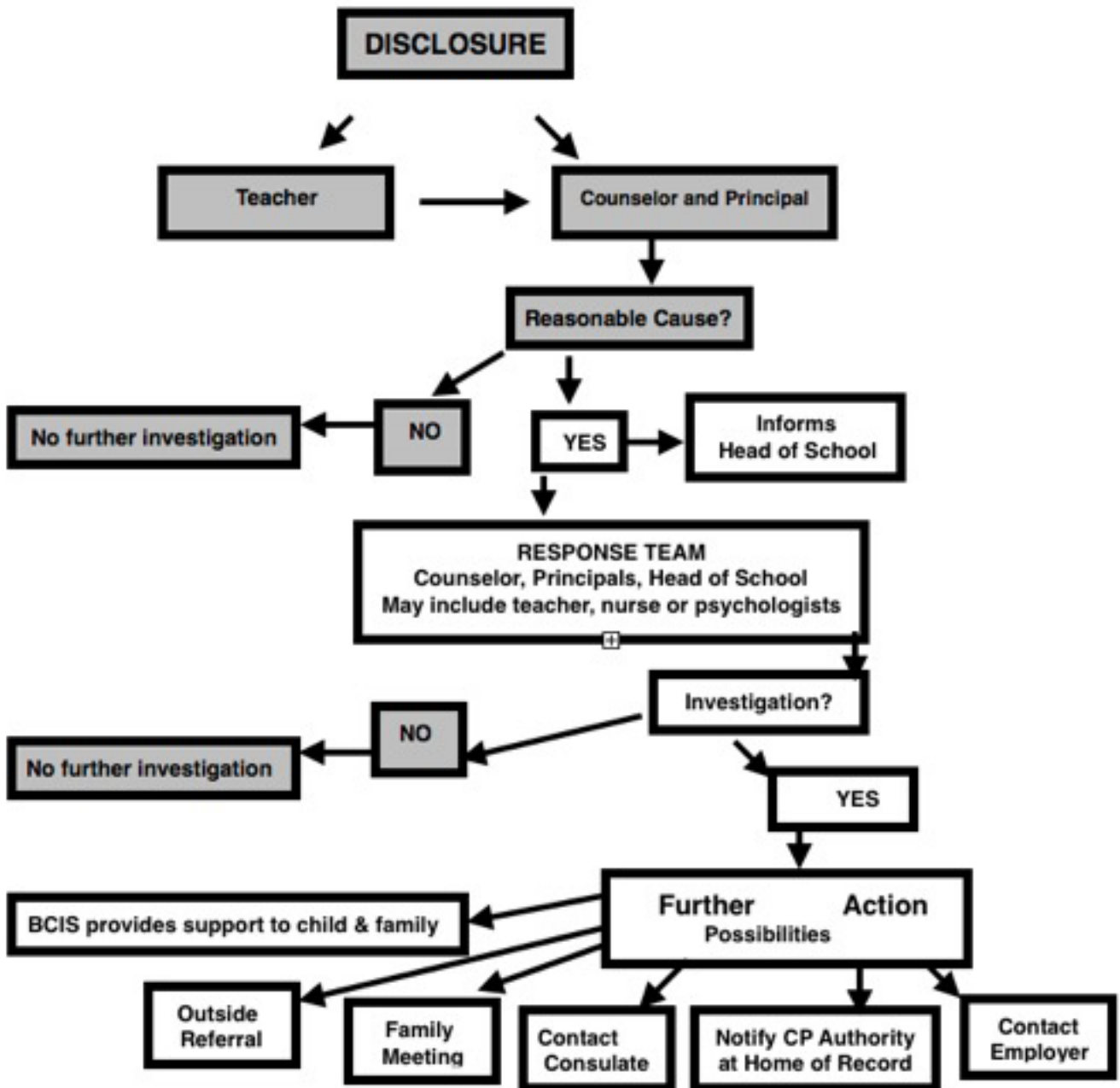
Based on acquired information, a plan of action will be developed to assist the child and family. As deemed appropriate, the following actions may or may not occur:

- Meetings with family to present the school's concerns
- Referral of the student and family to external professional services.
- Notification to the sponsoring employer of the concern with the child/family or appropriate authority at the home-of-record.
- Consultation with the consulate of the country of the involved family.
- Consultation with the school lawyer, Chinese Director or other external legal advisors.
- Consultation with Government agencies.
- Police involvement under circumstance which BCIS believes it is necessary

Step 3: Follow up

Subsequent to a substantiated case of child abuse or neglect, Principal and Counselor will maintain contact with the child and family to provide support and guidance as appropriate. The Principal/Counselor will also provide the child's teachers with ongoing support and resource materials / strategies. The Counselor will additionally maintain contact with outside therapists, updating on the progress of the child.

Flow Chart for Disclosures



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Guidelines for Dealing with Disclosures

School personnel are often the first people a student may tell when they are feeling unsafe. It is important for staff members to be aware of how children/young people disclose and how to respond in the most appropriate manner. If a student tells a staff member about being abused or harmed:

Do

- listen attentively, actively and without judgment;
- let the child use their own words;
- respond calmly to the information the student provides;
- only question the student if absolutely necessary and restrict questions to open ended question such as ‘Tell me what happened... and/or Tell me more about that...’;
- reassure the student that they have done the right thing to tell e.g. ‘Thank you for sharing’;
- reassure them they are not to blame for the behavior of others;
- provide pastoral support to the student;
- be aware of the privacy issues involved; be honest about your responsibility to take action

Do not

- react emotionally or accuse
- seek any more information than is absolutely necessary
- ask leading or probing questions or put words in the student’s mouth
- make promises that you cannot keep – particularly about not telling others such as the Principal or Counselor
- leave the student alone immediately after a disclosure
- discuss the situation with parents, care givers or others (other than with those designated in these processes e.g. Principal or Counselor)

Procedures for Allegations made about BCIS Staff

Where the concern is raised about a member of BCIS staff causing abuse, procedures for reporting suspected cases of child abuse or neglect will be carried out. If the allegation warrants that a child or children are in danger from potential harm, the suspected employee will be suspended from school duties until the investigation has been fully completed. This will not only protect students at BCIS but also protect the employee from further allegations being raised. The school principal will use the BCIS Code of Conduct as a reference document to determine allegation of staff abusing students.

Potential causes for concern may include (but is not limited to) suspicions relating to any of the definitions of sexual abuse (including child pornography or inappropriate photos being taken of students and/or being published), physical abuse, emotional abuse, and/or neglect.

Beijing City International School Code of Conduct

Beijing City International School is committed to the safety and protection of children. This Code of Conduct applies to all faculty, staff, employees and volunteers who represent the school and who interact with children or young people in both a direct and/or unsupervised capacity.

I promise to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in this Code of Conduct as a condition of my providing services to the children and youth participating in BCIS programs.

I will:

- Treat everyone with respect, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Never be alone with children and/or youth at school activities without another adult being notified.

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- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth; adults should be aware of the possible harm and misunderstanding associated with the use of sarcasm, especially with second language learners.
- Maintain appropriate physical boundaries at all times and touch children – when necessary – only in ways that are appropriate, public, and non-sexual.
- Comply with the mandatory reporting regulations of BCIS and with the BCIS Child Protection policy to report suspected child abuse which is available on the BCIS Website
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.

I will not:

- Touch or speak to a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
 - Inflict any physical or emotional abuse such as striking, spanking, shaking, dragging, slapping, humiliating, ridiculing, threatening, or degrading children and/or youth.
 - Smoke or use tobacco products, or possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while working with children and/or youth.
 - Transport a student home alone without the knowledge of their parent or guardian.
 - Accept gifts from or give gifts to children or youth without the knowledge of their parents or guardians. Adults should never buy alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, videos, or reading material that is inappropriate and give it to young people. Staff members and volunteers should not accept gifts from, or give gifts to children without the knowledge of their parents or guardians and they must inform their division principal if given a gift.
 - Engage in private communications with children via text messaging, email, Facebook, Twitter or similar forms of electronic or social media except for activities strictly involving school business without the knowledge of their parents or guardians. Electronic communication that takes place over a school network or platform may be subject to periodic monitoring.
 - Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth at any time.
 - Share any privileged information about children (demographic, locational, photographic) outside of the school without written, expressed consent.
- Please refer to the BCIS Personnel Policy Manual.

I understand that as a person working with and/or providing services to children and youth under the auspices of BCIS, I am subject to a criminal history background check.

Digital Media

Given the developing and prevalent use of social and digital media in schools and amongst school age children, BCIS will provide comprehensive education on a student's rights and responsibility in use of technology with an attentiveness to child protection issues.

In the normal course of facilitating the educational and co-curricular program offerings at the school, faculty may be in possession of digital media with images of students. BCIS faculty will always use their best professional judgment when using/sharing such images, with "declared professional intent." This item will be specifically discussed at faculty orientations and meetings as part of the comprehensive training on Child Protection at the school.

Review and Update of Child Protection Policy

BCIS Child Protection Policy should be reviewed and updated annually and any update and/or revise should be approved by Board of Trustees.

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Appendix 2

Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect Incident Report

According to BCIS policy, this form is intended to be completed by a school counselor or administrator, and kept on file in the school counselor's office.

Name of Child:			
Name of Alleged Perpetrator:			
Name of Reporter:			
Date of Incident:		Time of Incident:	
Place of Incident:		Witness(es) to Incident:	
Description of Incident: (Name and extent of the current injury to the child, and circumstances leading to the suspicion this child is a victim of abuse/neglect.)			
Have there been previous suspicions of abuse/neglect for this child?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No		
Immediate Action Taken:			
Follow-up Action Taken:			
Name of Family Member and Relationship to Child:			
Comments:			
Principal/HOS:			