

**International Child Protection Task Force  
School Evaluation Committee  
Report for ITFCP Meetings, AAIE San Francisco  
February 8, 2015**

**Membership of Committee**

John Bell (Co-Chair)	Education Executive and Head of School Improvement	Cognita Education
Ray Davis (Co-Chair)	Associate Director School support & Evaluation	Council of International Schools
Mark Hevland	Safety & Security Manager	Shanghai American School
Kelly Christian	Director of Operations	Middle State Association of Schools and Colleges
Dennis Larkin	Head of School	Lincoln Community School, Ghana
Ian Laycock	Deputy Head Senior School	The British School of the Netherlands
Fred Van Leuven	Executive Director	Western Association of Schools and Colleges
Rob Leveillee	Vice President International Services	AdvancED
Yukeshia Makhan	Deputy Head- Director of Studies	St. Nicholas' School Sao Paulo
Peter Mott	Director	New England Association of Schools and Colleges
Christine Ryan	Chief Inspector	Independent Schools Inspectorate. ISI. UK

The Committee has collected and reviewed accreditation and inspection protocols from a number of school evaluation agencies that accredit and or inspect schools globally. Upon reviewing these protocols there proved to be a wide variation in the extent to which each protocol placed emphasis upon child protection as a key element of quality assurance. It was also noted that there was a wide variation in the extent to which child protection standards were seen as being 'non-negotiable' or 'deal breakers' to the awarding of accreditation or to the successful outcome of inspection.

The Committee identified a number of areas of omission that occurred in many accreditation / inspection standards and articulators. The list of these omissions was presented at the ITFCP meeting held in Leiden in September 2014. General agreement was obtained from leading school evaluation agencies that the committee should develop a set of Essential Questions that schools should take into account when developing and designing child protection policies and practices. There was also agreement that the Committee should further develop a set of generic standards or indicators that evaluation agencies would adopt as a non-negotiable required minimum.

A total of 24 Essential questions were identified. These questions are designed to promote discussion and dialogue and stimulate research within schools on effective child protection practices. They were deliberately not placed in any specific sequence so as to promote the widest range of dialogue and discussion within schools.

**International Task Force on Child Protection - School Evaluation Committee**

**Twenty Four Essential Questions:**

1. To what extent can the school be assured that it is only employing people of good character?  
*Does the country/state have a system for checking employees?*
2. Does the school take measures to ensure that all helpers, volunteers and contract workers are people of good character?

3. How does the school ensure that all faculty and staff are aware of the school's child protection policies and practices?
4. Do faculty and staff know how to identify possible signs of child abuse and do they know what to do if they have suspicions of maltreatment or if a student discloses abuse?
5. To what extent is the school leadership cognizant of all policies and procedures related to child protection?
6. What training do school leaders receive on child protection?
7. Who has overall or delegated responsibility for ensuring the safety of students?
8. Who has overall responsibility for ensuring that child protection procedures are followed in line with approved school policies?
9. What training is available to staff and faculty to ensure that they are familiar with issues related to child safety?
10. What does the school mean by the term child abuse?
11. Do the school's operational procedures support and encourage good practice leading to enhanced child protection?
12. To what extent and how often are child protection policies and procedures reviewed?
13. What external support / organisations can a school call upon for support with child protection issues?
14. Is the school aware of, and complies with, all legal and statutory requirements / obligations within the country in which it operates?
15. What security and protection measures are taken by the school to ensure the safety of students in school?
16. Does the school have external expert advice about threat levels, for example from an embassy or the police? Can they call on the support of the police security services?
17. To what extent does child protection education form part of the written curriculum?
18. Are students aware of what to do if they feel uncomfortable or have concerns about mistreatment or abuse?
19. Are there national child protection agencies/policies and support agencies. Does the school comply and have good working relations with child protection agencies- does the school have named contacts.
20. Does the school make it clear on its web site that it complies with the law of the country regarding child protection and policy, also about attendance at school?
21. What measures are taken by the school to ensure the safety and protection of boarding students?
22. What measures are taken by the school to ensure the safety and protection of students in homestay accommodation?
23. Are school facilities designed and operated in a way that supports good child protection procedures?
24. Does the school have formal learning programs and promote about e-safety?

The following draft Standards / Indicators for consideration have been arranged within the following seven sections:

- School's Philosophy and Guiding Statements
- Curriculum / Learning and Teaching
- School Leadership / Ownership and Governance
- Faculty and Staff
- Student Support
- Boarding / Homestay / Residential
- Facilities

### **School's Philosophy and Guiding Statements**

- A contextually appropriate values statement about the rights of the child has been developed and formally adopted by the school.

### **Curriculum / Learning and Teaching**

- The school shall have in place formal learning programmes related to child protection which cover areas such as personal safety, grooming, online safety, healthy sexual behaviour, self-harm, staying safe away from home, disclosing abuse etc.

### **School Leadership / Ownership and Governance**

- The school develop and adopt a contextually appropriate definition of sexual, physical or emotional abuse.
- The school shall have clearly defined leadership responsibilities for child safety and duty of care.
- The school is cognizant of the legal, ethical and cultural expectations and requirements regarding child abuse within the country in which it operates.
- The school develops a community assessment framework and adopts a formal policy identifying actions to take if maltreatment or abuse is suspected or disclosed, including historical disclosure.

### **Faculty and Staff**

- Formal procedures exist for conducting criminal record checks on prospective and existing faculty, staff, volunteers, contractors, etc.
- Formal procedures exist to obtain and verify references for prospective and existing faculty and staff.
- The school has developed and adopted a code of conduct that guides interactions between adults and children.
- The school has a programme of professional training for faculty and staff on student safeguarding, child abuse prevention, recognition, intervention and reporting.

### **Student Support**

- The school develops meaningful and effective relationships with external organisations and bodies that are able to provide appropriate support and advice on matters related to child protection.

### **Boarding / Homestay / Residential**

- The school shall have specific child protection policies, practices and faculty and staff training programmes to ensure the safety and welfare of all students within boarding facilities and homestay and residential arrangements.

### **Facilities**

- Due regard is given to building and facility design, layout, designation and use to ensure best practice in child safety and protection.

## **International Task Force on Child Protection | Guiding Principles for International Education**

The following guiding principles are intended to provide a clear direction for international schools and related international education service agencies with the purpose of advocacy and support for our communities, our personnel and most importantly our children. We encourage all international schools to consider these principles as a steppingstone to developing child protection programs at every international school.

### **Guiding Principles for International Schools**

1. Each individual school is responsible to develop and implement a comprehensive child protection program that includes policy, procedures, curriculum development and implementation, adult training and professional development programs, assessment, engagement with community resources and service agencies and well-defined mechanisms for recruitment of teachers and for reporting cases of abuse.
2. International school leaders should be well educated about the issue of child protection and should ensure that their implementation of a comprehensive child protection program involves a broad based community effort to engage all stakeholders and to communicate annually the school's programs and policies.
3. International schools, when developing a comprehensive child protection program, should access a wide range of resources that are available through XXXXXXXXX. These resources should include a careful study of curriculum programs, training materials and might include consultants who are recognized as experts in the field of child protection and child welfare.
4. International Schools should engage local community resources through the establishment of a community based child protection team to include medical, legal social service, counselling and police authorities to assist the school in developing its programs and

procedures and to act as a resources to school personnel when handling specific cases of abuse.

5. International schools must be knowledgeable of and comply with the law of their host country.

### **Guiding Principles for Organisations Supporting International Schools**

1. Service agencies such as regional associations, accreditation bodies and recruiting firms must meet the standard of best practice in regard to child protection by providing clear standards and communicating those standards and practices publicly.
2. Regional Associations should implement a strategic plan to advocate, support the development of all aspects of comprehensive child protection programs in member school and should use their aegis to advocate for child protection.