Child Safety & Personal Protection

HANDBOOK
Dalat International School is a member of the Child Safety and Protection Network (CSPN) which is a group of agencies, organizations and international schools who have come together to collaborate, share resources, and develop best practice elements in the area of child safety. The Child Safety Elements establish consistent standards between and among agencies and facilitate ongoing networking, sharing of resources in both prevention and response and working together effectively on response teams.

Dalat International School’s prevention strategies, policies, procedures and response protocols are all designed to ensure that all students are treated with respect and dignity and enjoy a safe environment in which they feel protected. The school’s child protection policies are based on international law and standards from the United Nations and World Health Organization. When given reasonable cause to suspect that the rights of children are violated, Dalat will seek all available resources to restore those rights.
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INTRODUCTION

Dalat International School places a high value on children and strives to provide a safe learning environment. The school is committed to protecting the social, spiritual, moral, emotional, physical and mental health of students and to maintaining an environment in which all individuals treat each other with dignity and respect. No culture supports the harming of children. Dalat is compliant with Malaysian laws and international codes supporting child safety.

Dalat cultivates its respectful atmosphere through proactive training of its community members regarding safety and relationship issues. Dalat has incorporated developmentally appropriate child safety education for its students at all grade levels, increasing their confidence and ability to react to dangerous situations. Using these research-based programs, Dalat staff prepare students to develop skills and attitudes to keep themselves safe.

Students at an international school may have a special need for safeguarding due to the impact of transition and mobility on their sense of identity and relationships. They may be separated from their extended families and need support during times of crisis. They may experience confusion regarding behavioral expectations because they are caught between multiple cultures which may have conflicting value systems. The international school often takes on the role as the center of their family life and relationships.

Schools fill a special institutional role in society as protectors of children. They must ensure that all children in their care are afforded a safe and secure environment in which to grow and develop. With the opportunity to observe and interact with children over time, educators are in a unique position to identify children who need help and protection, particularly in the area of personal safety. It is the ethical obligation of all Dalat International School employees, adult volunteers and students to identify children in need of protection and report any suspected cases of child harassment or abuse to the Child Safety Team.

This handbook outlines how any member of the school community can report concerns or observations related to student safety and protection. School policy and procedures are followed in dealing with the spectrum of incidents from minor cases of misbehavior, serious or repeated cases of misconduct, as well as indicators, disclosures and reports of suspected harassment and/or abuse.

The Personal Protection Policy and its procedures serve the purpose of creating an environment which safeguards students and staff from abuse and harassment. The school will take action to prevent and correct any violations of the policy, as well as to respond to all allegations of child harassment or abuse. The school will take corrective action within the limits of its organizational jurisdiction and will comply fully with the laws of Malaysia with regard to any suspected case of child harassment or abuse. Violation of this policy by anyone associated with the school (expatriate or national staff or students) will result in discipline.

CHILD SAFETY TEAM

The Child Safety Team is a small group of school staff whose role is to oversee the policies and procedures that will result in a safe campus environment. They ensure that there is a comprehensive student protection

1Shanghai American School, Child Protection Handbook.
program in place at the school and regularly monitor the effectiveness of the program. They support teachers and counselors in implementing student protection curriculum and ensure and guide the safety training of all staff that have either direct or indirect contact with students. They also sensitively assess and respond to reports of harassment and abuse.

The Child Safety Team consists of four or more members who:

• are appointed by the head of school and deemed to be trustworthy, objective, caring, and committed to confidentiality,
• are committed to knowing and following the school’s Child Safety and Personal Protection Policy and procedures,
• are trained by the Child Safety and Protection Network (CSPN),
• include at least two members who are trained in CSPN response procedures,
• have worked at the school for at least one year before being appointed to the team.

REPORTING

Reporting Student Behavior

Anyone in the school community may observe or hear about an occurrence or behavior that causes concern. Reports of student misbehavior should be directed to the staff member responsible for the student at the time of the behavior. Reports of serious or repeated misconduct should be taken to a school administrator (principal, residence supervisor or head of school.) General concerns related to child safety and personal protection as well as reports, indicators or disclosures of suspected harassment or abuse should be submitted to the Child Safety Team. If a parent discloses a child safety concern to a staff member, both the staff member and parent need to clearly communicate who will report the concern to the Child Safety Team.

The spectrum of student behavior from minor infractions to abuse is divided into three levels:

• **Level 1** misbehavior includes lying, cheating, misuse of technology, inappropriate language, disrespect, gossip/slander, mocking/teasing, and disobedience. These behaviors are reported to the classroom teacher, dorm parent or activity advisor and are disciplined by the staff member responsible for the student at the time of the misbehavior (in consultation with the appropriate administrator if needed). These incidents are documented for potential follow up by counseling and administration according to the procedures of the staff member’s respective department (teachers log in Powerschool; dorm parents log in OneNote.) Any incident which may cause emotional harm to a student or minor violations that develop into a pattern should be documented and reported to the counseling department.

• **Level 2** misconduct includes self-harm, sexual activity, fighting/bullying between peers, threatening or bullying behavior directed towards younger/weaker students, discrimination, harassment, threatening or violent behavior, possession of weapons, gang activity, possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs or pornography, or serious or repeated behavior that violates the Personal Protection Policy or any inappropriate behavior by adults or students toward students including
unwanted touch, physical and/or emotional harassment. These behaviors are reported to an administrator (principal or residence supervisor) who works in cooperation with the Student Services Team and/or School Leadership Team to provide counseling and/or discipline. Administrators document these cases for potential follow up.

- **Level 3** incidents such as sexual harassment and/or molestation between peers, abuse (physical, sexual or emotional), neglect, inappropriate sexual conduct by adults to students or between student peers, inappropriate emotional/physical relationship between an adult and student. Any indicators or disclosures of these behaviors need to be reported to the Child Safety Team. They should be documented using a Personal Protection Policy Reporting Form (available at www.dalat.org) and submitting it to the Child Safety Team within 48 hours. The report may be given in written form, submitted electronically, or sent via email to hotline@dalat.org. The Child Safety Team follows the response protocol and school policy for assessing and responding to reports.

**Reporting Staff Behavior**

If a parent, student, or staff member observes an adult engaged in inappropriate behavior, or behavior that violates the Code of Conduct, he or she should inform the appropriate school administrator and/or a Child Safety Team member within 24 hrs.

Reports of inappropriate behavior by staff members are submitted according to the following:

- reports involving teachers are given to the principal,
- reports involving dorm parents are given to the residence supervisor,
- reports involving school administrators require inclusion of a non-staff CSPN-trained consultant who will assist in the response process.

Reports may be given verbally or in writing. If in doubt, ask a school counselor or a member of the Child Safety Team.

Concerns related to potential abuse or harassment involving an adult, or an inappropriate emotional relationship between a student and adult, may be reported directly to the Child Safety Team who will involve the head of school.

**Obligation to Report**

Staff will show discretion in dealing with student issues, erring on the side of caution. However, whenever there is cause to suspect child abuse, harassment or neglect, all school staff, volunteers and students should report their concerns to the Child Safety Team within 48 hours using the Personal Protection Reporting Form or hotline@dalat.org. If a staff member is unsure whether a report is inappropriate behavior or potential abuse or harassment, the staff member should forward such concerns to the Child Safety Team for assessment.

"Children and youth have legal and moral rights to their individuality, that when protected, will develop into the ability to meet the needs of the family, community and global society."

(Source: Shanghai American School, Child Protection Policy)
### WHAT AND HOW TO REPORT

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Behavior corrected and disciplined by the Teacher Dorm Parent or Activity Advisor

Repeated and/or serious behavior that warrants discipline and/or counseling by the School Leadership Team or Student Services Team

Resolved by Dalat Staff Member. The behavior is logged in PowerSchool for potential follow-up by counseling or administration.

Resolved by Dalat School Administrator. The behavior is documented by the administrator according to school policy.

Behaviors that are repeated and not resolved at the stated level, may be moved to the next level.

*PowerSchool log entry is used for inappropriate student behaviors. Log entries are viewed by administrators, counselors and reviewed by the Student Services Team.*
RESPONSE TO ABUSE AND MISCONDUCT

Observations
Indicators
Disclosures of
Harassment
or Abuse

Inappropriate behavior referred to Administration:
• Student Services Team
• School Leadership Team
• Head of School

Child Safety Team provides accountability to the administrator for follow-up. Unsatisfactory resolution may be referred to the designated student advocate.

Child Safety Team
reviews report to determine appropriate action according to school policy

Reports including administrators conducted with non-staff CSPN - trained consultant

Known or potential harassment or abuse:
Child Safety Team conducts a response process

Child Safety Team submits summary report and recommendations to Head of School

Resolved by Head of School according to school policy

Public safety notification from Head of School as required by policy

Criminal offenses reported to appropriate authorities as required by policy

Report to Child Safety Team within 48 hours using Reporting Form or email hotline@dalat.org
Any person observing suspicious behavior or an indicator of abuse, or receiving a disclosure or allegation, or who has knowledge which gives reason to suspect harm may not take any other action than submitting a report form; they may not perform any preliminary investigation or interviews. Even if there is reason to doubt a report, the person reporting must communicate the information accurately, completely, and immediately. Staff who have knowledge of violations but neglect to report them may be subject to disciplinary action.

Safety in Reporting and Responding
The school is committed to protecting each person involved in a response process as well as the objectivity and fairness of the process. Assistance will be provided for reluctant and/or scared reporters. Support will be offered to people who have been harmed and alleged offenders during the investigative process. The school will provide immediate safety and appropriate care for students determined to be victims of harassment and/or abuse.

Safety measures will be taken within the school’s jurisdiction and resources to ensure the safety of a child and that of other children in the home for situations in which the parents or other family members have allegedly abused a child in the home.

In cases of alleged abuse, the school will follow protocols for preventing the alleged offender from confronting the person who was harmed. Alleged offenders who are non-family members will not be allowed to meet with the person who was harmed during the response process.

The school is committed to an unbiased stance throughout the processing of reports and will include an objective investigator when needed at the expense of the school.

The school is committed to secure record-keeping of all reports, reviews, responses, and recommendations regardless of the conclusions reached of people involved. Care is taken to protect any people who have been harmed, any reporters or witnesses, and any person who allegedly caused harm. A minimum of records will be kept, only what is needed to respond to allegations and fulfill legal obligations.

DEFINITIONS AND INDICATORS
The school encourages all members of the community to be aware of definitions and indicators of abuse so that the combined efforts of all will serve to safeguard students. All school staff are considered child advocates and protectors.

Adults should report a concern if a student exhibits several of the indicators of abuse or a pattern emerges of unusual behavior. Behavioral indicators in and of themselves do not constitute abuse or neglect; together with other indicators, such as family dynamics, they may warrant follow up.

The school categorizes misconduct related to child safety and personal protection according to the following three areas: inappropriate behavior, harassment, and abuse. These terms are used by the Child Safety Team in their response to reports.

In cases of discipline, a certain amount of privacy and confidentiality may be required. A student’s concern, discomfort, and/or anxiety regarding potential discipline is normal.
Inappropriate Behavior

Inappropriate behavior encompasses unwanted attention or actions between peers that cause physical or emotional harm. Inappropriate physical contact may include unwanted or extended hugging or touching, holding or blocking, engaging in reckless behavior or causing physical harm. Inappropriate emotional dynamics include unwanted teasing, mocking, or disrespectful behavior to classmates and teachers that is hurtful or disruptive. Although inappropriate actions may be non-intentional, they may be judged according to the perception of the other person. This behavior is corrected and disciplined by classroom teachers, dorm parents or activity advisors.

Harassment

Harassment is non-accidental, immoral, and/or unethical behavior between peers that results in the dishonor or mistreatment of another person or creates a hostile environment. Harassment may include verbal or written, visual, physical or sexual behaviors. Prejudice and discrimination are also considered harassment because of the emotional harm they cause. These behaviors are considered serious and will be addressed by a school administrator or counselor. Repeated harassment may be referred to the Child Safety Team.

Harassing behavior may include:

- Verbal/Written: Mocking, slander, gossip, ostracizing; sexual comments; provocative comments, letters, notes, invitations; inappropriate verbal or written commentaries; hostile or degrading words; inappropriate written material whether in print, digital form, or on social media.
- Visual: sexual or obscene material; displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures; posting visually inappropriate material.
- Physical: leering, impeding or blocking movements; threatening gestures or acts of intimidation; physical violence; bullying and/or assault.
- Discrimination: epithets; slurs; negative stereotyping, threatening, intimidating.

SIGNS OF INAPPROPRIATE EMOTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

- Co-dependency or enmeshment of either party,
- Exclusive relationships between students that adversely affect their other relationships and responsibilities,
- Emotional attachment between staff and student in which the lines of authority are blurred,
- Threatening self-harm or harm to another, either emotionally or physically,
- Inability by a staff member to reason clearly, provide wise counsel and accountability and/or navigate disciplinary decisions that affect the student.
or hostile acts that relate to race, color, religion, national origin, age or gender.

- Sexual: deliberate and unwanted sexual gestures or advances, requests for sexual favors, molesting, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexually suggestive or intimidating nature.

Abuse Definitions of abuse are complex and based in various cultures of child-rearing behaviors, gender and role responsibilities and expectations. Child abuse includes non-accidental physical, emotional, mental or sexual harm, neglect or abuse from those who are responsible for the immediate care of a child.

Abuse usually occurs when there is an element of trust and there is a difference of power based on age, physical size, and intellectual and/or emotional capacity. Although the legal definition of child abuse refers to actions against individuals under the age of 18, the school will protect the rights and safety of students who are over the age of 18. All policies apply to currently-enrolled students. Should both parties be under the age of 18, factors considered in evaluating whether abuse has occurred include differences in responsibility, trust, power, development, awareness and understanding, coercion, and threats, whether implied or verbal. The case will be considered abuse if there is an age difference of more than three years (1095 days) between the two children.

Cultural, family, and religious beliefs and forms of child discipline may vary, but Dalat International School will communicate with parents when a child reports an injury due to discipline, or when a teacher, staff member, volunteer or another student observes such injury. The school counselor and principal will request a meeting with parents to talk about child discipline and provide counsel which may include referral for family counseling.

**Physical abuse may include:**
- hitting, punching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, biting, burning/scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing intentional physical harm to a child.

**Emotional abuse may include:**
- persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child so as to cause severe and adverse effects on a child’s emotional development.
- conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or
POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Unexplained cuts, bruises, welts or fractures, especially those on soft parts of the body
- Bruises of different ages and colors
- Injuries that resemble the shape of the object used
- Unexplained or patterned burns
- Injuries inconsistent with the information offered by the child
- Injuries that regularly appear after absence
- Corporal punishment which results in injury
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Aggressive or self-destructive behavior

POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF NEGLECT

- Child’s basic hygiene and nutritional needs are withheld by the caregivers
- Child’s medical needs are not met (untreated illnesses and injuries)
- Child shows fear or strong avoidance to going home
- Parents do not respond to repeated communications from the school or emergency calls from the school
- Both parents or legal guardians are absent from Penang for 24 hours or greater without providing adult supervision for their child and failing to notify the school of their absence

Neglect may include:

- Failure, refusal or inability on the part of a student’s caretaker to provide adequate physical and emotional care, medical or mental health treatment, appropriate supervision and a safe environment.
- Failure to provide proper adult guardianship such as leaving children unsupervised at home for any extended period of time.
- Allowing a child to engage in an illegal or harmful activity.

Sexual abuse may include:

- Committing or allowing any sexual offense against a child defined by Malaysian law or Dalat policy.
- Intentionally touching a child’s private parts (breasts, genitals or buttocks)

POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Unexplained cuts, bruises, welts or fractures, especially those on soft parts of the body
- Bruises of different ages and colors
- Injuries that resemble the shape of the object used
- Unexplained or patterned burns
- Injuries inconsistent with the information offered by the child
- Injuries that regularly appear after absence
- Corporal punishment which results in injury
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Aggressive or self-destructive behavior

valued only if they meet the needs of another person.

- threatening, intimidating, humiliating and/or rejecting another person or creating a hostile or negative environment.
- committing acts that are cruel or inhumane, such as extreme discipline or omissions demonstrating a disregard of a child’s pain or mental suffering.

Neglect may include:

- Failure, refusal or inability on the part of a student’s caretaker to provide adequate physical and emotional care,
either directly or through clothing other than for hygiene or child care purposes, whether a penetrating or non-penetrating act.

- Non-consensual sexual activity that may include physical or non-physical conduct, sexual coaxing or propositions, indecent exposure, involving children in the production or viewing of pornographic material, voyeurism, all forms of violent and non-violent molestation or assault, and any sexual activity in which the student does not fully comprehend, or that violates the laws or social taboos of society.

- Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening, or otherwise encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Sexual abuse has different characteristics than child abuse that warrants special attention. Sexual abuse usually requires planning by the offender, referred to as grooming, which results in victims accepting the blame, responsibility, guilt and shame for the offense. Sexual abuse requires far more secrecy than other forms of child abuse, so is more difficult to detect and/or report. The school has the responsibility and obligation to correct potential grooming behavior or actions which appear to be grooming.

UNDERSTANDING DISCLOSURES

Adults working with children must recognize that it is often very difficult for children to disclose abuse. Understanding their fears may help the response. Students often cannot easily talk about an abuse problem because they may:

- try to “forget” in order to cope,
- worry they will lose the love of their parents or friends,
- fear the shame of abuse,
- fear they will get in trouble for telling,
- fear they will be blamed, or
- be under threat by the offender to harm them or their family.

POTENTIAL INDICATORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

- Significant and abrupt changes in behavior
- Inappropriate sexual play, language or provocative behavior
- Age-inappropriate sexual knowledge, behavior or language
- Evidence of physical trauma to or discharge from a child’s private area
- Difficulty sleeping, eating, walking or sitting
- Fear of bathrooms or changing into PE uniforms
- Not wanting to be alone with an individual
- A child with a sexually transmitted disease or becoming pregnant
RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES

Even though every student is an individual and each situation is unique, the following general guidelines should be followed when a student alludes to or reports an alleged incident of harassment or abuse:

• Show acceptance of what the child says, however unlikely it may sound.
• Listen without interrupting.
• Stay calm and look at the child directly while being sensitive to cultural differences. Do not show emotions, such as disgust or alarm.
• Be honest and tell the child that you will need to let someone else know (do not promise confidentiality).
• Reassure the child that even if they have broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse.
• Be aware that the child may have been bribed or threatened not to tell.
• Never push for information, instead let the child know that you are always ready to listen if they want to tell you more.

HELPFUL THINGS TO SAY

“Thank you for telling me . . .”
“I believe you . . .”
“It’s not your fault . . .”
“You did the right thing to tell me . . .”
“I will help you . . .”

THINGS NOT TO SAY

“Why haven’t you told anyone before?”
“I can’t believe this/Are you sure this is true?”
“I am shocked.”
“Who/why/when/where/how?”

Action Steps Following a Disclosure

Be careful to follow these steps upon receiving a disclosure of harassment or abuse:

• Let the child know what you are going to do next.
• Offer to accompany the child to see a school counselor, if needed.
• Make notes during the meeting or as soon as possible after the meeting, writing down exactly what was said (verbatim) and what was happening immediately beforehand. Attach the detailed notes in the Personal Protection Reporting Form.
• Report the disclosure to the Child Safety Team as soon as possible (within 48 hours) through hotline@dalat.org or by submitting a Personal Protection Reporting Form (available at www.dalat.org).
• Consider your own feelings and seek support if needed while maintaining confidentiality for the child’s sake.
HISTORICAL DISCLOSURES

Dalat International School will receive reports of harassment and abuse that are historical in nature. Reports received prior to the school’s independence in 2000 will be reviewed by the Child Safety Team and forwarded to the respective mission organization or agency. A current student may report harassment or abuse committed by a former student. Although Dalat International School and the Child Safety Team do not have jurisdiction over a former student, an assessment, recommendations and an effort to provide restorative care and prevent future occurrences will be made.

In the event when a student discloses historical information of an abusive nature prior to enrollment at Dalat, a report will be made to the Child Safety Team. The student will be encouraged to share the information with his/her parents. In the event the student is unable or unwilling to talk to parents, a Child Safety Team member, advocate or school administrator will communicate the information to parents with the student’s knowledge. The student will be referred to a counselor and in certain cases counseling may be required.

If a staff member experiences abuse while at Dalat, or prior abuse comes to light, the school will refer the staff member for counseling. If emotional trauma interferes with the staff member’s ability to cope with living overseas or working at Dalat, he or she will meet with an administrator, and if desired, an advocate of his or her choosing. The administrator will determine a course of action, keeping the staff member’s and the school’s best interests in mind. The head of school has authority to review the staff member’s contract with the possibility of reducing responsibilities or releasing him or her from the contract. If the staff member is not able to continue their employment, the school will refer the staff member to the care of his or her sponsoring organization and/or home church. The school will follow up with communication to the sponsoring organization and/or home church to encourage the provision of member care.

SCHOOL ADVOCATE

Students who feel they have been subjected to harassment or abuse, or who observe conduct of a harassing or abusive nature (whether by a staff member, another student, a non-staff adult or a sibling, parent, a visitor, or any other person) are encouraged to promptly report the matter to the Child Safety Team. If the student or parent feels that due process or school policy is not followed in receiving or responding to the report, the person is encouraged to contact the school advocate. For contact information regarding the school advocate, go to the Child Protection tab on the school website.

The advocate:

- Is appointed by the head of school of Dalat International School,
- Is a trusted and reliable individual who does not have formal responsibility within the Dalat administration, boarding program, or school program,
- Demonstrates the capability of keeping confidences, is nurturing, approachable and discerning,
- Is well known and highly respected in the school community,
- Is readily available if called upon,
• Understands and supports the policies of the school related to child safety and protection.

The purpose of the advocate is to:

• Promote protection and care for Dalat students,

• Provide an objective, trained and trusted adult to whom students may go to express and process sensitive concerns or issues,

• Provide an extra measure of accountability to the school staff and administration,

• Provide representation for parents of boarding students in a time of difficulty or crisis,

• Enhance the responsibility and objectivity of the school administration in investigating and addressing all reports of harassment and abuse.

The advocate serves as an objective listener and supports students in reporting and processing sensitive issues and ensures that appropriate measures are taken to protect their safety. The advocate will not investigate reports or administer discipline. The advocate is the representative voice for students or parents who are not able to be present. Adults may also request the support of a school-appointed advocate.

In an alleged harassment or abuse response process, students may request an advocate or supportive staff member to accompany them to meetings. If students do not request an advocate, one may be assigned by the school administration to both the alleged victim and the alleged offender. Parents may decline in writing if they do not wish their assigned advocate to be included in meetings. The letter will be stored in the case file.

Child Safety and Protection Advocate

Dalat staff are committed to protecting the safety of students and are trained in the prevention, recognition and confrontation of abuse. Our personal protection policy and advocacy network also serve as safeguards. If a student feels that their physical safety or emotional health is threatened, they should inform a teacher, counselor, dorm parent, principal, or the residence supervisor. A non-staff advocate is available to provide students with support as needed. The advocate promotes the protection of students and enhances the objectivity of the administration in addressing reports. The advocate does not investigate or administer discipline but serves as a representative for students.

Karin Thorne
karinthorne@ymail.com
010-464-3413
If the school advocate receives an initial report that has not yet been processed by the school, the advocate will follow protocol in completing a Personal Protection Policy Reporting Form and submitting it to the Child Safety Team within 48 hours.

**RESPONDING TO REPORTS**

**Processing Reports**

Because of the value we place on children and the importance we place on the care and protection of our students, Dalat will accept all reports of abuse, current or historical, regardless of the perceived validity or severity. The school will respond to all allegations and reports, even if the person harmed does not personally want the allegations investigated.

The school reserves the right to fully respond to every complaint, conduct response protocols, take such steps as it feels are necessary to remedy the situation, and to notify appropriate humanitarian organizations, local law enforcement, child protective services, government officials or/and mission agencies as circumstances warrant.

The school administration will keep in mind ramifications of cultural background that may affect the practical working-out of each step of the process. In situations in which there is a language barrier, an interpreter may be called in to assist.

Employees, adult volunteers, parents, and students are expected to fully cooperate in any complaint or response that might involve child harassment or abuse. Anyone who conceals information or knowingly provides false or misleading information will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal or termination of enrollment. The nature of an allegation may necessitate that an employee be put on a paid leave of absence or a student be temporarily removed from the school premises.

The Child Safety Team processes Personal Protection Policy reports within five days to determine what course of action will be taken, either a referral back to administration, a preliminary response, or a full-scale response process. When needed, an objective responder from outside of the school’s jurisdiction will be included on the response team.

**Response Process**

If a response process is determined to be warranted, the Child Safety Team will inform the head of school and follow school policy and response protocol throughout the process. A member of the team will be appointed to record and secure notes and maintain a case file that will include confidential records of interviews, statements, incident reports, and other pertinent material.

Reviews of potential abuse will include a team of at least two members, with at least one representing the gender of the person who was harmed. Translators will be used when possible if the person who was harmed or the person who allegedly caused harm is not comfortable using English. An independent responder, from outside the school, will be included in cases of alleged abuse to either serve as an on-site responder, consultant, or to review both the process and findings. When responding to alleged abuse by an adult staff member (current or historical), an independent responder will be included on the team. When the Child Safety Team determines that a response goes beyond the expertise and experience of their
response team, they will seek additional expertise to effectively address the needs of the case.

The response will include the following as a minimum:

- The initial reporter,
- The person(s) who was harmed,
- The person(s) who allegedly caused harm,
- Known witnesses,
- Those persons whom the person who was harmed and/or alleged offender indicates are witnesses or can contribute to the response process.

Two or more responders will be involved in interviews with the person(s) who was harmed and the alleged offender(s). The interviews will be conducted in person (unless extenuating circumstances warrant a virtual meeting) and include a responder of the same gender.

Due diligence will be exercised to determine if there are additional people who have been harmed by the alleged offender(s).

Standard interview formats will be used for each interview.

A final summary of the response with recommendations will be given to the head of school, who will respond to the recommendations according to school policy. The report will be placed in the student’s or staff member’s file. The head of school will keep a log of disciplinary decisions that remain with the position; therefore, the “need to know” circle will include future heads of school of Dalat International School. The head of school will follow school policy for determining what to report regarding the outcomes of the response process to the school community, mission/business organizations and the local/regional authorities.

Confidentiality

Care will be exercised during the response process to protect both the person who was harmed and the person who allegedly caused harm by restricting information access to those who need to know and have the authority to know. The Child Safety Team will follow the policies and procedures of the Child Safety and Personal Protection Policy and established response protocol in responding to reports.

Dalat will seek to maintain confidentiality in the review of harassment and abuse reports, so far as maintaining confidentiality is not inconsistent with reviewing the alleged violation, eliminating any harassment or abuse found to have occurred, or preventing future violations.

If a staff member, student or family forces a public disclosure of the case details, the school may be forced to publicly defend its decision.

Communication

Dalat is committed to sensitive communication with the involved and affected parties in cases of alleged harassment or abuse.

- Parents, guardians and students will be informed that reports will be reviewed immediately and thoroughly.
- Parents and/or guardians will be notified as soon as possible if their child is a person who was allegedly harmed or a person who caused harm by an alleged violation of the Personal Protection
Policy.

- During the process, at least two notices will be given to the person who allegedly caused harm: an initial notice regarding the allegations and an outcome notice.

- Throughout the process, the appropriate school staff will be informed of necessary details to continue with normal functioning of the school.

- If a student or staff member who has been harmed, or a person who caused harm by a significant violation of the Personal Protection Policy is with a mission organization, the regional director of their mission will be informed.

Inaccurate Reports

It is sometimes difficult to know whether a particular behavior or conduct is harassment or abuse. Students having questions about whether they have observed or experienced harassment or abuse, whether they should submit a report, or about any part of the Personal Protection Policy, are encouraged to speak with a member of the Child Safety Team.

If a report of harassment or abuse is mistaken or inaccurate, but was made in good faith, the person making the report will not be subject to any form of disciplinary action for having made the report.

Accusations with intent to defame will result in disciplinary action appropriate to the situation.

Follow Up and Support

The school will provide appropriate follow up care and support for those involved and affected by misconduct, harassment and abuse according to the resources available to the school. Options include the provision of accountability, counseling, mentoring, spiritual resources, and member care.

The school may require professional counseling for people involved in serious violations of the Personal Protection Policy. This may be a prerequisite for re-enrollment, continued enrollment, or employment. Pastoral support may be offered to those involved in the case, including the persons who reported the case and community members who are directly affected by the situation.

School counselors cannot meet with sexual offenders. Victims of sexual abuse will be referred to outside counselors.

STAFF SCREENING

The screening process for prospective staff will include the following:

- Written and complete application forms which include specific history of employment or volunteer work with children and questions related to child safety and protection,
- Checking of gaps in employment,
- Submission and checking of at least two references,
- Interviews following a standard interview format,
- Questions regarding the candidate’s

According to the FBI, 96.4 % of children reporting abuse prove to be telling the truth.
personal history related to abuse (an individual with a history of abuse will have more extensive review to ensure that they will not repeat the behavior and/or that adequate healing has occurred),
- Police background checks when possible,
- Preliminary psychological evaluations by an independent screening consultant hired by the school,
- Signed copy indicating that they have read and support the Child Safety and Personal Protection Policy.

The school reserves the right to terminate the hiring process or withdraw a contract offer for any applicant found to be deceitful in the application process or in violation of appropriate standards of conduct.

The school does not employ anyone with a prior conviction for or history of perpetrating child sexual abuse or related offenses at any time during his or her adult life. Accurate employment references will be provided to other organizations regarding offenders.

STAFF TRAINING
Dalat staff will be trained at least annually in the prevention and recognition of harassment and abuse and in the reporting and response process. Staff will be responsible to have a working knowledge and understanding of the Child Safety and Personal Protection Policy and procedures. All staff will carefully follow the school’s outlined procedures when dealing with any suspected violation of the Personal Protection Policy.

Teachers, teacher assistants, and volunteers in the elementary school are trained in child safety through Committee for Children’s Second Step curriculum entitled “Child Protection Unit.” Information about the curriculum, videos for parents, and sample videos from the classroom are available on the school website by following the Child Protection tab. MS and HS teachers complete child safety workshops and online training. National staff, coaches, and other school volunteers also complete child safety training.

Dalat International School is committed to providing a safe environment for children and has created a Safe Environment Policy which outlines standard practices of child safety including visibility and supervision. The policy is available to parents on the school website by following the Child Protection tab.

STUDENT EDUCATION
All students applying to and attending the school will be directed to read the school’s Child Safety and Personal Protection Handbook annually. All students will receive age-appropriate instruction concerning personal safety. Students may access the document regarding Students Rights and Responsibilities on the school website by going to the Child Protection tab. The guidance department, in cooperation with school administration and the Child Safety Team, will provide resources that educate students and parents in the prevention, recognition and reporting of harassment and abuse and enhance awareness of the school’s personal protection policies and procedures.

PARENT EDUCATION
Parents of students in elementary school will receive take-home letters and information about accessing online resources for the school’s elementary curriculum, which
is taught in the second quarter of the school year. Parents may be asked to sign documentation indicating that they have reviewed the personal safety training materials with their children.

On the school’s website, under the Child Protection tab, there are a number of resources for parents including this handbook, videos explaining the school’s policies and procedures, and sample videos of the curriculum taught in the classroom. There are also copies of the various codes of conduct, a reporting form, the safe environment policy, and a document for parents entitled Parental Rights and Responsibilities.

**ADHERENCE TO POLICY**

Dalat will strive to apply the policy and procedures listed herein as consistently and respectfully as possible. However, this policy is not intended to constitute an expressed or implied contract or other legally enforceable promise or right that binds or commits Dalat to follow specific procedures in every circumstance.
[Jesus] said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” And he took the children in his arms put his hands on them and blessed them.

*Mark 10:14-16*

Then [Jesus] said to them, “Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For he who is least among you all – he is the greatest.”

*Luke 9:48*