



**MEF SCHOOLS
CHILD
PROTECTION
POLICY**

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1.1. Child Protection Policy

MEF Schools embrace the right of children to receive education in an inclusive school culture. With this perspective, MEF Schools are aware that it is the duty and responsibility of all members of the school community to ensure that all students are in an educational environment where they are respected and valued and where they feel physically, socially and emotionally safe.

One of our most important responsibilities as a school is to ensure that our students are in a safe environment and to create the necessary environment for them to know and exercise their personal rights. Accordingly, all stakeholders of the school community are responsible for ensuring that students' health, safety and protection from all forms of physical, emotional, sexual neglect and abuse.

MEF Schools "Child Protection Policy" is developed by a committee of administrators and teachers in primary, middle and high schools, taking into account the standards and practices of IB documents for all students in our national schools, as well as the regulations required by the government in our national school.

The Child Protection Policy covers all students at MEF Schools, teachers and employees working on campus, and all parents. The Child Protection Policy is regularly updated with the contributions of teachers, students, parents and administrators in line with changing needs and circumstances.

1.2. Policy Review

The School Management is responsible for reviewing the Child Protection Policy annually and keeping it up to date.

The last revision was made on January 4, 2023 by the primary school directorate and primary school administrators and teachers.

1.3. Objectives and Principles

All children have the right to protection from violence, neglect and abuse. However, millions of children all over the world from different socio-economic backgrounds, religions and cultures and of different ages are exposed to violence, neglect and abuse every day. Millions more are at risk.

MEF Schools aim to provide a safe learning environment under appropriate practices and supervision for children to play, learn, develop and succeed.

MEF Schools follows the process by establishing appropriate procedures to ensure that suspected cases of child abuse that may occur at school or outside of school are reported appropriately. A report made within the scope of child protection is a report of a child/young person's

It is the responsibility of the employee who suspects that abuse may have taken place. The procedures also apply to students who self-report abuse. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students feel safe and are competent to communicate if they have suffered any harm.

MEF Schools take all reports into account while at the same time implementing the necessary measures to ensure the safety of the child/youth in accordance with Turkish law and international protection.

1.4. Legal Framework - Relevant Legislation and Regulations

MEF Schools' Child Protection Policy is based on international law and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Turkey is a signatory, as well as the legal legislation and regulations of the Republic of Turkey and IB criteria.

The official bases utilized within the scope of the policy are presented below.

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child November 20, 1989

Article 19 - Protection from abuse and neglect: The State shall protect the child from maltreatment by parents or other persons responsible for the care of the child and shall establish appropriate social programs for the prevention of abuse and the treatment of victims.

Article 34 - Sexual exploitation: The State shall protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse, including prostitution and pornography.

- Child Protection Law of the Republic of Turkey - Law Number 5395
- Ministry of National Education Journal of Communiqués Psychosocial Protection, Prevention and Crisis Intervention Services Directive Volume: 82 April 2019 Issue 2739
- Ministry of National Education Guidance and Psychological Counseling Ethics Directive
- Regulation on Guidance Services Counseling Measures and Psychological Counseling Services August 14, 2020 Issue: 31213

1.5. IB Perspective

The IB's vision is to build a worldwide community of schools, educators and students with a common mission to empower young people with values, knowledge and skills to create a better and more peaceful world.

In this context, all students have the right to be protected from violence, neglect and abuse. In this context, all students studying at MEF Schools are included in the "Child Protection Policy".

1.6. Scope

Members of the school community where this policy is implemented:

- All employees of MEF Schools and employees of the school's affiliated organizations,
- Individuals and units with contractual relationships with the school,
- Board members, managers, academic and non-academic staff,
- All students, parents and legal guardians, in particular those who follow the school's code of conduct, respect each other and report incidents/reasonable suspicions,
- All chaperones and volunteers working with children and young people, or those involved in school programs and activities involving children and young people,
- Visitors, suppliers or guests on school premises.

1.7. Basic Principles

- a. At MEF Schools, all students are treated with respect. With the safe school environment created, students know that they are cared for and safe.
- b. The best interests of the child are taken into consideration in all measures and decisions taken at MEF Schools.
- c. Develops policies related to processes and practices in accordance with the school responsibility within the scope of the Child Protection Law.
- d. In recruitment processes, all employees are carefully selected in accordance with the principles of this policy.
- e. Up-to-date information on the child protection program is collected and stored in the best interest of children, respecting confidentiality.
- f. All staff working at MEF Schools are given the necessary training on the child protection policy. All personnel confirm that they are aware of and will comply with the principles of this policy.
- g. School staff are aware of possible indicators of neglect and abuse. Accordingly, they are sensitive and attentive to changes in students' behavior.
- h. All employees shall notify the necessary authorities in case of any risk of harm to the child, in case of any suspicion and/or if it is communicated to them.
- i. MEF Schools consult experts and receive support when necessary.
- j. All employees of MEF Schools are obliged to report in writing to the Child Protection Commission any incidents and/or suspected and/or reported cases of abuse. The Child Protection Commission refers to the relevant local authorities or official authorities.

1.8. Key Responsibilities

MEF Schools realize their commitment to protect children from abuse through four stages.

- **Awareness** Ensuring that school staff are aware of the problem of child abuse and the risks to children
- **Prevention:** Trying to protect students from all kinds of abuse through awareness raising activities and practices
- **Recording and in-school notification (school administration):** Reporting allegations about all actual or suspected cases of abuse involving children
- **Responding:** Ensuring that action is taken to support and protect children where concerns about possible abuse are raised

To ensure that the above reporting and response standards are met, MEF Schools;

- To take seriously any concerns that arise,
- Take positive steps to protect children who are exposed to any concerns,
- Supporting children who are the source of the concern or staff/other adults who raise this concern,
- Act appropriately and effectively when promoting or cooperating with the subsequent investigative process,
- To be guided by the principle of protecting the best interests of the child in the child protection process,
- Taking children's views and wishes into account,
- Ensure the protection of children in collaboration with parents and other professionals,
- As all members of MEF School, advocate and commit to taking reasonable measures to protect the safety and well-being of children and young people at school from physical, emotional or sexual abuse and all forms of bullying, neglect and child exploitation.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. CHILD** For the purposes of this document, the term "child" includes anyone under the age of 18, as defined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the CRC. At MEF Schools, students over the age of 18 are also covered by this definition.
- 2.2. CHILD PROTECTION:** Child protection means supporting the life and development of children free from all risks of violence, harm and violation of their rights.
- 2.3. CHILD PROTECTION TEAM/COMMITTEE:** The Child Protection Commission is a professional team authorized to intervene in all cases of abuse and neglect for students, teachers and all school staff.
This commission consists of the school principal, deputy principals, psychological counselors/guidance counselors, school doctor and nurse.
The role of the Child Protection Team/Committee is to inform the school principal(s) about the events and the process to the General Director. They follow up any report, verbal or written communication received by the committee. The specified committee members are expected to review all relevant policies together and be ready to support child protection needs when necessary. The Child Protection Team/Committee meets on an emergency basis to receive updates on practices or to approve policy changes.
- 2.4. VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN:** Child neglect and abuse and child maltreatment include all forms of physical or emotional maltreatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent behavior, commercial or other exploitation, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent behavior, and commercial or other exploitation of children in relationships of responsibility, trust or power that result in actual or potential harm to the health, life, development or dignity of the child.
- 2.5. PHYSICAL ABUSE** In the broadest sense, it can be defined as "non-accidental injury to the child". The most common case is physical violence and beating the child.
"Abuse that leads to the appearance of ecchymoses, fractures, burns and similar lesions that cause physical damage to the body" is physical abuse. Physical abuse involves non-accidental injury and abuse of the child. It involves physical harm in different ways such as hitting, shaking, grabbing, throwing, pushing, burning, suffocating the child.
- 2.6. EMOTIONAL ABUSE** Emotional abuse is any chronic action or inaction that disrupts a child's vision or emotional integrity. It is the persistent emotional mistreatment of a child in a way that has serious and long-lasting effects on the child's emotional and psychological development. Swearing at the child, leaving the child alone, misleading, frightening, intimidating, threatening, not meeting the child's emotional needs, mocking, humiliating the child are forms of emotional and psycho-social abuse. In addition, actions such as constantly expecting more from the child than his/her capacity, overprotecting the child, making him/her dependent, being overly authoritarian, expecting responsibilities beyond his/her age, discriminating between siblings and peers, severe punishment incompatible with the child's behavior and applying violence to the face even if it does not leave a trace are also included in this abuse group.

- 2.7. SEXUAL ABUSE** Sexual abuse refers to the coercion, encouragement and instrumentalization of a child to engage in any sexual activity in order to satisfy the child's sexual needs and desires, whether the child is aware of it or not, with or without the child's consent. These activities may include physical contact with or without sexual intercourse, exhibitionism, voyeurism, sex talk, using children in pornography, exposing children to look at pornographic content, causing them to be in inappropriate situations, encouraging them to exhibit sexually inappropriate behaviors.
- 2.8. CYBER ABUSE** Any kind of interaction that negatively affects the emotional, physical and development of the child through information and communication technologies falls under this type of abuse. In online environments, the child is exposed to hate, suppression, stalking, harassment, bullying, violent and pornographic images, causing disruption of emotional, social and physical development. This type of abuse also includes other types of emotional, physical, sexual and neglect abuse. The fact that the people who are responsible for taking care of the child are not protective and informative against situations where the child may be exposed to cyber abuse is also included in this type of abuse.
- 2.9. NEGLIGENCE:** Neglect is the failure of the person responsible for taking care of the child to fulfill this obligation, even if he/she is able to do so, or neglecting the child by not meeting his/her physical or emotional needs. It is defined as not paying the necessary attention to issues such as nutrition, clothing, hygiene, medical needs, adequate social relations, emotional needs or optimal living conditions.

3. OUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS MEF SCHOOLS

3.1. Duties, Authorities and Responsibilities of School Principals

- Ensures the establishment of a school child protection team consisting of personnel who have received in-service training on the subject. Chairs the school child protection team/commission.
- Ensures that all teachers and staff within the school, especially the school child protection team, are trained on the subject. Responsible for ensuring that the Child Protection Policy is known and implemented throughout the school.
- Assigns the relevant units and persons to collect information about the allegations and/or complaints submitted to him/her.
- Ensures that psychosocial protection, prevention and crisis intervention services included in the school guidance services program are carried out.
- Ensures that protective, preventive and empowering activities are carried out for trauma/crisis situations according to the school risk map created.
- Facilitates psychosocial protection, prevention and crisis intervention services at school and makes use of local resources.
- Plans with the school team to inform students, parents, teachers and school support staff after trauma/crisis situations.
- Ensures that students who have been exposed to traumatic experiences are referred to health institutions and takes necessary measures by monitoring their condition.
- Coordinates information and cooperation with the family.
- Ensures that the records of individuals affected by trauma/crisis situations are kept and maintained in accordance with ethical rules, especially the principle of confidentiality.
- It takes the necessary measures in line with the reports prepared as a result of trauma/crisis situations and sends the reports to the relevant units.

3.2. Duties, Authorities and Responsibilities of the PDR Department

- Include services on psychosocial protection, prevention and crisis intervention in the school guidance services program.
- Creates the school risk map within the scope of psychosocial protection, prevention and crisis intervention services and directs and monitors individuals affected by trauma/crisis to relevant institutions when necessary.
- Organizes activities for psychosocial protection, prevention and crisis intervention services for school management, teachers, students and families.
- Cooperates with the school administration and the guidance and research center regarding the psychosocial protection, prevention and crisis intervention activities to be carried out throughout the school against possible trauma / crisis situations at school.
- Keeps and maintains records of individuals affected by trauma/crisis situations in accordance with ethical rules, especially the principle of confidentiality.
- In the Guidance and Psychological Counseling Services to be provided to students who have been exposed to traumatic / difficult life events, it ensures the participation of the student's close environment such as teachers, family and friends in the psychosocial intervention process.

3.3. Duties, Authorities and Responsibilities of Teachers

- Be alert to possible indicators of abuse and neglect.
- When a student speaks to him/her, he/she understands that he/she will be communicating in accordance with the procedures contained in this policy.
- Know that when they observe or suspect any of the indicators of possible neglect/abuse, they should report it to the school principal and guidance department as described in this policy.

3.4. Duties, Authorities and Responsibilities of Parents

- The homeroom teacher informs the school psychological counselor and the school administration about the crisis related to the child.
- Together with the school, they identify the child's needs and provide information.

3.5. Duties, Authorities and Responsibilities of the Child Protection Team

- The Headmaster and school principals publish the written Child Protection Policy on the website to inform teachers, parents and students about the Child Protection Program. They share it with the school community via email.
- New members of the school community will also be informed in detail.
- Prepares the school action plan covering the necessary work in terms of measures to be taken, information and services to be provided throughout the school against possible traumatic / challenging life events.
- Provides security around the school according to the characteristics of the traumatic / challenging life event experienced / may be experienced and notifies the relevant units (ambulance, police, fire brigade, family, etc.).
- It stops confusion and prevents misunderstandings.
- After traumatic/challenging life events, they decide when and how to disclose to whom and take action.
- Receives information from the Guidance and Research Center about the work carried out within the scope of psychosocial intervention services. Requests the application of advanced psychosocial intervention methods for the needs of the school.

3.6. Duties and Authorities of the School Health Unit

MEF Schools health workers;

- Child Health Monitoring: School health workers regularly monitor the health status of students and conduct health screenings. They evaluate the general health status of students and identify possible health problems.
- First Aid: Provides first aid interventions in emergencies and coordinates the provision of necessary medical assistance. Intervenes in accidents that occur inside or outside the school.
- Vaccination Programs: School health workers administer vaccines to students within the scope of national vaccination programs. They regularly monitor immunization records and identify missing vaccines.
- Health Education: Health workers train students on healthy living habits, hygiene, nutrition and sexual health. They participate in awareness-raising activities to protect students from harmful habits.
- Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting: Within the framework of the child protection policy, reports suspicious situations and notifies the necessary authorities in case of suspected child abuse or neglect.
- Cooperation and Communication: Communicates effectively with other school staff, parents and relevant

health institutions regarding the health status of students. Keeps students' health information confidential and protects their privacy.

- Emergency Plans: School health professionals contribute to emergency plans and train students on how to act in emergency situations.

- Students with Special Needs: The school closely monitors the health status of students with special needs and provides necessary health services. Provides appropriate support for the educational and health needs of these students.

These responsibilities cover the general duties of school health workers to support the healthy development of children.

4. PREVENTIVE ACTIVITIES

MEF Schools are obliged to ensure the health and safety of students, and in this sense, they are responsible for taking precautions against any situation that may harm children. Prevention of abuse lies at the heart of child protection. It acknowledges that institutional awareness and procedures encourage positive behaviors in employees and ensure early detection of concerns and appropriate response with awareness and awareness of child protection. In this context, it offers the following preventive activities.

4.1. Informing and Raising Awareness

Efforts are made to ensure that the entire school community is aware of and informed about the Child Protection Policy. The school shares its child protection policy with its stakeholders (newsletters, website, social media, presentations, etc.). As a result of this sharing, all stakeholders (all educators and support staff) are aware of their responsibilities towards students and treat all students with respect. Adopts a good listening attitude for all students, cares about changes in children's behavior and knows that changes in a student's behavior can be a sign of abuse.

4.2. Code of Conduct Agreement

All staff will sign and abide by a code of conduct confirming their understanding and commitment to Child Protection (Annex 5)

4.3. Trips

Excursions are planned according to age groups and excursions that are deemed to be a security risk are canceled. The companies to be visited are selected with reference. A risk assessment is made before the trip. Research is conducted on the destination of the excursion. Processes such as the route, duration of the trip and traffic conditions are reviewed. In boarding trips, the necessary security measures are taken in advance at the place of accommodation. (Mini bars are emptied, +18 TV channels are turned off, the floor where the students stay is allocated only to students, windows etc. It is ensured that the places are locked and controlled by the teachers on duty on the trip.)

Students' room assignments are determined in advance. No adult and student will stay in the same room. In a boarding trip in the younger age group, a teacher may accompany a student in need, provided that the teacher and the student are not alone, in line with the needs of the student at the time of the trip (if the student needs it in very special cases), by informing the family and obtaining written approval from the family. If the student in need is a girl, one of the female teachers on duty during the trip, and if the student in need is a boy, one of the male teachers on duty during the trip will provide support. A letter of approval from the family is attached to the report to be kept at the end of the trip). The number of teachers and guides is determined according to the number of students (1 teacher for 10 students, 1 vice principal for 40 students, guide for boarding trips, etc.). Students are insured by the tourism company for all trips. The trip process is carried out by adhering to the trip procedure.

At the end of the process, the trip is evaluated with a report in line with the place and program. Necessary measures are taken for the next trip. A report is kept at the end of the excursion about the events experienced during the excursions. The private health information of the students participating in the excursion is obtained in writing from the families before the excursion (medication use, allergic status, etc.) In case of any inconvenience, the excursion is not repeated.

4.4. Technology Use

MEF Schools take precautions for safe internet use on computers inside the school. Within the scope of Conscious Use of Technology, the Department of Computing deals with Digital Citizenship. In this context, the topics of "Digital Security, Digital Rights and Responsibilities", which are closely related to this topic, are mainly taught. The PDR Department strives to empower students in this sense by covering topics such as the conscious use of technology, cyberbullying, and behaviors they may encounter in the virtual environment. In these lessons, students are also informed about the negative situations they may encounter on social media and their responsibilities according to their age level. In addition, the IT Department uses various security software to prevent any unwanted access to areas within the school where internet access is available.

5. REPORTING

5.1. REPORTING PROCEDURES

When to Express Doubt?

The first indication of concern about a child's welfare may not always be a visible serious injury. Concerns can have different causes;

- Bruises or marks on the child's body,
- Oral or written disclosures made by the child himself/herself, another child, a parent or other adult,
- Observations of the child's behavior,
- Unexplained changes in the child's behavior or personality,
- Evidence of a specific detail about an event or a disturbance in the child's writing or drawing that indicates abuse or possible abuse,
- Deficits in self-care indicating neglect, developmental difficulties resulting from neglect,
- Unauthorized absence from school / absenteeism without the school's knowledge,
- Information about the child's parent(s)/caregiver(s) or the situation at home,
- Misuse of technology, e.g. sexting, inappropriate comments on social media, cyberbullying, etc.

Every staff member working in the institution is obliged to provide the Child Protection Team with any information about a possible case of child abuse. This information may come from a student who has shared the case, from personal observation or from another source.

As MEF Schools, all concerns raised are taken seriously. The first person to hear or encounter alleged or suspected misconduct has the responsibility to report the concern by filling out the relevant form. Any adult who withholds any information or conceals any misconduct is also considered an accomplice.

If the concern is about an employee of the institution, it is reported to the head of the school to which he/she reports and to the head of the unit to which he/she reports. If there is a concern about an academic or non-academic manager, it is reported directly to the General Manager.

5.2. Reporting/ Steps to Follow in a Suspicious Situation

The relevant school principal informs the general director about all processes.

1. **STEP: The person** (school employee, teacher, student, visitor, etc.) who witnesses the suspicious situation / has information about the suspicious situation **informs** the school principal by filling out the form within 24 hours.
 - Child Protection Concern / Allegation Form (Annex-1)
 - The Child Protection Team brings the matter to the attention of the school principal or, in the absence of the principal, the deputy principal.

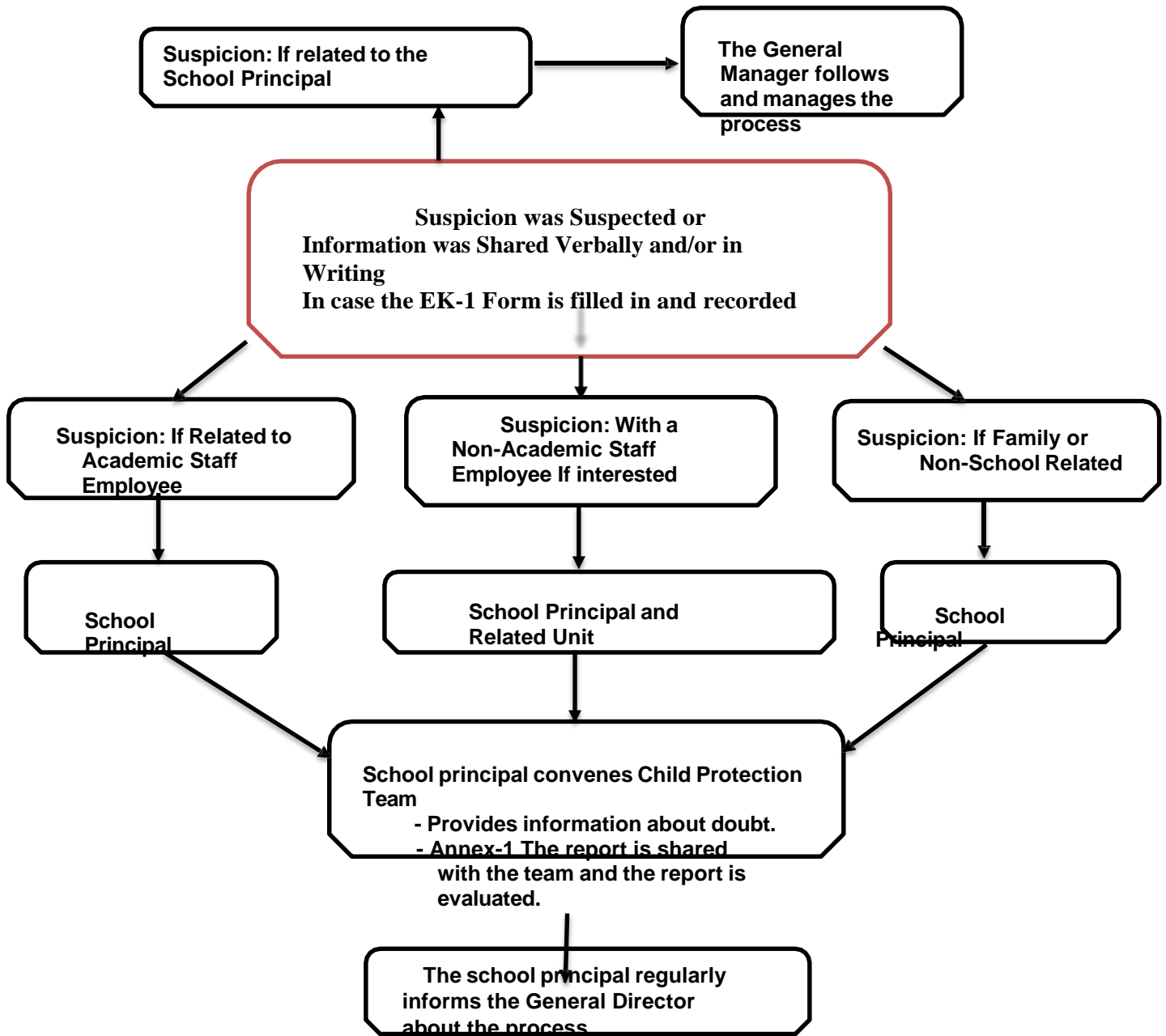
2. **STEP:** Physical and emotional symptoms are assessed to determine whether the incident is a valid suspicion.
 - In case of any suspicion; the school principal calls everyone in the Child Protection Team (psychological counselor, assistant principals, school nurse and doctor) to a meeting. The person in suspicion can be invited to the meeting if the child protection team needs them.
3. **STEP:** The Child Protection Team meets immediately in cases of suspicion, allegation or disclosure of abuse/neglect that violates the principles in the Child Protection Policy. A written action plan including the steps to be followed is prepared and a report is kept.
4. **STEP:** All documents related to child protection reports are kept in a confidential file by the child protection team. These records are shared openly and clearly with the relevant institutions within the legal framework.
5. **STEP:** The case is followed up by the responsible person in the child protection team.

5.3. Action Plan in Case of Suspicion

1. In the event of a report of an alleged perpetrator, MEF School will conduct a full investigation. The employee (academic and non-academic staff) will be asked to take paid leave during the investigation. In case of any misconduct, immediate termination of employment takes place. Procedures for termination of employment are handled and monitored by human resources.
2. MEF Schools informs the legal department about the issue and incorporates the legal department's guidance into the process.
3. Informing the family is done via face-to-face meeting and/or e-mail/letter with the approval and follow-up of the relevant school directorate.
4. To further support students and families, MEF Schools may recommend different expert support to the family or student, such as a social services specialist, with the approval of the guidance and psychological counseling department and/or the Child Protection Team.
5. With the approval and knowledge of the General Director, the relevant school principal and the school legal department, it is decided to report the situation to the Juvenile Justice Department.

5.4 REPORTING MAP

The Reporting Map below shows to whom child protection concerns should be reported. The reporting map is posted where staff and visitors can see it regularly to remind people to be vigilant about child protection.



5.5. DIFFERENT REPORTING FORMATS

All concerns raised are taken seriously. It is not the responsibility of the first person who hears or encounters an alleged or suspected case of abuse to decide whether abuse has occurred; the person who hears or encounters it has a responsibility to report the concern immediately.

Notification by the Child

If a child has reported abuse of any kind, it is very important to listen carefully so that you can record and report it accurately.

- Be open to listening immediately when a child shares something,
- Be available when the child is resting (not busy with other work),
- Listen attentively and at the pace of the child's narration,
- What is said must be taken seriously,
- The child should be reassured when listening to what the child says,
- The child should be told that he/she should pass the information/information to the authority,
- What is said orally by the child should be carefully recorded in handwriting,
- Too many questions should be avoided and the scope of questions should be limited to clarify what the child is saying,
- The child should not be guided in the questions asked and the questions should be clearly framed.

When a child reports abuse, the teacher concerned should immediately take notes on the Child Protection Reporting Form in Annex 1 and record what has been said. He/she can take notes on a blank piece of paper until he/she finds the form and then transfer his/her notes to Annex 1. They should also attach what they wrote on the blank paper to the form.

While noting what the child says;

- What the student says should be written down exactly.
- The nature of the allegation. dates, times and other specific factors or relevant information should be included.
- Questions should be asked to find out whether what the child is telling is real (experience) or imaginary or hearsay.
- If the child has any visible physical injuries or bruising, these should be indicated on the body map on page 2 of the form in Annex 1.

The person who wrote the report should submit the report/ Child Protection Report Form to the Child

Protection Team. The person who writes the report strictly complies with the following rules;

- They do not take photographs of the child or examine the child's body.
- It does not investigate the disclosure or allegation and submits the report to the child protection team.
- It does not promise the child the outcome.
- Does not speculate or blame anyone for what the child has shared/explained.
- They record and write down what is said without comment.
- Forwards the information to the right person in the child protection team.

The person writing the report does not promise to keep anything confidential. They reassure the child that the information will only be shared with those who are responsible for keeping children safe at school.

5.6 Notification by the Employee

If a member of staff at the institution observes or suspects something that seems wrong, they write it down on the Child Protection Notification Form and submit it to the child protection commissioner.

- Adds information about the observed behavior change to the form.
- In his/her report, he/she indicates whether he/she is expressing his/her own concerns or someone else's concerns.

After Reporting

In all cases, all processes and follow-up activities are carried out by the Child Protection Team to ensure that information is properly documented and strict confidentiality is maintained.

The Child Protection Manager (CPM) takes the first steps to collect data on the information received and cross-reference it with other information, they inform the Director General about the process. The school doctor, who is part of the Child Protection Team, is involved depending on the scope of the case.

After reporting, the following procedure is followed.

1. Records are taken about the people in the information form.
2. Staff or children are interviewed as appropriate.
 - a. The interview process for children is conducted by the school psychological counselor.
 - b. Depending on the age of the child, knowledge is acquired by drawing pictures, using figures techniques such as dramatization can be used.
 - c. Classroom observations are made by the child's teacher, counselor or, if appropriate, the relevant deputy principal.
3. Based on the information gathered, the commission draws a roadmap and decides on follow-up actions.

Actions include:

- In-school counseling,
- Meetings with parents to communicate concerns of the school,
- Developing an action plan with family(s),
- Referral of the child and family to an external specialist,
- Seeking legal advice through the school lawyer or others,
- Support for the child's teacher or referrer, if necessary,
- In line with the advice given by the school lawyer, legal procedures are followed and the police are informed.

6. RECORD KEEPING

6.1. Central Registration System

The Child Protection Team keeps a record of all data to safeguard children with the knowledge of the school principal.

The contents of this recording;

1. MEF Schools safe recruitment practices, (Reference checks and criminal record request and due diligence regarding police checks)
2. A record of all Child Protection trainings received by all staff working in the organization,
3. A record of all notes, referrals made and actions taken with any child,
4. Keeps a record of all notes related to any personnel about whom there is a suspicion or complaint, records the referrals made and the action plan taken.

All records are stored in a fireproof safe. They are added to the school files of all students with child protection concerns.

7. CHILD PROTECTION AND WORKERS

7.1 Safe Recruitment

MEF Schools makes every effort to apply the highest standards of selection, recruitment and verification in recruitment practices to ensure the safety of children.

Before a job offer is made, the manager conducts reference checks on the person to be recruited. Two written and two telephone reference checks are carried out, including specific questions on Child Protection. See the "MEF Safe Recruitment Procedure" for more details. Annex 4 shows the questions.

All staff will undergo a criminal check before starting work. A criminal check will be requested for each country where an employee resides or works. A criminal record check from Turkey will then be requested annually for all employees.

7.2 Employee Code of Conduct

All staff will sign and abide by a code of conduct confirming their understanding and commitment to Child Protection (Annex 5).

All staff will carry an ID card (teachers and administrative staff) or wear the MEF uniform (housekeeping, cafeteria or other staff).

7.3 Positive Touch and Restrictive Physical Intervention

At MEF, it is believed that students need to be safe, know how to behave and know that the adults around them can manage them safely and confidently. Teachers treat children lovingly, but apply clear and supportive boundaries. In exceptional circumstances restrictive physical intervention may be required and in such cases acceptable forms of intervention are used. More information can be found in Annex 6.

7.4 Staff Training

All staff receive child protection training at the beginning of each year. This can be face-to-face or an online course. Participation in the training is recorded in the Central Registration System. No staff member's training is interrupted for more than 24 months. Care is therefore taken to ensure that staff do not miss relevant training due to illness, maternity or other leave.

The Child Protection Policy is shared and discussed at the beginning of each academic year during the Teacher Orientation Session. The revision committee is updated. The scope of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is included as part of this discussion. In face-to-face meetings, it is ensured that the relevant procedure is reviewed and reporting systems are clear to all staff. Teachers will also attend Annex 6 of this document which discusses the use of Positive Touch and Restrictive Physical Intervention.

7.5 Allegations against Personnel

Any concerns about the staff member are taken directly by the Head of School, bypassing the CCT. The Principal conducts the investigation process in coordination with the Deputy Director General.

Regardless of the outcome, records of investigations or allegations against any staff member are recorded in the Central Records System and kept in the employee's confidential folder in the Human Resources office.

If a staff member is reported as an alleged perpetrator, MEF School will conduct a full investigation. The employee will be asked to take paid leave during the investigation. Any serious misconduct will result in immediate termination of employment. The incident will be reported to the police in Turkey and in the teacher's home country, as well as to external recruitment agencies.

8. VISITORS

All visitors at MEF Schools:

1. They are registered when entering the campus through the security gate with their ID card.
2. They get an identity card to be worn at all times
3. They sign safe codes of conduct
 - a. They do not take pictures of children other than their own,
 - b. They can only use adult restrooms,
 - c. They wear an identity card,
 - d. Visitors are always accompanied by a staff member on campus.
 - e. Parents register their cars to enter the parking lot. A vehicle sticker for each registered car is given to the parent by the school.

8.1. External Suppliers and Employees

In addition to the above, suppliers cannot be left alone in an area where there may be students.

9. STUDENT TRAINING

At MEF Schools, students are informed and trained about the Rights of the Child. The Guidance and Psychological Counseling Department takes the responsibility to dedicate time each year to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child through guidance classes or classroom counseling classes. Activities and learning opportunities will explore students' rights, giving them a good understanding of their rights and what to do when there is a problem. The content of activities is modified to be language, age and developmentally appropriate. Students discuss what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior and what to do when they feel something is not right.

10. SHARING POLICY

MEF Schools communicates this policy annually to all teachers and the community. It is available on the school website and Google Drive so that the community and all staff can access it at any time.

MEF Schools protects children by not sharing information such as children's names, locations, photos or case studies or publishing information online without the informed consent of parents. Parents have the right to refuse, in which case students are placed on a "no-photo list".

Show the Injuries You Observe





Appendix 3

MEF SCHOOLS CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFETY

At MEF Schools we understand that schools play a vital role in a child's life and we recognize that we have a shared responsibility to protect and safeguard their physical and emotional wellbeing. It is therefore a crucial requirement that we are informed about child protection issues that arise during each student's time at their previous school. We would therefore be grateful if you, as Head of School/Child Protection Manager, could complete and return this form to us regarding the following student joining MEF Schools.

Child's name

Previous school:

Does this child/young person have child protection issues? Yes / No

IMPORTANT: If your answer is yes,

Please contact him by email or school phone.

Please report to the Director of Child Protection ...provide more details. Any special concerns if any, so that we can make sure you have the appropriate support. these we are happy to discuss.

If you answered no, please sign and send this form by email to the child protection manager.

Name:

Location:

History:

All information provided will be held in the strictest confidence.

Appendix 4

TELEPHONE REFERENCE CHECK FOR NEW RECRUITMENT

Can you please share the strengths and challenges of this teacher? Can you tell us a bit about the teacher's performance in the classroom? Teaching style?

Can you tell us about this teacher's relationships with students, teachers, parents and leadership?

Do you have any reservations about this candidate working unsupervised with children?

How does this person contribute to society? How do they affect school morale?

Does the candidate meet deadlines, punctuality, etc.?

Is this candidate open to feedback?

Is there anything else you would like to share with me?

Appendix 5

RULES OF BEHAVIOR THAT MEF SCHOOLS EMPLOYEES MUST COMPLY WITH

The code of conduct stated herein is read and signed by all MEF Schools employees and all employees comply with these rules.

Definition of Child: For the purpose of this document, the definition of a "child" under **the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child** is "**anyone under the age of 18**". Any student at MEF Schools over the age of 18 will continue to be included within this definition.

MEF Schools employees never;

- Does not hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children,
- Does not develop physical/sexual relationships with children,
- They do not develop relationships with children that could be considered emotionally exploitative or abusive in any way,
- Does not behave in a way that could be abusive or put the child at risk of abuse,
- Does not use inappropriate language, make suggestions or give inappropriate, offensive or abusive advice,
- Does not behave in a physically inappropriate or sexually provocative manner,
- Do not take the child or children with whom they conduct academic studies home for overnight stays (except for the children of both MEF teachers and their parents)
- He/she does not spend time alone with children away from others,
- During the Gezi protests, employees do not take children to their own homes or places where they will be alone,
- They do not share the same bed with the child or children with whom they conduct academic studies,
- It does not do for children of a personal nature what they can do for themselves,
- Does not participate in or condone children's illegal, dangerous or abusive behavior,
- Does not act or communicate in ways intended to embarrass, humiliate or commit any form of emotional abuse of children,
- It does not discriminate, treat differently or encourage the exclusion of certain children,
- Does not use or share photos or any other information about children on personal social media accounts,
- Does not verbally harass the student,
- Does not drink alcohol at school events where there is student participation.

This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. The main principle here is to emphasize that employees should avoid actions or behaviors that may constitute malpractice or potentially malicious behavior.

All MEF employees and anyone in contact with children,

- Recognize and manage situations that may pose risks,
- Plans and organizes the work and workplace to minimize risks,
- When working with children, he/she makes his/her work as visible as possible,
- Ensures that a culture of open communication exists to ensure that any issues or concerns can be raised and discussed,
- It makes sure that there is a sense of responsibility among employees so that malpractice or potentially malicious behavior does not go unchallenged,
- Talks to children, staff or others about their contact and enables them to raise concerns,
- Empowers children - discussing with them their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable and what they can do if there is a problem.

I agree to abide by the above code of conduct. I understand that violations of this code of conduct may lead to immediate termination of my employment contract.

Signature :

Date:

Name Surname:

Appendix 6

Positive Touch and the Use of Restrictive Physical Intervention

1. Introduction

At MEF, students need to be safe, know how to behave and know that the adults around them can manage them in a safe and confident way.

Teachers treat children with love but keep clear and supportive boundaries.

In exceptional circumstances, restrictive physical intervention may be required and in such cases acceptable forms of intervention will be used.

2. Acceptable forms of intervention/touch

Staff have some reasons to have physical contact with students:

- Comforting a child in distress,
- Gently guiding a child,
- For curricular reasons, e.g. physical education and drama
- In an emergency to prevent danger
- In rare cases where Restrictive Physical Intervention is warranted

When physical contact occurs, staff should consider the following;

- Age and comprehension level of the student
- Individual characteristics and background of the student
- Place of contact

3. Definition of 'restrictive physical intervention'

Restrictive Physical Intervention is used to prevent a child from doing or continuing to do any of the following.

- If he/she is likely to injure himself/herself or others,
- If there is a situation that causes damage to school property
- Engaging in prejudiced behaviors to ensure order and discipline at school
- In case of juvenile delinquency

'Restrictive Physical Interventions' are interventions in which bodily contact using force is used. The use of force can only be considered reasonable if the circumstances of the incident warrant it. The degree of force must be proportionate to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behavior or consequences intended to be prevented.

4. When the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention is appropriate.

Restrictive Physical Interventions will only be used when all other strategies have failed. Sometimes physical management may be necessary in cases of clear danger or extreme urgency. Some students may also become distressed, agitated and out of control and may need to be calmed down with a brief Restrictive Physical Intervention. The safety and welfare of all students and staff is an important consideration and the school's duty of care must be a paramount factor.

5. Who can use restrictive physical intervention?

All staff have a responsibility to ensure the safety of children. In an emergency situation all staff should do whatever they feel is necessary in the situation they encounter. If they believe they will encounter the behavior again, they will be trained in Restrictive Physical Intervention as part of the school's duty of care.

6. Use of Restrictive Physical Intervention

Staff will use the minimum force necessary to restore safety and appropriate behavior. The following principles are adhered to;

- Restrictive Physical Intervention is an act of care and control, not punishment.
- It is never used to force staff to follow instructions.
- Only when the staff member believes that immediate action is necessary in the best interests of the student/other student.
- Staff will take steps in advance to prevent the need for Restrictive Physical Intervention through dialogue and distraction at the level of understanding the child.
- Only the minimum force necessary to prevent severe distress, injury or damage will be used. Staff will be able to demonstrate that the intervention used is appropriate to the incident.
- Every effort will be made to ensure the presence of other personnel, who may act as assistants and/or witnesses.
- As soon as a student regains control, any intervention will be relaxed.
- Escalation will be avoided at all costs.
- The student's age and level of understanding will always be taken into account.
- The circumstances of an individual student will be taken into account and reference will be made to any Behaviour Plan in place and in the case of students, Individualized Education Plans will be supported to safeguard the emotional well-being of all concerned following any incident.