

# European Azerbaijan School



## Child Protection Policy

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## **Mission**

The European Azerbaijan School provides each student with a diverse and vibrant education in a compassionate and supportive environment which promotes respect, innovation, creativity, intercultural understanding and critical thinking. This enables students to become reflective and respectful international citizens who, as empowered lifelong learners, can flourish globally and contribute fully and meaningfully to their community and create a more peaceful and inclusive society.

## **Policy Aims**

To ensure that all members of the EAS community help keep children and young people safe by:

- contributing to the provision of safe learning environments for children and young people
- taking appropriate actions with the aim of making sure they are kept safe at school
- identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm
- communicating to the school and wider community our commitment to safeguarding children

## **Scope of the Policy**

This policy applies to all members of the EAS community all staff, students, parents, and visitors to the school.

## **Policy Statement**

The European Azerbaijan School endorses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), of which our host country, Azerbaijan, is a signatory. Schools fill a special institutional role in society as protectors of children. Schools need to ensure that all children in their care are afforded a safe and secure environment in which to grow and develop, both at school and away. Educators, having the opportunity to observe and interact with children over time, are in a unique position to identify children who need help and protection.

As such, educators have a professional and ethical obligation to identify children who need help and protection, and to take steps to ensure that the child and family avail themselves of the services needed to remedy any situation that constitutes child abuse or neglect. All staff employed at EAS must report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect whenever the staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered, or is at significant risk of suffering abuse or neglect.

Reporting and follow up of all suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect will proceed in accordance with administrative regulations respective to this policy. Furthermore, cases of suspected child abuse or neglect may be reported to the appropriate child protection agency in the home country, and/or to local authorities. EAS seeks to be a safe haven for students who may be experiencing abuse or neglect in any aspect of their lives.

# European Azerbaijan School

## **Bullying**

All pupils and parents receive a copy of the anti-bullying procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum.

## **E-Safety**

The school's e-safety policy explains how we try to keep children safe in school. Cyber bullying by children, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. Chat rooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behavior and children are not allowed to access these sites whilst in school.

## **Photography and Images**

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so, we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place.

To protect children, we will:

- seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- seek parental consent use only the child's first name with an image
- ensure that children are appropriately dressed
- encourage children to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

## **Wellbeing Team**

The well-being teams in both the primary and secondary schools are responsible for the ongoing proactive support for and monitoring of wellbeing in the school.

## **Parent/Community Awareness**

It is vital that the school's commitment to the highest possible standards of safeguarding and child protection for all students is communicated clearly to the variety of stakeholders who come into contact with the school.

- School safety goals and objectives are communicated regularly to all parents.
- Child Protection Policy and Procedures are available on request.
- The school's commitment to child protection is stated clearly on the school's marketing and communications materials
- New families receive specific information regarding the school's policies and procedures as part of the 'New Parent Orientation'.
- Guidance and resources on student safety issues and how parents can talk with their children are available from the counselor

## **Staff Recruitment**

The school is committed to maintaining procedures to ensure the safe recruitment and selection of all teaching and nonteaching staff.

# European Azerbaijan School

## **Screening and criminal background checks**

All personnel, staff, teachers, volunteers, and other members of the community whose potential employment or volunteer service involves direct contact with, and/or the potential for unmonitored access to children (including any individuals who regularly provide transportation to children) are given thorough reference and criminal background checks.

## **Code of Conduct**

In addition to screening and background checks, all newly appointed staff are asked to agree to adhere to the 'Code of Conduct', a copy of which is provided to them (in both Azerbaijani and English).

## **Facilities and Security**

School leadership ensures that all facilities are secure and appropriate to respect the safety and wellbeing of students in accordance to Azerbaijani law conducts reviews and inspections every 5 years.

## **Staff Training**

Regular staff training is conducted to ensure staff feel confident about all aspects of child protection: awareness, types, signs/symptoms, prevention, policies and laws, reporting process, children's curricula, local authority support and resources available.

Specifically:

- New staff receive child protection training on these aspects as part of their 'New Staff Orientation'.
- The 'Staff Code of Conduct' is provided to all staff annually to give clear expectations and boundaries regarding child protection procedures. These procedures are also included, in summarized form, in the staff handbook.
- All staff including board members regularly receive training, presented by the child protection officers or visiting specialist(s), on identifying indicators of concern, understanding how sex offenders operate, and child protection procedures within the school.

## **Procedures**

### **Reporting**

It is a legal obligation for faculty, staff, and administrators, either as individuals or members of the institution, to report incidents of, or concerns about, physical or psychological violence, aggression, harassment, and physical or sexual abuse.

The reporting should be done within the next school day, or at most within 48 hours, to the school Deputy Principal students well-being. In his or her absence, the concern must be reported to the Principal and Head of School. Contact may be made at any time, and is not restricted to working hours.

- Primary School: Fidan Jafarova,
- Secondary School: Zohra Malikova

# European Azerbaijan School

## **Responding to a Child's Disclosure**

### **Step 1**

Any member of staff who has reasonable cause to believe that abuse is occurring or has occurred, must report it to any member of the Wellbeing Team. This member of the Well-being Team, will in turn pass this on to the Deputy Principal (in case of absence; any member of the Incident Response Team). The latter will contact the Principal and Head of School who will convene the Incident Response Team.

### **Step 2**

The Incident Response Team will gather information regarding the reported incident and in cases of suspected physical, emotional, sexual abuse and/or neglect.

### **Step 3**

In all cases, follow-up activities will be conducted in a manner that ensures that information is documented factually and that strict confidentiality is maintained. The following procedure will be used:

- Interview staff members as necessary and document information relative to the case.
- Consult with school personnel to review the child's history in the school.
- Determine the course of follow-up actions.

### **Step 4**

During and after the process described above, there might be a need for emotional support for staff, students and families involved. This will be provided by the Well-being Team. All documentation of the investigation will be kept confidential and will be stored in a designated lockable space, under the supervision of the Deputy Principal students well-being

The standard reporting format used by the Incident Response Team will include the following:

- Historical context the background history of the reporting
- Child's name, date of birth, place of birth, gender, nationality, languages spoken, address, class, attendance details, siblings
- Information on parents/guardians name, nationality, professions, telephone
- Information about the specific report nature and extent of reported injuries/maltreatment; how reporter became aware (firsthand witness?)
- Description of action taken (if any)
- Other information that may be helpful

This will be written using a descriptive non-judgmental style, employing phrases such as ' X reported that...'; 'Y said that'. If determined that the case warrants making a report to local authorities or agencies, this report should be documented using applicable forms.