



Safeguarding Children – Policy & Procedures

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PART ONE – SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1.1 Mission Statement & Vision

- a) At BISS we strive to be a place where pupils, staff, helpers, families and other visitors will be made welcome and comfortable, and where we will treat each other with respect.
- b) We believe that all children and young people have the right to protection from neglect and abuse, and that their welfare is of paramount importance. BISS is based at Dorothy Stringer School, and together we share the belief that school is a place where learning and personal development takes place in a climate of trust and confidence, and where we value everyone's unique contribution to our community.
- c) Everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and for ensuring that they are protected from harm.
- d) All staff working in or in partnership with our school have a duty of care to ensure that children are safe and protected, and we all have a duty of care to ensure that if there are any concerns relating to the welfare or safety of a child, the local and national child safeguarding procedures are followed.
- e) We will always try to work in partnership with families but in any conflict between the needs of the child or young person and those of parents/carers or professionals, the needs of the young person must come first.
- f) We are committed to safe recruitment and selection procedures to ensure that all staff and host families (also referred to as homestay providers) have been appropriately screened prior to appointment.
- g) We are committed to the provision of appropriate child safeguarding training through our staff induction programme and within continuing professional development opportunities. We are also committed to offer appropriate child safeguarding awareness training, including making this policy known and accessible via our website (or by email or via hard copy on request) to all adults who care for our students through their role or through partnership work with our organisation, including:
 - i. Teachers, office staff and activity leaders employed by BISS
 - ii. Transport subcontractors contracted by BISS
 - iii. Lead responsible adult in each host family (the homestay provider)
 - iv. Overseas teachers and leaders accompanying the students

1.2 Context

- a) In England the law states the people who work with children have to keep them safe.
- b) This safeguarding legislation is set out in the Children's Act (1989) and (2004) and in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

- c) It also features in the United Nations convention on the Rights of the Child (to which the UK is a signatory), which sets out the rights of children to be free from abuse. The Government also provides guidance in the document Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013.

1.3 Significant Harm

- a) The concept of Significant Harm introduced in the Children's Act 1989 is the threshold by which compulsory intervention by Children's Services may take place.
- b) Harm means the ill treatment or the impairment of health or development.
- c) Development means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.
- d) Health means physical or mental health; and ill treatment includes sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment which are not physical.
- e) Child or children refers to young people under the age of 18.

1.4 BISS Designated Person(s) For Child Safeguarding

- a) All schools have to have a senior member of staff with responsibility for implementing the Safeguarding Children Policy.
- b) At BISS, the current designated member(s) of staff with child safeguarding responsibility are:

Marilena Ward and Inger Sanders

- c) They are both contactable:
 - **during office hours on (+44) 1273 85225**
 - **out of office hours via the emergency contact phone (+44) 7881097021**
- d) As designated staff for child safeguarding, they will undertake regular child safeguarding training and will make sure that all BISS staff and lead adults in host families know how to recognise and report any concerns or indications that a child is or has been neglected or abused.
- e) They will make any necessary contact with the appropriate safeguarding team or the police, make sure the rest of BISS follows the BISS Safeguarding Children Procedures (within this document) and contributes fully to the child protection process.
- f) They are also responsible for providing basic Safeguarding Awareness training to staff and host family lead contacts, and keeping a central record of safeguarding training. Information about training is available on request.

1.5 Categories of Abuse

- a) Through their day-to-day contact with children, BISS staff and adult leads in host families have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect, and referring those concerns to the BISS Designated Persons for

Safeguarding who will in turn notify, as/if appropriate investigative agencies (e.g. Children's Services or Police). Evidence of abuse can include any one or more than one of the following:

- b) *Physical Abuse*: non-accidental injuries, bruising, wounding, burns and fractures. Indicators may include:
 - Obvious signs of injury
 - Injuries that are unusual or unexplained
 - Injuries which while explained are frequent
- c) *Neglect*: the chronic inattention to basic needs. Indicators may include:
 - Dirty, unkempt appearance
 - Developmental delay
 - Low self esteem
 - Hunger
- d) *Sexual Abuse*: the involvement of children or young people in sexual activity. This includes the abuse of a position of trust by an adult with professional responsibility to a child. Indicators may include:
 - Physical difficulties such as wetting or soiling
 - Extreme variations in behaviour
 - Sexualised language or behaviour
 - Indirect disclosure through play, drawing or written work
- e) *Emotional Abuse*: persistent emotional ill treatment such as the denial of love, affection or approval, bullying, harassment, verbal abuse, threatened physical abuse or behaviour that may lead to extremist radicalisation. Indicators may include:
 - Low self-esteem, unhappiness, fear, distress, anxiety
 - Attention seeking or extreme anti-social or radical behaviours
 - Emotional developmental delay
- f) Staff at BISS will be trained to recognise and respond to the categories and potential indicators of abuse.

PART TWO – PROCEDURES: ACTION TO BE TAKEN IF ABUSE IS SUSPECTED OR DISCLOSED

2.1 Action to be Taken if Abuse is Suspected

- a) Sometimes concerns that a child or young person is suffering or is likely to be suffering some sort of abuse will build up slowly over time. At other times, concerns will occur as a response to a child presenting an injury or a mark, or talking about a worrying issue.
- b) All concerns should be logged on the attached BISS Child Welfare Concern Record Form and should be immediately referred to the BISS designated person(s):

Marilena Ward and Inger Sanders

- c) They are both contactable:
 - **during office hours on (+44) 1273 85225**

- **out of office hours via the emergency contact phone (+44) 7881097021**
- d) The BISS designated person(s) will provide support and guidance, and, if appropriate or necessary, will make a referral to Brighton & Hove Children's Services safeguarding team or to the Police.

2.2 How to Deal With Disclosures of Abuse from Children

- a) Sometimes children and young people who are suffering abuse choose a trusted adult to tell.
- b) If a child discloses abuse, whether this is in school, during an activity or in the homestay house, the person hearing the disclosure should:
 - i. Listen, allowing the child to recall freely
 - ii. Reassure the child they are believed
 - iii. Make notes as soon as possible recording as accurately as possible the words used by the child (use the attached BISS Welfare Concern Form or transfer your notes to the form as soon as possible).
 - iv. Be clear with the child that the information will have to be passed on to people who will be able to help
 - v. **DO NOT ASK THE CHILD QUESTIONS.** This is the role of specially trained social workers and police officers. Others posing questions to the child could contaminate potential evidence of a crime.
 - vi. If the disclosure is from or concerning a BISS student refer immediately to BISS's Designated Person(s), who will contact the Children's Services or the Police if necessary.

OR

If the child is in immediate risk of severe harm or physical danger call the relevant Emergency Services first and then contact BISS's Designated Person.

 - vii. Keep the Welfare Concern Form secure and confidential, and give it to the BISS Designated Person as soon as possible.
 - viii. Do not communicate details to anyone other than BISS's Designated Person or Emergency/Children's Services.
 - ix. Do not post any comments relating to the allegation on social media.
 - x. BISS's Designated Person will notify parents/carers and BISS's Principal as applicable.

2.3 Allegations of Abuse Made Against Staff

- a) We believe that all members of the school community are entitled to care and protection from harm. We will not accept inappropriate behaviour towards students, staff or individuals with whom we work in partnership with, and we will ensure that any concerns or allegations of impropriety are dealt with quickly, fairly and sensitively.
- b) Any staff or adults working in partnership with BISS who disclose information regarding inappropriate behaviour, by colleagues or other adults, will be listened to and supported.
- c) If an adult makes an allegation of abuse concerning another adult, the person hearing the disclosure should:

- i. Listen, allowing the individual to recall freely
 - ii. Make notes as soon as possible recording as accurately as possible the words used by the individual (use the attached Welfare Concern Form or transfer your notes to the form as soon as possible).
 - iii. Be clear with the individual that the information will have to be passed on to professionals who will be able to help
 - iv. **DO NOT ASK LEADING QUESTIONS.** This is the role of specially trained social workers and police officers.
 - v. If the disclosure concerns a BISS student refer immediately to BISS's Designated Person(s) for Safeguarding, who will contact the Children's Services and/or Police if necessary.
OR
If someone is in immediate risk of severe harm or physical danger call the Emergency Services first and then contact BISS's Designated Person(s).
 - vi. Keep the Welfare Concern Form secure and confidential, and give it to the BISS Designated Person as soon as possible.
 - vii. Do not communicate details to anyone other than BISS's Designated Person or Emergency/Children's Services.
 - viii. Do not post any comments relating to the allegation on social media.
 - ix. BISS's Designated Person will notify parents/carers and the Principal as applicable.
- d) In the event that an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff or other adult working in partnership with BISS, the Principal will seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer and will agree procedure to be followed.
- e) Parents or carers of a child allegedly abused by member of staff or other adult in the school, or an adult working in partnership with the school will be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation.
- f) Any member of BISS staff facing investigation into an allegation of abuse will be subject to procedures laid down by the local Children's Services safeguarding team and will be kept informed as appropriate.

PART THREE – GENERAL SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

3.1 Information Sharing

- a) At BISS we share information with parents or partner agencies in order to:
- i. Support early intervention to help children, young people and families who need additional services to achieve positive outcomes.
 - ii. Ensure we fulfil our duty to safeguard children and promote their welfare.
- b) The Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information but it is in place to ensure that personal information is shared appropriately. At BISS we follow the guidance below to share information professionally and lawfully:
- i. Explain openly and honestly to parents/carers or to agents/accompanying teachers at the outset what information will or could be shared and why, and

- seek agreement, except when doing so puts the child or others at risk of significant harm.
 - ii. The child's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration when making decisions on whether to share information about them.
 - iii. Ensure information is accurate, up to date and necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it: share only with those who need it and share it securely.
 - iv. Respect the wishes of children or families who do not consent to share confidential information, unless in your judgment there is sufficient need to override that lack of consent.
 - v. Seek advice when in doubt.
 - vi. Always record the reason for your decision whether it is to share or not to share information.
- c) At BISS, the decision to share information when there are child safeguarding concerns will be made by the BISS Designated Person(s) for Safeguarding.

3.2 Record Keeping

- a) The Data Protection Act state that personal information held by agencies must be obtained and processed fairly and lawfully and stored securely. It must be accurate and proportionate to the purpose, not held longer than necessary and may only be disclosed in appropriate circumstances.
- b) Record keeping is an important aspect of BISS school life. BISS staff keep records on areas of pupil welfare and attainment.
- c) Where concerns arise about the safety or wellbeing of a student, or there are indications that the child may be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, staff will record:
 - i. The reason for the concern
 - ii. What was said or witnessed and details of any other person present
 - iii. Dates and times of incidents and when the notes were made
 - iv. Date, time and outcome of any discussion with the parent or carer
 - v. Date, time and outcome of any discussion with the head teacher/ principal, Children's Services staff or other relevant professionals consulted.
- d) Staff will use the BISS Child Welfare Concern Record Form (see Appendix), and will be careful to distinguish between fact opinion and hearsay. Notes will be passed to BISS's Designated Person(s) for Safeguarding, who will keep all welfare concerns and child safeguarding records in a locked cabinet.
- e) These records form evidence and may be used in the child protection referral and any subsequent investigation or legal proceedings. They are exempt from open file regulations and do not have to be made available to parents or carers requesting access to the student's file.
- f) However, unless to do so would put a child at significant risk, parents and carers may see these forms. Good practice and partnership working dictates that if anything is significant enough to be recorded it should be discussed with parents or carers, unless this increases risks for the child or damages the potential for the collection of evidence.
- g) Any welfare or child protection records held by BISS will be passed on to the child's next school or their home country school, if the designated person

believes they still constitute a concern. If a referral has taken place in this country, the appropriate local Children's Services team will hold any formal records of child protector meetings and they will take responsibility for the appropriate storage of these records.

3.3 Safeguarding Training for BISS Staff and Key Partner Adults

- a) All members of BISS staff will receive Safeguarding Children training as part of their induction. The BISS Designated Person for Safeguarding Children will monitor and update this training every three years.
- b) BISS host families (homestay providers) will be offered Safeguarding Children training which at least one named, responsible adult per family should undertake.
- c) All BISS staff and key partner staff (including the named/responsible adult in each host family, the overseas agent and accompanying leaders or teachers from overseas schools or other agencies) will be informed of their responsibility to safeguard children and the name and contact details of the BISS Designated Person(s) for Safeguarding.
- d) The BISS Designated Person(s) will undertake more advanced, designated persons' training on Safeguarding Children. They will also undertake regular refresher courses as required, and every three years as a minimum.

3.4 Confidentiality

- a) All members of BISS staff and their partners are entitled to privacy. In general, confidential information about students, families or others within the school community should be kept confidential and privacy respected.
- b) Where there are concerns that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, information must be shared with the BISS Designated Person(s) for Safeguarding in the first instance, and may subsequently be shared with the Brighton & Hove Children's Services safeguarding team or the Police.
- c) Where BISS staff or other adults working in partnership with BISS have concerns, either due to what they have seen or heard, or in relation to a direct disclosure by a child, they cannot keep that information confidential, and the child must not be given false guarantees that this is possible. It must be shared with the BISS Designated Person(s) in the interests of safeguarding that child.
- d) Other BISS staff, partner teachers or agents, or the lead responsible host family member may need to be alerted to concerns about a child or young person, possibly in order to monitor the concern, or to gather further evidence prior to a referral being made, or to assist in providing appropriate support to a child or young person after a referral as been made.
- e) Information should only be shared on a strict need to know basis.

3.5 Working with Outside Agencies

- a) BISS recognises the authority of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and we are also committed to working in partnership with Dorothy Stringer School's

safeguarding team, the British Council, Brighton & Hove City Council's Children Services safeguarding team and the Police.

- b) We are happy to comply with procedures prescribed or recommended by Dorothy Stringer School, Brighton & Hove City Council, the British Council, and the Pan Sussex child safeguarding procedures, and to be proactive in working together to safeguard children.
- c) Any incident requiring advice from or referral to safeguarding teams, and which is arising outside of normal hours must be referred directly to the BISS emergency/out of house contact. If the emergency contact is not the BISS Designated Person for Safeguarding, he or she must immediately notify the BISS Designated Person(s) for Safeguarding. If a child is in immediate or grave danger, the Emergency Services must be notified FIRST and then the BISS Designated Person for safeguarding must also alerted as soon as possible.

3.6 Recruitment of Staff

- a) The BISS management team will ensure that its staff recruitment and selection policy is in keeping with British Council and national and local Safeguarding Children directives or recommendations, and that it fulfils the requirements of the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).
- b) Recruitment will be robust in:
 - i. Requesting two references be submitted before interview
 - ii. Following up at least two references in writing before appointment
 - iii. Verifying and recording DBS checks
 - iv. Verifying and recording checks on qualifications (as appropriate)
 - v. Checking any career gaps
 - vi. Underlining BISS's commitment to Safeguarding Children in any recruitment adverts, application forms and letters.
- c) At least one member of the selection or recruitment team will have undertaken appropriate training to ensure that interviews to appoint staff reflect the importance of safeguarding children.

3.7 Induction

- a) All BISS staff, and all key/lead partnership staff and key/lead responsible adult in each host family will be given induction information and training around this policy.
- b) All Dorothy Stringer School staff are given inductions and training about the Dorothy Stringer School Safeguarding Children policy, copies of which are available on request.

3.8 ID Badges

- a) BISS is located at Dorothy Stringer School, a large, state secondary school.
- b) Strict rules apply for the safety and welfare of all students and staff on campus:
 - i. BISS students and accompanying overseas leaders or teachers are given a BISS ID badge and lanyard on their first day at school. This must always be

- worn whilst in school or activity programmes and must clearly visible over clothes.
- ii. BISS staff - must provide a photo of themselves on appointment for their personal ID badge. This must always be worn at school and on activity programmes and must be clearly visible over clothes.
 - iii. Any adult seen on school premises without a visible ID badge will be approached, questioned and reported to the Principal. Unidentified adults will be asked to leave the premises.
 - iv. If an ID badge is forgotten the individual concerned must immediately report to Dorothy Stringer School Reception to ask for a Visitors Badge or the BISS Office to ask for a replacement badge.
- c) Repeated failure to wear an ID badge by either staff or students may result in disciplinary action being taken.

3.9 Vulnerable Children and Additional Needs

- a) BISS recognises that for a number of reasons, children for whom English is an additional language may more vulnerable to abuse or may be less able to tell people about abuse happening to them.
- b) For these reasons it is essential that rigorous Child Safeguarding procedures are in place, especially with regard to recruitment and checks on staff and adults with whom we work in partnership.
- c) We believe it is essential that BISS staff and adults working in partnership with BISS have clear guidelines setting out acceptable and recommended behaviour working with for whom English is an additional language.
- d) We also believe it is important to set out behaviour guidelines for the children themselves (see the BISS Student Behaviour Policy within the Student Information Leaflet, copies available on request).
- e) To ensure safety and wellbeing, and so that every child and young person gains the maximum benefit from the course and their stay in England, we strongly recommend that every participant already has a basic competent level of English in speaking, listening, reading and writing.
- f) Regarding children with additional needs (learning, emotional or physical) parents, teachers or agents must discuss these with our staff prior to booking.

3.10 Students Safety at School and in the Host Family

- a) Whilst students are in the school, BISS and its staff are responsible for their welfare. All staff are checked to meet Safeguarding requirements and activities risk assessed to meet Health and Safety requirements.
- b) Whilst students are in their host family home, the named lead adult of each family is responsible for the students' welfare. Host families are visited prior to the allocation of any students, and checked for suitability. In case of concerns or emergencies – they must contact the BISS Designated Person in charge of Safeguarding and/or the BISS 24 hour out of office hours emergency contact.
- c) Host families should undertake to:

- i. A valid enhanced DBS check for at least one lead, named responsible adult in the house;
- ii. Basic Child Safeguarding Awareness training (available on line, details on request).
- iii. Have a valid landlord's Gas Safety Check certificate (renewable annually);
- iv. Issue each student/ pair of students with a key during their stay;
- v. Show students on arrival the safe exit routes from their room/the house in case of fire or other emergency.

3.11 BISS Organised Trips and Activities Away from School or the Host Family

- a) BISS believes that educational trips, excursions and activities outside of the school enhance the learning experience available to our students.
- b) In order to ensure that children are kept safe when taking trips outside of the school and the host family, we will ensure that we:
 - i. Undertake risk assessments for each activity.
 - ii. Have adequate supervision on all organised activities (1 member of staff for every 15-20 students).
 - iii. Inform students about expected behaviour and school rules (Student Behaviour Policy – copies on request).
 - iv. Obtain written consent from individual parents of students travelling as individuals (not as part of an organised group) confirming that they allow their child to go out unsupervised in pairs/small groups during designated free time periods (see BISS Parental Consent Form for Individual Students, copies available on request).
 - v. Ask agents, schools or parents (as applicable) to advise us about any special needs or requirements for their students /child well in advance; if these are significant they must be discussed with us prior to booking.
 - vi. Ensure key staff are trained in Emergency First Aid and carry suitable equipment.
- c) Please note that students are expected to return to their host families after BISS organised activities on their own, and are not supervised during this period.

3.12 Free Time – All Students

- a) Standard BISS programmes are carefully planned with the welfare, safety and enjoyment of our young students in mind. They comprise a full day of lessons and /or activities and excursions from Monday to Saturday. On Sundays and in the evenings students will be spending some time with their homestay hosts, and they may wish to also spend some free time with their friends.
- b) We have strict rules around this, which are explained in our Welcome & Induction session and in the Student Handbook booklet given to each student (copies available on request).
- c) BISS school rules for students stipulate amongst other items that:
 - i. the student curfew time is 22.00, by which all students must be back in their host family;
 - ii. students must return home in the early evening to eat dinner with their family or must notify their family in advance if eating out with their group.
- d) Breaking or repeatedly disregarding these rules will lead to serious sanctions, including being asked to leave the course and return to their home country.

- e) BISS does not provide 24 hour supervision outside of scheduled activities and lessons. BISS does not directly supervise students during free time or time spent with their host family.

3.13 Free Time – Students With A Group

- a) If a student is attending our programmes as part of a group organised by leaders from his/her home country or home school, then the accompanying teachers or group leaders are responsible for the students during any non timetabled free time (outside of BISS school lessons, BISS school organised events and trips and time with the host family). The accompanying teachers are attending our programme in a supervisory capacity, and supervising students from their own group falls under their duty of care.
- b) All students and their group leaders have BISS's 24 emergency contact phone number they can call for additional help or advice if needed.

3.14 Free Time – Individual Students

- a) If a student is an individual whose parents have booked their programme directly with BISS (i.e. who is not travelling as part of an organised group) then BISS is responsible for that student during any free time (outside of BISS school lessons, BISS school organised events and trips and time with the host family). However, we require parents of all individual students to complete and return the BISS Parental Consent Form (copies on request) specifying if they give permission for their child to go out on their own/with friends during free time.
- b) All individual students have BISS's 24 emergency contact phone number they can call for help or advice whenever needed.

3.15 Transport

- a) BISS uses SP Transport for its airport transfer service. All drivers employed by SP have undergone and passed enhanced DBS checks.
- b) From time to time we may also use taxi services for short trips or individuals. We use Brighton and Hove Radio Cabs whose drivers are licensed by Brighton & Hove Council and who have undergone and passed enhanced DBS checks.
- c) Students are brought to school on their first morning by their host family. During their induction, BISS staff will ensure all students know how to get to their home stay addresses. From then on students will be expected to travel between school and homestay unsupervised.

3.16 Other Adults Working In and Around School

- a) BISS is based at Dorothy Stringer School, which is a state school and subject to stringent checks and regulations under English Law.
- b) All Dorothy Stringer staff are DBS checked and receive safeguarding children training.

- c) In addition Dorothy Stringer School employs additional staff or contractors to carry out cleaning, catering, building or maintenance work on the site. Dorothy Stringer School is responsible for and carries out all applicable reference and safety checks with the subcontractors prior to employment, and issues them all with the necessary child safeguarding information, including their expected conduct whilst on site.

3.17 Photography or Filming Images of Children

- a) BISS believes that images of children are an important record of school life and achievements.
- b) We have a Photography or Filming Images of Children Policy and Procedure, which is reinforced to all staff and partner adults and agents.
- c) This procedure is regularly reviewed together with guidance on Safeguarding Children. Copies of this policy are available on request.

3.18 Other Related BISS Policies

- a) BISS will develop and review all its policies and procedures with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our students.
- b) We will take into account the principles outlined in this policy, and ensure that all our other policies and procedures support the safeguarding of children, protecting them from harm and neglect, in particular through:
 - i. **BISS Staff Recruitment Policy and Procedure** – to ensure suitable staff are appointed
 - ii. **BISS Student Handbook** – to ensure appropriate rules and boundaries are in place to keep children safe and happy, and be clear about sanctions that apply.
 - iii. **BISS Code of Conduct Guidelines Policy** – for staff and homestay providers.
 - iv. **BISS Electronic Contact with Students Under 18 and Internet Policy**
- c) Further details of BISS policies and procedures are available on request.

BISS Child Welfare Concern Record Form

Full Name of Child:			
Date of Birth:		Group/ Nationality:	
Reason for concern:			
What was said:			
What was witnessed:			
Details of other person present:			
Dates and times of incident(s):			
Notes made by (name):		Date /Time:	

Further Discussions With parent or carer:	Details of Decisions, Reasons and Outcomes		
Date and time:			

Further Discussion With head teacher/ principal:	Details of Decisions, Reasons and Outcomes		
Date and time:			

Further Discussion With Children's Services or other relevant professionals (describe):	Details of Decisions, Reasons and Outcomes		
Date and time:			

Form to be completed and passed to the BISS Designated Person for safeguarding as soon as possible, and to be kept in a locked cabinet at all times.

BISS is committed to Safeguarding Children.