



**YANGON
AMERICAN**
INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL

Child Protection Policy

Yangon, Myanmar

Updated on 1/08/2024



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Introduction

Policy Statement

All children have the right to be protected from external factors that could have an emotional or physical impact on them. Yangon American is committed to providing our students with a safe and secure environment where they spend a large amount of their day. Yangon American believes all children have the ability to learn, and the needs of the student come first. We consider the significance of the varying traditions and cultural values of each student for the protection and harmonious development of the child.

This child protection policy and its related procedures and protocols are based upon the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (“UNCRC”) is a legally binding international agreement setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities. The UNCRC consists of 54 articles that set out children’s rights, below are example of six of the most applicable articles.

Article 2

1. Shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
2. Shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.

Article 13

1. The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.
2. The exercise of this right may be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:
 - a. For respect of the rights or reputations of others; or
 - b. For the protection of national security or of public order, or of public health or morals.

Article 14

1. Shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
2. Shall respect the rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians, to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.
3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

Article 19(1)

1. Shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

Article 33

1. Shall take all appropriate measures, including legislative, administrative, social and educational measures, to protect children from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances as defined in the relevant international treaties, and to prevent the use of children in the illicit production and trafficking of such substances.



Article 34

1. Shall undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes, parties shall take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent:
 - a. The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;
 - b. The exploitative use of a child in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;
 - c. The exploitative use of a child in pornographic performances and materials.

All staff employed at Yangon American International School must report suspected incidences of child abuse or neglect whenever the staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse or neglect. Reporting and follow up of all suspected incidences of child abuse or neglect will proceed in accordance with administrative regulations respective to this policy, which will be reviewed annually by the Head of School.

Term Descriptions

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

Yangon American International School recognizes four types of abuse and neglect, as defined by WHO:

- PHYSICAL ABUSE
- SEXUAL ABUSE
- EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE
- NEGLECT

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is defined as the intentional use of physical force against a child that results in - or has a high likelihood of resulting in - harm for the child’s health, survival, development, or dignity. This includes, but may not be limited to, hitting, beating, kicking, shaking, biting, strangling, scalding, burning, poisoning, or suffocating. Much physical violence in the home is inflicted with the object to punish the child.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is defined as the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared, or else that violates the laws or social taboos of society. Children can be sexually abused by both adults and other children who are - by virtue of their age or stage of development - in a position of responsibility, trust, or power over the victim.

Emotional and Psychological Abuse

Emotional and psychological abuse involve both isolated incidents, as well as a pattern of failure over time on the part of a parent or caregiver to provide a developmentally appropriate and supportive environment. Acts in this category may have a high probability of damaging the child’s physical or mental health, or the child’s physical, mental, moral or social development. Abuse of this type includes: undue restriction of movement; patterns of belittling, blaming, threatening, frightening, discriminating against, or ridiculing; and other non-physical forms of rejection or hostile treatment.

Neglect

Neglect includes both isolated incidents and a pattern of failure over time on the part of a parent or other family member to provide for the development and well-being of the child - where the parent is in the position to do so - in one or more of the following areas:

- Health;
- Education;
- Emotional development;
- Nutrition;
- Shelter and safe living conditions. The parents of neglected children are not necessarily poor. They may equally be financially well-off.



Substance

Any drug which changes the way the body functions, mentally, physically or emotionally.

Staff

All individuals employed by Yangon American International School.



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MYTHS VS FACTS ABOUT CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Myth: *Child abuse is carried out by strangers.*

Fact: *Research indicates that 90% of abuse is from domestic causes and is committed by individuals known to the child. International school communities tend to have families that move often and are separated from their extended families in their home-of-record. When abuse is within the family, the transient lifestyle then increases the risk to international school students who tend not to have access to outside resources, and therefore cannot get help.*

Myth: *Learning about child protection is harmful to your children.*

Fact: *Research indicates that developmentally appropriate education makes children more confident and able to react to dangerous situations and using a specific population context increases protective behavior.*

Myth: *Abuse education is sex education.*

Fact: *Research-based programs prepare students to develop the skills and attitudes to keep themselves safe from perpetrators, and behaviors that include bullying, harassment and other forms of exploitation.*

Myth: *Abuse is a matter of culture; physical or sexual abuse falls within the norms of some cultures and is acceptable.*

Fact: *The reality is that there is no excuse for child abuse! No culture supports harming children.*

Myth: *Child abuse is a result of poverty and happens in low socioeconomic circumstances.*

Fact: *Research indicates that child abuse occurs in all racial, ethnic, socio-economic, and cultural sectors of society. A common characteristic of an abusive family is isolation, such as that commonly found in our international school families who move often or are separated from their extended families at home.*

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Code of Conduct

Yangon American encourages all staff and third-party members working with students to behave transparently and with common sense, keeping the best interests of the child as the primary consideration.

This section outlines the code of conduct all staff and third-party members working with school should follow. Everyone, including students, should follow this code of conduct in order to protect each other from being harmed. The guidelines express the prohibition of inappropriate behaviors of which all staff and third-party members should be aware. Overstepping the boundaries will lead to serious consequences.

Professional Behavior

You must:

- Maintain the highest levels of personal and professional conduct with the understanding of confidentiality;
- Be able to identify situations that may place a member of the school community at risk and know how to deal with such situations;
- Know how to report any concerns, suspicions, or certainties about possible abuse or maltreatment;
- Show caution before touching a child, and be aware of how physical touch may be perceived and/or misunderstood, and whether it is appropriate;
- Organize work and the workplace to minimize any potential safeguarding risks; including always being as visible as possible to other adults when working with children;
- Ensure that any actions or forms of behavior that are inappropriate or may lead to abuse do not go unnoticed or tolerated;
- Respect children's rights and treat them with fairness, honesty, dignity and respect;
- Avoid language or behavior that devalues the importance of safeguarding and the protection of children.

You must never:

- Abuse or maltreat a child (physically, emotionally, sexually, or through neglect);
- Use your position to intimidate, bully, threaten, discriminate against, coerce or undermine anyone in the school community;
- Behave or communicate with children or adults to build inappropriate relationships in order to abuse or put them at risk;
- Give special rewards or privileges in an attempt to build inappropriate relationships with children;
- Engage in, or attempt to engage in, sexual or inappropriate relationships with children, including the use of suggestive conversations, comments, texting, sharing of inappropriate images/videos, or emails;
- Engage with children using online personal communication including, but not limited to, e-mail, chats, and social networks, except only professional online tools and environments that are sanctioned by the employer and used in the course of the child's education and welfare;
- Possess or share indecent images of children;
- Sleep in the same room or bed as a child with whom you are working;
- Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do themselves;
- Offer transport in your car to a student without express parental/management permission, except in the case of emergency;
- Encourage or assist others to break the law in any way; condone or participate in behavior by children that is illegal, abusive or endangers their safety;

Substance Abuse

Yangon American is aware of both legal and illegal drugs that could be harmful for the school community. We acknowledge our role as a responsible school in terms of education, prevention, support and the handling of drug related incidents.

- Yangon American will not tolerate any possession, use or supply of illicit drugs in the school, or during off campus activities by any member of the school community.
- Yangon American will not allow any adults who are under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs when responsible for the supervision of students on/off campus.



- Yangon American will not allow the possession, use or supply of alcohol or tobacco in the school or on school activities by any student.
- Yangon American will not allow the abuse of solvent-based substances unless they have written prescription or "over the counter" medications for reasonable personal use only.
- Students are required to inform the School Doctor if they must take medical drugs during school for an extended period.
- The School must be informed if a student has a medical condition and relevant teachers must also be informed.
- A student or teacher may not give another student any prescribed or "over the counter" medicine.
- Chemicals in school laboratories will be held under lock and key. Students will handle and use such substances only under their teacher's supervision.

Electronic Communication

Yangon American is aware of the Internet being a medium for open communications where anyone can send messages, discuss ideas and publish material with few restrictions. At Yangon American, we use email, text messages and other social media to communicate with third party agencies, parents and colleagues. Staff must use work email to communicate with students and any communication should reference school matters.

Social Media Guidelines

In accordance with our commitment to child safeguarding and privacy, Yangon American is strictly prohibited for staff members to upload or share any photographs or videos of students on their personal social media accounts. This policy is in place to protect the privacy and well-being of our students, ensuring that their images are not exposed to potential risks such as cyberbullying, unauthorized use, or unwanted attention. All media involving students must be handled with the utmost care and shared only through official, school-approved channels with explicit parental consent.

Changing Room Rules

Yangon American prohibits harassment and other types of inappropriate conduct in the changing rooms. The following changing room rules are compulsory:

- No phones or other devices with video cameras are allowed in the changing room.
- When supervision is required, female staff should supervise girls and male staff should supervise boys.
- All students have the right to privacy and respect for modesty when using the changing room; therefore, no adults should enter without seeking permission first.
- Unless there is an injury or illness, adults are not allowed to touch students.

Discrimination

All students at Yangon American have the right to be treated fairly by the staff and third-party members. It is important for each child to feel welcome, safe, included, respected, cared for, guided and supported while they are at Yangon American. Discrimination can develop barriers to effectively working together. Such barriers arise from negative attitudes related to socio-cultural and economic background, current lifestyle, primary language spoken, skin color, gender, status, intervention, orientation etc.

The followings are the potential impact on the students due to discrimination:

- Favoritism in the classroom is seen as fundamentally unfair and adds to inequalities that affect student success and failure.
- A teacher who expresses favoritism is likely to have a negative reputation. Students who are not favored are likely to develop negative attitudes toward the teacher and toward the school. Trust between the teacher and these students declines, which impacts relationship building.
- Students who are favored are likely to be resented by other students. Favored students are likely to become targets for aggressive acts by other students such as rejection and isolation.
- Students who are not favored may recognize the teacher's attitude toward them as a negative judgment and develop damaging attitudes about themselves related to classroom learning. The situation may exacerbate the problems of those with already negative attitudes. Students may become angry and act out or withdraw.



- All this can undermine a teacher's effectiveness and runs counter to developing a positive classroom climate.
- Beyond school, negative effects at home can arise when those who are favored adopt a sense of privilege, and those who are not favored internalize the negative feelings they perceive from the teacher's behavior toward them.



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Reporting and Disclosing a Harmful Incident

In order to fulfil the school's duty to prevent any form of abuse to children, all Yangon American staff and other witnesses have the responsibility to follow the disclosure process if they suspect any harmful situation. The Child Protection Lead is required to fill out the information using the form in the Appendix and recording on the incident log. If need further investigation incident is reported to the Safeguarding Lead which will fill out further information on the form and the incident log. All disclosures will be recorded and presented to our safeguarding team on trimester basis and all matters will be kept confidential. Please refer to the table below of the members within the safeguarding roles:

Safeguarding Team			
No.	Role	Person	Email
1	Director of Safety & Child Protection	Michael Hall	michael@asia-strategic.com
2	Head of School	David Snyder	david.snyder@yangonamerican.edu.mm
3	Human Resources	ZuZu	thanthan@yangonamerican.edu.mm
4	Safeguarding Lead	Adrian Avery Shalin Aung	adrian.avery@yangonamerican.edu.mm shalin@yangonamerican.edu.mm
5	Child Protection Lead	Counselor	christina.moe@yangonamerican.edu.mm

Child Protection Response Team			
No.	Role	Person	Email
1	Director of Safety & Child Protection	Michael Hall	michael@asia-strategic.com
2	Head of School	David Snyder	david.snyder@yangonamerican.edu.mm
3	Human Resources	ZuZu	thanthan@yangonamerican.edu.mm
4	Safeguarding Lead	Adrian Avery Shalin Aung	adrian.avery@yangonamerican.edu.mm shalin@yangonamerican.edu.mm
5	Child Protection Lead	Counselor	christina.moe@yangonamerican.edu.mm
6	Nurse	Ei Su Mon	ei.su@yangonamerican.edu.mm
7	Legal	Ni Ni Tun	ninitun@asia-strategic.com
8	Others		

The following are the reporting conditions:

- If a student makes a disclosure to a staff member or a third party, they have the responsibility to report the matter to the Child Protection Lead immediately and, in any case, no later than 24 hours after the event. The initial report can be done by speech.
- Victims may also report incidents to any staff member. The victim may orally or communicate in writing the allegation.



Disclosure

If a child makes a complaint to you about an incident that is of abusive or negligent nature, make sure to listen carefully and note what they say. Make sure to let the child know that he or she did the right thing by telling you about the incident. If the abuse is of a physical nature and the child is injured, you should take the child to the School nurse immediately. The next step is to report the situation to the Child Protection Lead who will then take the most appropriate action to ensure the safety of the child.

Do's and Don'ts for when a child chooses to confide in you

Do's

- Be available and interested
- Listen carefully with attention to detail
- Take it seriously
- Encourage the child they are right to tell
- Negotiate getting help
- Get help immediately
- Immediately make a cautious record of the complaint

Don't

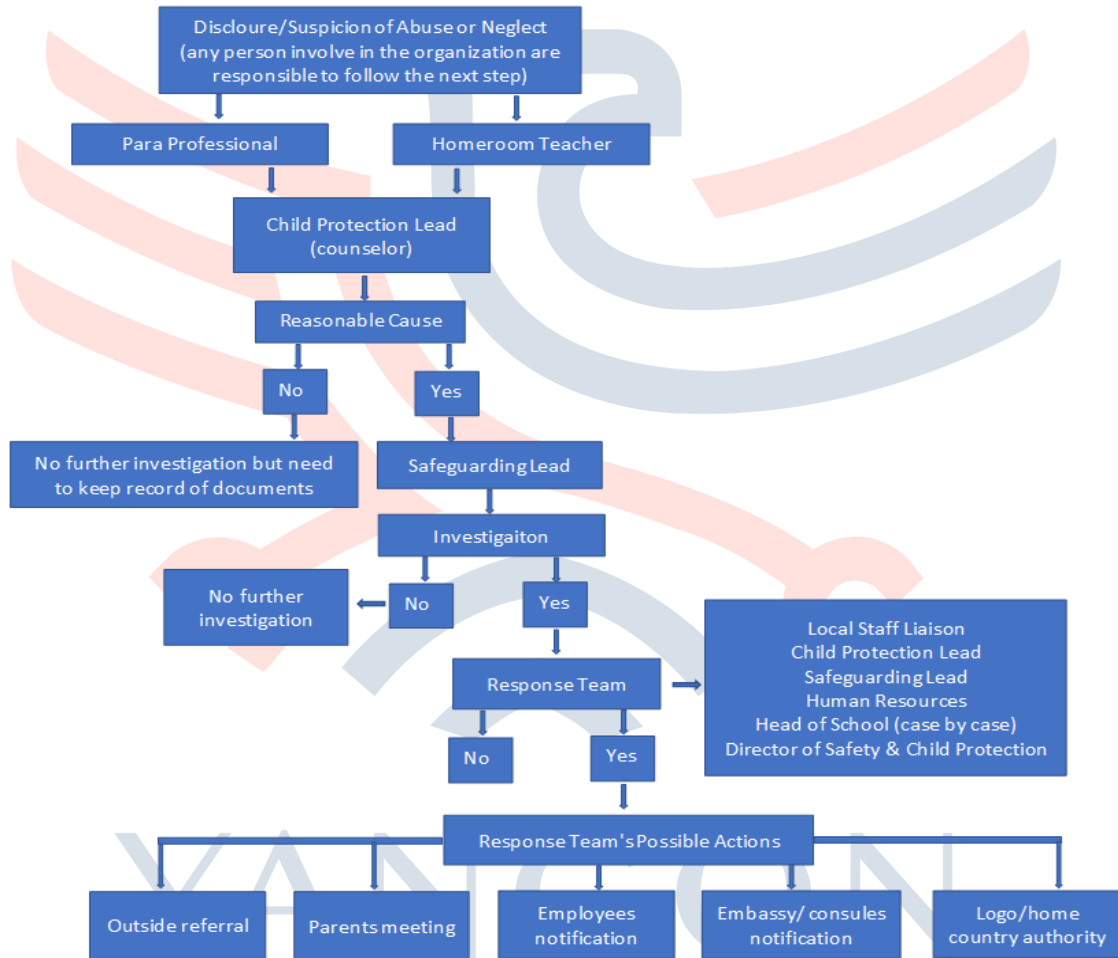
- Overreact
- Jump to conclusions
- Make your own assumptions
- Try to get the child to disclose
- Speculate or blame anybody
- Make promises that cannot be kept

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Disclosure Process

Reporting Flow Chart



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Safeguarding Whistleblowing Guidance

A staff member may recognize that something is wrong but may not feel able to express concerns because of loyalty to colleagues or a fear of harassment or victimization. We encourage all adults to ensure that children are their priority and should not be unnecessarily at risk. This is known as 'whistleblowing'.

Reasons for whistleblowing:

- Every individual has a responsibility to raise concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour in relation to the safety and welfare of people in our school.
- To prevent a problem from becoming more serious.
- To protect or reduce risks to other children or adults.

How to raise a concern:

- Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible. The earlier a concern is expressed the sooner action can be taken.
- The concern should express exactly what practice is causing concern and why.
- The person raising a concern should approach the Head of School. If a concern is expressed about the Head of School, please report to the Director of Safety and Child Protection.

The next steps:

- The staff member specified in any whistleblowing procedure should be given information about the nature and progress of any enquiries.
- The employer has a responsibility to protect the staff member from any harassment or victimization including, where appropriate, keeping the whistleblowing staff member's identity confidential.
- No action will be taken against the whistle-blower if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.

Self-reporting

Occasionally a member of staff may have a personal difficulty that they know is impinging on their professional competence. Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so that professional and personal support can be offered. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children in the school.

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Safe Recruitment

Staff

In order to ensure that children are protected while at Yangon American, it is a requirement that our staff are carefully selected, screened, trained and constantly supervised. The school is responsible for obtaining the following documentation as part of these safer recruitment background checks:

1. References: written or verbal reference checks from current and past employers
2. Identity Checks: validation of the identity of potential candidates
3. Curriculum Vitae & Resumes: employment history and verification of any gaps in employment
4. Qualifications: proof of education and training credentials
5. Criminal Records Check: ensure no previous safeguarding or other convictions
6. Social media examination: to ensure ethical behavior

The Letter of Offer and Employment Contract must include a standard written condition that the final confirmation of all letters of offer and contracts are subject to obtaining safeguarding checks and other references listed in this document. More details can be found in the [Safe Recruitment Policy](#).

Volunteers

Some people who may be unsuitable for working with children and young people may use volunteering as an opportunity to gain access to children. For this reason, any regular volunteers in the school, in any capacity, will be asked for character references and identity checks, such as NRC or passport. All volunteers will be asked to sign a safeguarding statement. A parent or other volunteer must work under the direct supervision of a member of the staff and at no time have unsupervised contact with children.

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Incident Report Form

Details of the Child

Name: _____

Age: _____

Gender: _____

Grade: _____

Date and time of Incident: _____

Please tick the type of Incident below:

- Abuse (physical, emotional, psychological)
- Neglect
- Drugs/ Alcohol
- Discrimination
- Other

Please state here, if other option chosen: _____

Was the student injured or bruised? YES NO

If YES, please state in detail of the injury/bruise:

Please explain the incident below:

Additional Information: (Further action required or not required).

Signature of Child Protection Lead

Date

Signature of Safeguarding Lead (if necessary)

Date

Signature of Head of School (if necessary)

Date