

PRIMA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL BELGRADE

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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Introduction

PRIMA International School values the student's whole personality and desires to provide a healthy and safe environment for their personal and academic advancement. This shall be achieved by:

- protecting students from maltreatment at the school and on school grounds;
- preventing impairment of our students' mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that our students grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable PRIMA International School students to have the best outcomes.

Clarification of terms

Safeguarding is a set of policies and practices to protect children from harm, such as abuse, neglect, and exploitation. It ensures the school provides safe and effective care. Child protection refers to actions taken to protect children who have already experienced abuse, neglect, exploitation, or have otherwise been harmed.

Children who have been abused or neglected may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way, and consequently their behaviour at school may be disruptive and/or challenging; children can be both victims and perpetrators of abuse; children who harm others may have been abused themselves. The School fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children from harm, supporting and promoting the welfare of all of our students.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to offer students a safe and supporting learning environment to aid their transition from childhood into adulthood. This shall be achieved through:

- prevention of any form of harm or abuse through teaching and support offered to students;
- procedures for identifying, reporting, and dealing with cases, or suspected cases, of harm or abuse;
- teachers and school Psychologist providing support to students who have or may have been abused;
- Maintaining a culture of vigilance.

Students' welfare is of paramount importance. PRIMA International School endeavours to create an atmosphere where children are able to talk freely to any staff

member if they are worried or concerned about something. Staff members are trained to reassure potential victims of abuse that they are being taken seriously and that they will be kept safe. We recognise that staff members play a particularly important role, since they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide students with help to prevent concerns from escalating. In view of this, it is a stated duty of all staff members to always act in the best interest of the child when faced with a concern about a student's welfare.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Admissions and Inclusion Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Critical Incident Policy and Emergency Procedures
- E-Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- School Trip Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

Roles and Responsibilities

The Director of PRIMA International School acts as the Safeguarding and Child Protection Officer (SCPO); the Head of Primary acts as the Deputy Safeguarding and Child Protection Officer (Deputy SCPO).

If any employee or parent has any child safety concerns, they should discuss them with the Director of PRIMA International School. The Director assumes the following responsibilities:

- updating the Safeguarding and Protection Policy, ensuring that staff and children/parents/carers/legal guardians are aware of it and that it is put into practice;
- being the final point of contact for safeguarding and child protection issues;
- keeping a record of any concerns expressed about safeguarding and child protection issues;
- contacting the local authorities if necessary;
- ensuring that employees are given appropriate training and supervision;
- ensuring that everyone involved with the organisation is aware of the identity of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Officer.

Teachers and support staff shall be trained in safeguarding and open to approach from anyone with a concern for a student's welfare. Staff members understand that abuse and/or neglect can happen anywhere, including on school grounds. The School provides activities and opportunities for students to develop the knowledge, values, and skills they need to identify risks, including knowing when and how to ask for help for themselves and others to stay safe from abuse on- and offline. The School actively seeks to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers, and/or legal guardians, as well as other agencies to ensure the welfare of every student in our care.

Contact Details of Other Agencies Involved in Safeguarding

Social Work Centre:
Gradski centar za socijalni rad
Savski venac
Lomina 17
11000 Beograd, Srbija
Phone: + 381 11 23 63 538

Police Station:
Ljermontova 16
11000 Beograd, Srbija
Phone: + 192 / + 381 11 347 02 00

Recognising Abuse, Neglect and/or Exploitation

Abuse, neglect and exploitation are forms of maltreatment that may take the form of inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or by a stranger (e.g., online). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent, carer and/or legal guardian fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only for meeting the needs of another person. It may feature age – or developmentally-inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, or non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's mental and/or physical health or development. Neglect may involve a parent, carer and/or legal guardian failing to provide adequate food and clothing or shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment; failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate caretakers; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Sexual or Criminal Exploitation are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group take advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted that exploitation, apart from being physical, can also be facilitated and/or take place online. Child sexual exploitation does not always include physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology. Children may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or may begin carrying a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. These children will be treated as victims, understanding that they have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to. It shall be acknowledged that boys and girls who are criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

'Child-On-Child' abuse, sexual violence, and sexual harassment can occur between two or more children of any age and sex from primary to secondary stage, both offline and online. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Child-on-child abuse can also occur in intimate personal relationships between students and may also take the form of consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (sexting or youth produced sexual imagery).

Abuse perpetrated by children can be just as harmful as that perpetrated by adults, so it is important that all staff members focus on the support for the student(s) exhibiting the harmful behaviour. Staff must never tolerate or dismiss concerns relating to child-on-child abuse. In case of concern or a disclosure of any form of child-on-child abuse, staff members shall follow the Staff Concerns Procedure.

Child Safety and Prevention of Abuse, Neglect, and/or Exploitation

1. PRIMA International School undertakes responsibility for the physical, emotional and psychological welfare of the student whilst the student is on school premises.
2. PRIMA International School undertakes to employ staff in accordance with its Safer Recruitment Policy.
3. PRIMA International School undertakes to ensure that all staff members receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training annually, and that all new staff receive safeguarding training as part of their induction. Records of above mentioned training activities shall be maintained.
4. The Director shall ensure that staff members know:
 - emergency services' call centre numbers;
 - how to deal with, record, and securely store concerns or disclosures;
5. Students are not allowed to leave PRIMA International School grounds without an adult accompanying them unless the parents have signed a release form allowing them to do so (e.g. ride the school bus or walk home). Any adult other than the parent accompanying students shall be duly announced by the parents.
6. PRIMA International School shall establish an environment where children feel safe, secure, and feel confident to address the staff with any concerns they may have. All staff members shall encourage children to come to them to seek support and guidance. All staff members shall be trained to recognise signs of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation, and always act in the best interests of the child.
7. Teachers and teaching support staff shall include activities and topics for PSHE in their lessons to help children learn how to take care of their physical and mental health, to know whom to address for help, as well as to develop skills they need to stay safe from abuse, neglect and/or exploitation.
8. A group of students under sixteen should not be left unattended at any time.
9. Staff members shall avoid being alone with an individual student for a long time. If there is a need for a staff member to be alone with a student (e.g., administering first aid or if the student is distressed), they shall ensure that another staff member is aware of this and shall not remain alone with the student for more than absolutely necessary.

10. At no time should a member of any external organisation arrange to meet a PRIMA International School student away from school activities without supervision. Any meetings held in PRIMA International School shall be planned in advance and require the approval of the Director.

Safeguarding Responses to Children Who Go Missing

All staff members should be aware that they hold safeguarding responsibilities for students who are missing education, particularly on repeated or consecutive occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in the future.

The following steps and processes shall be put in place to ensure an appropriate safeguarding response to students who go missing:

- An attendance register is taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session;
- Contact is established with parents/carers/legal guardians and if these are unavailable, it is followed up with the emergency contacts held;
- Two emergency contact numbers are held for each student, where possible;
- Staff will alert SCPO/Deputy SCPO to any concerns raised regarding children who are absent from school;
- attendance data shall be closely monitored to ensure early intervention in cases of poor attendance and/or unexplained absences.

Mental Health

All staff members are made aware that mental health problems may be an indicator that a student has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation. Students shall be observed daily to identify behaviours suggesting that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or may be at risk of developing one. If staff members have a mental health concern about a student, they shall immediately inform the SCPO/Deputy SCPO. The School Psychologist shall be the designated Mental Health Officer and shall be involved in assessing the situation and deciding on further actions along with SCPO/Deputy SCPO.

Staff Concerns Procedure

Staff members shall not ignore any indicators of maltreatment, abuse, neglect and/or exploitation, and shall act to address matters when they identify cases of students who may need help or protection. If a child talks to any staff member about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, it is vital that staff let them know that they must pass the information on. Under no circumstances should staff members keep any secrets for children.

Staff members can refer to the List of Indicators of Abuse and Neglect (see Appendix 1 for details).

If staff members have any concerns about a student, they shall immediately address the Psychologist and Head Teacher of their respective department or Director/SCPO to agree a course of action. If a student is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to the social service and/or the police immediately. Anyone can make a referral. Where referrals are not made by the SCPO, the SCPO should be informed as soon as possible about such a referral.

Dealing with Disclosure

If a student discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the staff member should:

- listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief;
- accept what is being said;
- allow the student to talk freely;
- reassure the student, but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep;
- never promise a student that they will not tell anyone - as this may ultimately not be in the best interest of the student;
- reassure them that what has happened is not their fault;
- stress that it was the right thing to tell;
- listen, only asking questions when necessary to clarify;
- not criticise the alleged perpetrator;
- explain what has to be done next and who has to be told;
- make a written record, which should be signed and include the time, date and the staff member's position (see Appendix 2 for details);
- pass the information to the Head Teacher and/or Director/SCPO without delay.

When a record of a disclosure is passed to the SCPO, the SCPO will record the time and date the record of concern was received. The SCPO will assess the concern together with Deputy SCPO and Mental Health Officer, taking account of any other safeguarding information known about the student, and decide on further actions. Where the SCPO believes that a student may be at imminent and significant risk of harm they should call the competent authorities (police and/or social service) and make a note of the date and time the referral to the authorities was made. The SCPO shall keep a record of all actions undertaken and securely store these documents (see Appendix 2 for details).

The School shall normally seek to discuss any concerns about a child with their parent(s), carer(s) and/or legal guardian(s). The SCPO will contact the parent(s), carer(s) and/or legal guardian(s) in the event of a concern, suspicion, or disclosure. However, if the School believes that notifying parent(s), carer(s) and/or legal

guardian(s) could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, then advice will first be sought from the social service.

Allegations Involving School Staff

An allegation is any information which indicates that a staff member may have:

- behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a student;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against/related to a student;
- behaved towards a student or students in a way which indicates they would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.

Such an allegation can be made by any student the staff member has contact with within their personal, professional or community life. These allegations should immediately be communicated to the SCPO and/or Deputy SCPO, who will investigate the allegations and decide on further action.

If staff members have concerns about another staff member, then this should be referred to the SCPO and/or Deputy SCPO. Where there are concerns about the SCPO and/or Deputy SCPO, this should be referred to the Proprietor as appropriate. Allegations against the Proprietor shall be referred to the police.

Confidentiality

All staff in PRIMA International School (teaching and non-teaching staff) should only discuss concerns and/or disclosures with the SCPO/Deputy SCPO, who will then decide to whom the information will be disseminated to. If required, staff members shall also have a responsibility to share relevant information about the safeguarding and protection of students with other professionals, particularly the Mental Health Officer and the social service.

Record Keeping

All concerns, disclosure, discussions, and decisions made, as well as the rationale behind those decisions shall be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss this with the SCPO and/or Deputy SCPO.

When a student has made a disclosure, a staff member should:

- record it as soon as possible after the conversation;
- record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the student;
- record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions;
- not destroy the original records in case they are needed by court.

All records need to be given to the SCPO and/or Deputy SCPO promptly. No copies should be retained by the staff member. Records shall be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information shall be password-protected and only made available to relevant individuals. Sensitive information must not be stored on laptop computers. Child protection information shall be stored separately from the student's school file. and the school file will be tagged to indicate that separate information is held. When a student leaves the School, all files pertaining to the student shall be copied, archived, and stored securely for 5 (five) years, while the original shall be securely packaged and transferred to the new school. A signed document acknowledging receipt of the record will be requested from the new school.

Review and Evaluation

This policy shall be reviewed by the Management on an annual basis to ensure that it is meeting its goals.

The Child Protection Policy was adopted by PRIMA International School on 31 August 2018. It was amended into the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy on 10 November 2022.

This policy was last reviewed in August 2025.

Signed on behalf of the Management by:

Director

Head of Primary

Signature.....

Signature.....

Name in Capitals.....BRIGITTE PETROVIC

Name in Capitals.....MINA DRAGIC

School Board Member

Signature.....

Name in Capitals.....JOVANA LALOVIC

This policy shall be next reviewed by the Management by August 2026.

APPENDIX 1 - LIST OF INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Physical abuse	
Child	
Bruises – shape, grouping, site, repeat or multiple	Withdrawal from physical contact
Bite-marks – site and size Burns and scalds – shape, definition, size, depth, scars	Aggression towards others, emotional and behaviour problems
Improbable, conflicting explanations for injuries or unexplained injuries	Frequently absent from school
Untreated injuries	Admission of punishment which appears excessive
Injuries on parts of body where accidental injury is unlikely	Fractures
Repeated or multiple injuries	Fabricated or induced illness
Parent	Family/environment
Parent with injuries	History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
Evasive or aggressive towards child or others	Past history in the family of childhood abuse, self-harm, false allegations of physical or sexual assault
Explanation inconsistent with injury	Marginalised or isolated by the community.
Fear of medical help / parents not seeking medical help	Physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement.
Over chastisement of child	

Emotional abuse	
Child	
Self-harm	Over-reaction to mistakes / Inappropriate emotional responses
Chronic running away from home	Abnormal or indiscriminate attachment
Substance abuse	Low self-esteem
Cleptomania	Extremes of passivity or aggression
Makes a disclosure	Social isolation – withdrawn, a ‘loner’ Frozen watchfulness particularly pre school
Developmental delay	Depression
Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking) with no medical record of special needs	Desperate attention-seeking behaviour
Parent	Family/environment
Observed to be aggressive towards child or others	Marginalised or isolated by the community.
Intensely involved with their children, never allowing anyone else to undertake their child's care.	History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
Previous domestic violence	History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family
History of abuse or mental health problems	Past history in the family of childhood abuse, self-harm, false allegations of physical or sexual assault
Mental health, drug or alcohol difficulties	Wider parenting difficulties
Cold and unresponsive to the child's emotional needs	Physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement.
Overly critical of the child	Lack of support from family or social network.

Neglect	
Child	
Failure to thrive - underweight, small stature	Low self-esteem
Dirty and unkempt condition	Inadequate social skills and poor socialisation
Inadequately clothed	Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
Dry sparse hair	Abnormal voracious appetite at school or nursery
Untreated medical problems	Self-harming behaviour
Red/purple mottled skin, particularly on the hands and feet, seen in the winter due to cold	Constant tiredness
Swollen limbs with sores that are slow to heal, usually associated with cold injury	Disturbed peer relationships
Parent	Family/environment
Failure to meet the child's basic essential needs including health needs	Marginalised or isolated by the community.
Leaving a child alone	History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
Failure to provide adequate caretakers	History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family
Keeping an unhygienic dangerous or hazardous home environment	Past history in the family of childhood abuse, self-harm, false allegations of physical or sexual assault
Unkempt presentation	Lack of opportunities for child to play and learn
Unable to meet child's emotional needs	Dangerous or hazardous home environment including failure to use home safety equipment; risk from animals
Mental health, alcohol or drug difficulties	

APPENDIX 2 - STAFF CONCERN REPORT FORM

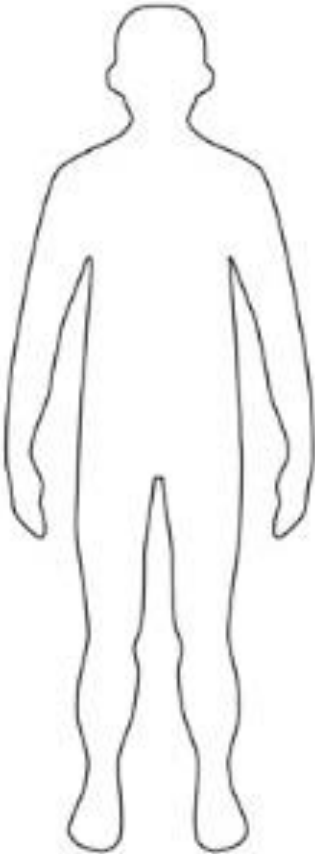
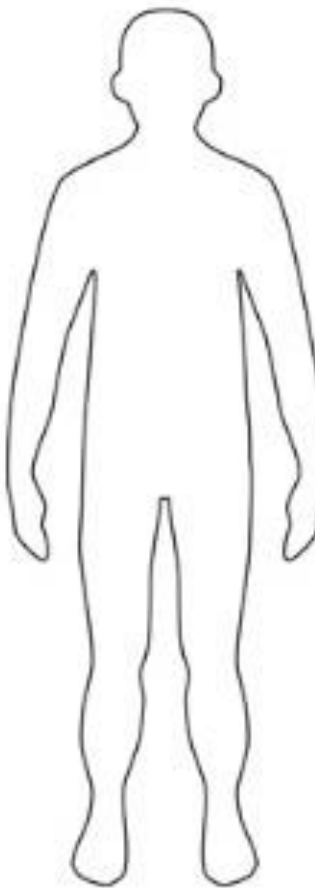
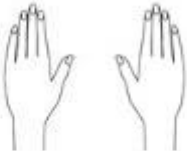
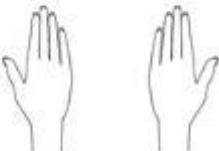
Section 1 – to be completed by staff members		
Name of child:	Date/Time of incident:	
Class and year:	Date/Time of disclosure:	of
Location of incident:	Date/Time of record:	
Name of person reporting:	Date/Time of referral to SCPO:	
Job title:		
Signature:		
Nature of Concern/Incident <i>Describe your concern using clear, straightforward language:</i>		
Any other relevant information (previous concern, other professionals involved/ SEN details, etc.)		
Body map used (tick)	Yes	No
Additional documents attached (tick)	Yes	No

Section 2 – to be completed by SCPO/Deputy SCPO			
Information received:			Date/Time:
Initial action taken:			Date/Time:
Further action taken:			Date/Time:
Final outcome:			Date/Time:
Parent(s)/carer(s)/legal guardian(s) informed:		Y	N
Completed by (tick)		SCPO	Deputy SCPO
Name and Signature:			

Section 3 – Body Map

To be completed by staff member at time of observation

N.B. Under no circumstances should a staff member ask a child to remove clothing to see a suspected injury. If a child has described where an injury is, or it is clearly visible without needing to remove outer clothing, please indicate below.

FRONT 	BACK 	     
Student Name:	Staff Member Name:	
Date and time of observation:		