



# Abuja Preparatory School

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## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Dec 2018

In its policies, practices and activities, Abuja Preparatory School will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare. The school will recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations.

We will:

- Fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters.
- Adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect.
- Develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children.
- Fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.

Certain policies such as our Code of Conduct, Anti-bullying Policy, Pupil Attendance Policy and the Supervision of Pupils Policy will take particular account of this Child Protection Policy. This policy will also be considered with reference to the participation by pupils in sporting activities, other extra-curricular activities and school outings. Other practices and activities, where child protection might have particular relevance, will take due consideration of the procedures outlined within this policy.

The Board has ensured that the necessary policies, protocols or practices as appropriate are in place in respect of each of the above listed items. This policy will be made available to school personnel and is readily accessible to parents on request. It will be available on our school website ([www.abujaprep.com](http://www.abujaprep.com)).

### **Designated Liaison Person (DLP)**

The DLP at Abuja Preparatory School is the Relations Manager

The DLP has specific responsibility for child protection and will represent the school in all correspondence.

The DLP acts in cases where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion or where an allegation has been made.

### **Confidentiality**

All information regarding concerns of possible child abuse or grooming for abuse should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis in the interests of the child. The giving of information to those who

need to have that information is not a breach of confidentiality. This procedure exists for the protection of a child who may have been or has been abused. The DLP should inform a parent/guardian, unless doing so is likely to endanger the child or place that child at further risk. A decision not to inform a parent/guardian should be briefly recorded together with the reasons for not doing so.

### **Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse**

The school shall assure any person reporting child abuse or grooming for abuse that they have immunity from civil liability. Any person who reports child abuse 'reasonably and in good faith' to designated officers of the school shall be protected and information shall remain confidential

### **Recognition of Child Abuse**

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types:

- Neglect
- Emotional abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse and grooming for sexual abuse.

All signs and symptoms must be examined in the total context of the child's situation and family circumstances. There are commonly three stages in the identification of child abuse:

1. Considering the possibility
2. Looking out for signs of abuse
3. Recording of information.

### **Handling Disclosures from Children**

Staff are advised to deal with each situation sensitively, reassure the child but not to make promises that cannot be fulfilled. The adult should not ask leading questions or make suggestions. They should explain that further help may have to be sought. The discussion should then be recorded accurately. The record should include reference to what was observed with sketches of physical injury where necessary. It should also record when the alleged incident took place. Records should be kept in a secure place.

The information should then be conveyed to the school DLP. If the reporting person and the DLP are satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the suspicion/allegation, then appropriate action must be taken.

### **Allegations or Suspicions in relation to School Employees**

The Proprietress and the DLP are primarily concerned with the protection of the children in their care. However, employees must be protected against false and malicious claims. Where possible legal advice should be sought in relation to the employee's actions.

### **Reporting**

When an allegation of abuse is made against a school employee, the DLP should act in the following way.

1. A written statement of the allegation should be sought from the person/agency making the report. A parent/guardian may make a statement on behalf of a child.

2. The DLP should always inform the Proprietress.
3. The Proprietress assumes responsibility for communicating with the employee.
4. School employees, who receive allegations about another school employee, should immediately report the matter to the DLP.
5. School employees who form suspicions regarding conduct of another school employee should consult with the DLP.
6. The employee should be informed by the Proprietress:
  - That an allegation has been made against him/her
  - The nature of the allegation
  - The employee should be given a copy of the written allegation and any other relevant documentation.
  - The employee should be requested to respond to the allegation in writing to the Proprietress within a specified period and told that this may be passed to the schools legal advisers.
  - The Proprietress must take the necessary steps to protect the child.
  - The Proprietress may direct that the employee take administrative leave with pay and avoid suspension, thus removing any implication of guilt.
  - An investigation and (if necessary a disciplinary hearing will then be convened according to fair labour practice. Further legal action may be necessary at the conclusion of a disciplinary hearing.

### **School Measures Taken to Protect the Children in Our Care**

There are a number of areas where common sense in our school should prevail in order to protect the children in the school and the staff who care for them. In relation to this, certain points should be noted:

1. A copy of the school's child protection policy, which includes the names of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Deputy DLP, will be made available to all school personnel and is readily accessible to parents on our website.
2. The name of the DLP and other relevant support services are available to parents.
3. Abuja Preparatory School will undertake an annual review of its Child Protection Policy and its implementation by the school.
4. Staff who take classes swimming should make sure that there are two adults in attendance at all times. The dressing rooms and pool area should be well supervised.
5. Staff should not be alone in a classroom with one child or detain a child on their own after school.
6. When possible children should work in groups.
7. Young children or children with physical disabilities who may require assistance in toiletry matters will be aided by a carer who has met the necessary screening requirements when being employed by the school.

### **Child Protection Practices**

The following areas are of specific concern in relation to Child Protection. The following practices shall be adopted:

1. Physical contact between school personnel and the child should always be in response to the needs of the child and not the needs of the adult. While physical contact may be used to comfort, reassure or assist a child, the following should be factors in determining its appropriateness:

- It is acceptable to the child
  - It is open and not secretive
  - The age and developmental stage of the child School personnel should avoid doing anything of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.
2. School personnel should never engage in or allow:
- The use of inappropriate language or behaviours
  - Physical punishment of any kind
  - Sexually provocative games or suggestive comments about or to a child
  - The use of sexually explicit or pornographic material All media products (YouTube clips, CDs, DVDs etc.) should be checked for their appropriateness with regard to age and suitability. Visitors/Guest speakers should never be left alone with pupils. The school (principal/ teachers) has a responsibility to check out the credentials of the visitor/guest speaker and to ensure that the material in use is appropriate.

### **Children with specific toileting/intimate care needs**

1. In all situations where a pupil needs assistance with toileting/intimate care, a meeting will be convened, after enrolment and before the child starts school, between parents/guardians, class teacher, special needs assistant (if allocated), Principal and if appropriate the pupil. The purpose of the meeting will be to ascertain the specific needs of the child and to determine how the school can best meet those needs.
2. The staff to be involved in this care will be identified and provision will be made for occasions when the particular staff members involved are absent. A written copy of what has been agreed will be made and kept in the child's file.
3. Toileting accidents clean underwear and suitable clothing will be kept in the school so that if a pupil has an 'accident' of this nature, they will in the first instance be offered fresh clothing into which they can change. If the pupil for whatever reason cannot clean or change themselves and the parents/guardians cannot be contacted, the child will be assisted by members of staff familiar to the child.

### **Accidents**

While every precaution will be taken under our Health and Safety Policy to ensure the safety of children, we realise that accidents will happen. Accidents will be noted in our Incident book and will be addressed.

### **One-to-one teaching**

1. It is the policy in this school that one-to-one teaching is often in the best interest of the child.
2. Every effort will be made to ensure that this teaching takes place in an open environment.
3. Parents of children who are to be involved in one-to-one teaching will be informed and their agreement sought.

### **Changing for Games/ PE / Swimming**

Pupils will be expected to dress and undress themselves for Games/ PE/ Swimming. Where assistance is needed this will be done in the communal area and with the consent of parents. Under no circumstances will members of staff/ volunteers be expected to or allowed to dress/undress a child in a cubicle/private area. At all times there must be adequate supervision of pupils. While every effort will be made to adhere to best practice as agreed and outlined above, in the event of an emergency where this is not possible or practicable, a full record of the incident should be made and reported to the Headmaster and parents.

### **Attendance**

Our school attendance will be monitored as per our Attendance Policy. With regard to child protection, we will pay particular attention to trends in non-attendance. Any pupil with a pattern on poor attendance will be monitored for signs of neglect/physical/emotional abuse.

### **Behaviour**

Children are encouraged at all times to play co-operatively and inappropriate behaviour will be addressed under our Code of Conduct. If an incident occurs which we consider to be of a sexualised nature, we will notify the DLP who will record it and respond to it appropriately.

### **Bullying**

Bullying behaviour will be addressed under our Anti-Bullying policy. If the behaviour involved is of a sexualised nature or regarded as being particularly abusive, then the matter will be referred to the DLP.

### **Children travelling in staff cars**

Members of the school staff will not transport individual children in their cars at any time.

### **Communication**

Every effort will be made to enhance pupil-teacher communication. If pupils have concerns they will be listened to sympathetically. If teachers have to communicate with pupils on a one-to-one basis, they are requested to leave the classroom door open or request a colleague to attend.

### **Induction of Staff**

The DLP will be responsible for informing all new teachers and ancillary staff of the school's Policy.

A member of staff, once trained, will be responsible for the mentoring of new teachers and will be responsible for supporting new teachers.

### **Induction of Pupils**

All parents and children will be made aware of attendance rules and their implications.

- All parents will be informed of the programmes in place in the school.
- All new parents will be given a copy of the school's enrolment policy, which outlines the procedures parents and children should use when contacting the school if there are absences or concerns of an educational/personal/family matter.
- Parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the class teacher/principal if they wish to discuss their child's progress. All parents will be given a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies.

### **Internet Safety**

It is the intention of Abuja Preparatory School to ensure that child protection concerns will be addressed in the school's Acceptable Use Policy as part of its Information and Communication Technology policy.

### **Record Keeping**

Teachers will keep records on each child's reports. Roll books will be updated daily. Sensitive information regarding children will be shared on a need - to - know basis.

All educational files of pupils who no longer attend this school are kept in a locked storage cabinet.

Further details on record keeping will be found in the school's Handbook.

### **Supervision**

The school's supervision policy will be followed by all staff to ensure that there is comprehensive supervision of children at all breaks. A rota will be displayed to cover both breaks.

### **Visibility**

Teachers will ensure that children are visible in the school playground. Children will not be allowed to spend time in classrooms or toilets where they would not be under adult supervision. They are not to leave the school playground or to engage with adults who are outside of the school playground.