

## **Isca School Safeguarding Policy**

- **Safeguarding Lead: Javier Diez Martinez (Level 3)**
- **Accommodation and Welfare and Student Services: Sarah Tomlinson (Level 3)**

Purpose of this document: To inform Isca School of English staff of their responsibilities when working with children

The Policy content applies to: All Isca School staff

### **Introduction**

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

For the purpose of this policy document:

- ✚ The term 'child' will be used to describe all children and young people under the age of 18 years old participating in school-led activities.
- ✚ The term 'staff' will be used to describe those employed on a contract of employment at the Isca School of English, including those on working on a voluntary/unpaid basis.
- ✚ Staff should implement this policy using the following guidelines when conducting work that involves children. This will protect the safety and well-being of children engaging with the school and that of our own staff.

### **Children's Rights**

All children have needs and rights:

- ✚ The need for physical care and attention
- ✚ The need for intellectual stimulation
- ✚ The need for emotional love and security
- ✚ The need for social contact and relationships
- ✚ The right to have their needs met and safeguarded
- ✚ The right to be protected from neglect, abuse and exploitation
- ✚ The right to be protected from discrimination
- ✚ The right to be treated as an individual

### **Isca School of English Child Protection Policy**

In our provision for children the Isca School of English will ensure that:

- ✚ The welfare of the child is paramount
- ✚ All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- ✚ All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- ✚ All members of staff have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate child protection lead member of staff.

### **Policy statement**

Isca School of English staff have a professional duty to take such steps that, in the circumstances of an educational institution, are reasonable to see that the child is safe from harm while involved in school activities.

All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. The Isca School of English aims to ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in its activities through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines it has adopted.

### **Policy aims**

The aim of the Isca School of English Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

- ✚ Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst visiting/ in the care of the school
- ✚ Allow all staff /volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

### **Policy implementation**

The Isca School of English Child Protection Policy will be implemented by adhering to the policy guidelines contained within this document. All staff who work with children must comply with this Policy in conjunction with the school's Code of Conduct, failing which disciplinary action may be taken under the school's Disciplinary Procedure.

The guidelines cover three main areas:

- ✚ Staff recruitment, induction, support and training
- ✚ Staff conduct
- ✚ Child protection procedures

### **Staff recruitment, support and training**

The Isca School of English is committed to safer recruitment. A position offered to a successful applicant is subject to references and a DBS check. All applicants undergo an enhanced DBS check before or shortly after they are in the post of employment.

Until a DBS is returned as clear Management will:

- ✚ Management will check the process of the DBS daily until it clears
- ✚ Management will ask the Teacher to teach with the door open until the DBS clears.
- ✚ Management will monitor teacher visually.
- ✚ Management will make a visual check on class.

All homestay providers who wish to host under-18s also undergo a DBS check before they are able to start hosting them.

- ✚ At initial recruitment to the Isca School of English, employee CVs are checked and any unexplained gaps in employment history are queried
- ✚ Pre-activity training including,
- ✚ The activity requirements and responsibilities clarified.

- ✚ Child protection procedures are explained and training needs are identified.
- ✚ Staff sign up to the school's Code of Conduct for staff and the Child Protection Policy.
- ✚ Staff are selected on their suitability for the activity requirements and responsibilities and their ability to demonstrate that they can work safely with children (as determined by the CV and pre-activity training).
- ✚ All staff working with our students undergo training in Basic Awareness in Child Protection (as well as online Prevent training)

All staff will receive a copy of the Isca School of English Child Protection Policy. Awareness of child protection issues will continue to be addressed as appropriate to the cohort of students.

### **Referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

A referral must be made to the DBS when the Isca School of English school withdraws permission for an individual to engage in work with under-18s or would have done so had that individual not resigned, retired, been made redundant because they think that the individual has:

- ✚ engaged in relevant conduct; i.e. action or inaction that has caused: neglect,
- ✚ emotional/psychological, sexual, or physical harm
- ✚ satisfied the Harm Test; to harm or cause harm, put a child at risk, attempt to harm or incite
- ✚ others to harm
- ✚ received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence

*If these conditions have been met the information must be referred to the DBS.*

The referral should be made to the DBS when the provider has gathered sufficient evidence as part of their investigations to support their reasons for withdrawing permission to engage in work with under-18s and in following good practice, consulted with their Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

### **Staff Conduct**

#### **Good practice guidelines**

All staff should demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from allegations of misconduct. Staff should maintain their standards of behaviour therefore acting as a role model.

The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

#### **Good practice means:**

- ✚ Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- ✚ Never allow yourself to be left alone with a participant. There may be rare occasions when a confidential interview or a one-to-one meeting is necessary and in such circumstances, **the interview should be conducted in a room with**

- an open door or visual access.** Where this is not possible, the member of staff should ensure that there is another adult nearby.
- ✚ Never make gratuitous physical contact with a participant. There may be occasions where a distressed participant needs comfort which may include physical comforting and staff should use their discretion to ensure that it is appropriate and not unnecessary or unjustified contact. No Full body contact
  - ✚ Be cautious about physical contact in games. Where physical contact is inescapable (e.g. to demonstrate equipment or a particular exercise/move) staff should be aware of the limits within which such contact should take place and of the possibility for misinterpretation of such contact.
  - ✚ Treat all children equally, and with respect and dignity.
  - ✚ The Isca School of English will take positive action to eliminate discrimination against any person or group of people.
  - ✚ Staff should ensure that children are protected from discrimination on any grounds, including ability, and challenge discriminating comments and behaviour. Activities should be designed to include all children and to promote positive attitudes towards differences.
  - ✚ Be clear about what the objectives of the activity are before it begins and always put the welfare of each child first, before winning or achieving goals.
  - ✚ Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with children (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child)
  - ✚ Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
  - ✚ Ensuring that if children of mixed genders are to be supervised, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff, where practical. However, remember that same gender abuse can also occur.
  - ✚ Conducting yourself in a manner that sets a good example to the participants. Be an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of/whilst responsible for children.
  - ✚ Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
  - ✚ Never using physical force against a participant, unless it constitutes reasonable restraint to protect him/her or another person or to protect property. If it is necessary to restrain a participant because they are an immediate danger to themselves or others or to property then the minimum amount of force should be used for the shortest amount of time. Remain calm and get the attention and support of other staff. The incident should be recorded in writing, with a witness statement (where possible), immediately afterwards.
  - ✚ Never using physical punishment
  - ✚ As part of the enrolment procedure, the Isca School secures parental consent in writing if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment where the participant is under 18. First aid given should be recorded in writing and reported to the lead member of staff who will inform the parent or guardian.
  - ✚ Staff required to administer first aid (normally the trained First Aider) should ensure, wherever possible, that another member of staff is present if they are in any doubt as to whether necessary physical contact could be misconstrued.

- ✚ Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- ✚ **Always refer any problems to the child protection lead member of staff.**
- ✚ **Question any unknown adult who enters the school's premises and/or who attempts to engage with the children.**

**Practices never to be sanctioned:**

- ✚ Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- ✚ Engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
- ✚ Children's inappropriate use of language and/or behaviour. This should always be challenged.
- ✚ Sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- ✚ Reducing a child to tears as a form of control.
- ✚ Allegations made by a child must not go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- ✚ Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves (e.g. apply sunscreen).
- ✚ Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home or arrange meetings off-campus.

**Challenging Behaviour and how to address it:**

'Bad' behaviour is often a response to a situation, or a way to seek attention. If children are occupied there will be less of a need to seek attention and less of a chance for boredom to set in.

The following guidelines can be used to deal with challenging behaviour constructively:

- ✚ Be aware of what unacceptable behaviour is. Ask your lead member of staff if you are unsure. Children attending certain activities will have been issued with a code of conduct.
- ✚ Explain to children why certain behaviour is unacceptable. This makes children feel responsible for their behaviour and they are less likely to repeat it.
- ✚ Make sure it is the behaviour which is punished and not the person. Always avoid labelling someone as 'bad'.
- ✚ If appropriate ignore the bad behaviour for a while – a child may only be attention seeking.

**Dealing with problems outside of work hours**

The duty of care to our students extends to outside of the work place and outside of work hours. You will see a number of our students in the city centre in the afternoons and evenings and at weekends. If you see any student engaging in any harmful or inappropriate behaviour (such as drinking alcohol), it is your responsibility to stop that behaviour, if it is within your capability and/or to report it immediately to a responsible person at the school using the emergency telephone number located on your teacher Id Cards

### **Use of photographic/filming equipment**

- ✚ Written consent has been gained by the Isca School for the taking of photographs for in-school use, promotion and publicity.
- ✚ Staff must not themselves place photographs in the public domain.
- ✚ The school will not allow an image to be used for something other than that for which it was initially agreed.
- ✚ All students shown will be appropriately dressed.
- ✚ No images of children and young persons featured in Isca School publications will be accompanied by personal details such as their school or home address.
- ✚ The school does not put student profiles with images and personal information on its website.

### **Electronic and Social Media contact with students**

This section applies to the relationship between students and staff before, during or after a course.

Staff may only communicate with students using their Isca School email address which must be closed at the end of their contract and only use this email address during the summer for class projects, homework during the course. In any electronic contact with students, staff must pay particular attention to use neutral, un-emotive language that will not be misconstrued.

**Staff must not exchange any information with a student that they would not be happy to share with the child's parent or carer.**

Electronic contact is defined as the communication or publication of information (including images) between two or more people using an electronic device. This may occur using (but is not limited to) landline and mobile phones, other handheld electronic devices, gaming equipment

Electronic contact may include but is not limited to voice communication, text communication, instant messaging, email, social networking sites, blogs, photos and videos.

Student mobile numbers are available on excursions for staff (for use by staff during excursions); however, staff should only give out the school excursion mobile number, and not their own private number.

**Social-networking on Facebook etc. is strictly prohibited.**

At no point is it acceptable for any electronic contact with a student which is of a non-work-related nature before, during or after a course.

### **Child Protection Procedures**

The Isca School of English will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (Devon) to:

- ✚ • Ensure we have a lead member of staff for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- ✚ **Safeguarding Lead for Isca School: Javier Diez Martinez. Level 3**
- ✚ • Ensure every member of staff knows the name of the lead staff member responsible for child protection.
- ✚ • Ensure all staff understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the lead staff member. However, staff should remember that they are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred.
- ✚ • Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- ✚ • Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately. Ensure all records are kept securely in locked locations.
- ✚ • Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- ✚ • Adopt a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.

### **What is abuse?**

**Child Abuse** *A term to describe a range of ways in which people, usually adults but it can also be another child or groups of children, harm children. Often the adult is a person who is known and trusted by the child.*

*Child abuse is neglect, physical injury, sexual abuse or emotional abuse inflicted or knowingly not prevented, which causes significant harm or death.*

### **Awareness of actual or likely occurrence of abuse**

There are a number of ways in which abuse becomes apparent:

- ✚ A child discloses abuse.
- ✚ Someone else discloses that a child has told him/her or that he/she strongly believes a child has been or is being abused.
- ✚ A child may show signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no satisfactory explanation.
- ✚ A child's behaviour may indicate that it is likely that he/she is being abused.
- ✚ A member of staff's behaviour or in the way in which he/she relates to a child causes concern.

## **Some Indicators that a Person is being or may be being abused**

### **Recognising Abuse**

While abuse of young people at the Isca School of English is extremely unlikely we should not assume that it could never happen. Our duty of care to young people and vulnerable adults extends to watching out for signs of potential abuse.

It is important to be aware that indicators of abuse can be very difficult to recognise and that the list below is not exhaustive.

It is also important to note that the presence of one or more of these indicators is not proof that abuse has taken or is taking place.

It is not a staff member's responsibility to decide whether a child has been abused, but only to raise concerns that they may have been. Always listen and follow the procedures for responding to allegations of abuse

Indicators of abuse may include the following:

### **Sexual abuse**

- ✚ Acting in an inappropriate sexual way with objects or peers
- ✚ Nightmares, sleeping problems
- ✚ Becoming withdrawn or clingy
- ✚ Personality changes, seeming insecure
- ✚ Unaccountable fear/dread of particular places or people
- ✚ Changes in eating habits
- ✚ Physical signs such as unexplained soreness around genitals, sexually transmitted diseases
- ✚ Becoming secretive

### **Emotional abuse**

- ✚ Delayed physical or emotional development
- ✚ Shows extremes of passivity or aggression
- ✚ Sudden speech disorders
- ✚ Overreaction to mistakes, or continual self-depreciation
- ✚ Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation)

### **Physical abuse**

- ✚ Has unexplained bruises, burns etc.
- ✚ Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather
- ✚ Neglect
- ✚ Often hungry; may beg or steal food
- ✚ Badly dressed in clothes that need washing
- ✚ Poor appearance and personal hygiene; unwashed, hair not brushed
- ✚ Lacks needed medical or dental care
- ✚ Often tired

- ✚ Might abuse alcohol or other drugs

### **Specific Areas**

In addition to the types of abuse mentioned above, two other specific types of abuse to that staff must be aware of are Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

#### *Child Sexual Exploitation*

This is a form of sexual abuse where under-18s are exploited to engage in sexual activity in return for money, gifts, drugs, affection or status. CSE does not always involve physical contact as it can happen online or involve pressure from peers or cyber bullying.

Signs to look for in under-18s include:

- Having a much older boyfriend / girlfriend
- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with others involved in exploitation
- Misusing drugs or alcohol
- Being absent from school, going missing or regularly coming back late to homestays.

#### *Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)*

This is a practice that can cause severe and long-lasting damage to physical and mental health. It is carried out for religious, social or cultural reasons, however there are no medical reasons for carrying it out. It is a criminal offence if done in the UK. Staff should be aware that a person who has suffered FGM may ask for help without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear. Any causes for concern are to be reported to the Safeguarding Lead (Sarah Tomlinson)

**Issues of Disclosure**

Becoming aware of abuse can cause a multitude of emotional reactions, which are personal to each individual. Whatever the reaction and however the abuse has become apparent, actual or suspected, it must be responded to in the correct manner according to the procedure outlined here. Even if the truth of the disclosure is uncertain – an appropriate response has to be made. A response in accordance with the procedure outlined here will be supported by the lead member of staff and ultimately the Isca School of English.

**What to do upon suspicion or disclosure**

There are some basic principles in reacting to suspicions, allegations, and/or disclosures.

<b>What to do</b>	<b>What not to do</b>
Stay calm	Don't panic. Don't over-react. It is extremely unlikely that the participant is in immediate danger.
Listen, hear and believe	Don't probe for more information. Questioning the participant may affect how the participant's disclosure is received at a later date.
Give time to the person to say what they want	Don't make assumptions, don't paraphrase and don't offer alternative explanations
Reassure & explain that they have done the right thing in telling. Explain that only those professionals who need to know will be informed	Don't promise confidentiality to keep secrets or that everything will be OK (it might not)
Act immediately in accordance with the procedure in this policy	Don't try to deal with it yourself
Record in writing as near as verbatim as possible what was said as soon as possible	Don't make negative comments about the alleged abuser
Report to the lead member of staff	Don't 'gossip' with colleagues about what has been said to you
Record your report	Don't make a child repeat a story unnecessarily

**It is the duty of anyone who works with children to report disclosure of abuse. It is not for staff to decide whether or not a suspicion or allegation is true. All suspicions or allegations must be taken seriously and dealt with according to this procedure.**

### **Responsibility**

Staff made aware of suspicions, allegations or actual abuse, **are responsible to take the appropriate action according to this procedure.**

- The primary responsibility of the person who first suspects or who is told of abuse is to report it and to ensure that their concern is taken seriously whilst adhering to the dos and don'ts above.
- The incident should be reported immediately to the lead member of staff who is then responsible for dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse.

Staff should never **try to deal with a suspicion, allegation or actual incident of abuse by him/herself.**

### **Reporting suspected, alleged, or actual incidents of abuse**

It may sometimes be difficult to accept that something that has been disclosed in confidence by a child or anyone else should be passed on to a colleague. But the welfare of a child must be paramount and you therefore have a duty to report suspicions, allegations or actual incidents to the designated member of staff.

Information should also be reported if you yourself have concerns that a child may be suffering harm or at risk of abuse, even if you are unsure about your suspicions. The Initial Notification (LADO) form must be completed and returned to the address specified on the form.

Once this initial report has been made, the lead member of staff will consult with the relevant statutory agencies.

Local Safeguarding Children's Board  
Children & Young People's Services  
Parkers Barn, Parkers Way

#### **TOTNES, TQ9 5UF**

First Point of contact: Sara Beck, Team Support Clerk. Tel: 01392 38 6013 or 01803 869313. Fax: 01392 38 6087

Exeter based LADOs are: Jan Liff and Frances Hunt on 01392 384 945

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline 0800 800 500

The following information may be required:

- Staff name, address, telephone number, position/role within the school.
- As many details about the child as possible, e.g. name, date of birth, home address, home telephone number, address in the UK
- What the reasons are for telephoning, e.g. the suspicions, allegations, what has been said, giving details of times and dates and the child's emotional state, or what the child has said in response to the suspicions/concerns. Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- What's been done so far?

- Where possible referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

The relevant statutory agency will then give instructions as to what to do next and take the responsibility for further action.

### **Statutory Child Protection Procedures**

What happens next is entirely up to the relevant statutory agency, usually Social Services.

Enough information passed onto the agency may lead to the suspicion, allegation or actual incident, being dealt with quickly with few complications, or it may lead to thorough checks with several other organisations and possibly a child protection conference.

A child protection conference involves as many people as possible, (including the parents/carers and sometimes the child as well), who discuss the issues that have been raised in the suspicions, allegations, or actual abuse that has been reported and investigated. Decisions about what will happen next are made at the conference. Quite often, the person who has made the initial report may not be contacted again unless further information is required and it is not usual practice for the relevant statutory agency to feedback developments. However, if you feel that not enough action has been taken, and the child is still at risk, concerns should be reported again or the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline contacted for advice.

### **Recording suspected or actual incidents**

No matter what happens to a suspicion, allegation or actual incident of abuse, (that is whether or not it is processed through a statutory agency or not), all details must be recorded.

Important information to record includes:

- The date and time of disclosure, suspicion, allegation or actual abuse incident.
- Details given to you about the above e.g. date & time of when things occurred.
- An indication of the parties involved.
- Details of what action you and the school have taken.
- Details of reporting on, e.g. who to (statutory agency) and when.

If for any reason it is decided not to consult with a relevant statutory agency, a full explanation of why must be documented.

Recording should be factual, that is no reference made to your own subjective opinions. Records should be kept completely confidential and secure (always locked away) and only shared with those who need to know about the suspicion, allegation or actual incident of abuse.

## Isca School Safeguarding Policy

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*The Isca School of English's commitment to equality and diversity means that this policy has been screened in relation to the use of gender-neutral language, jargon-free plain English, recognition of the needs of disabled people, promotion of the positive duty in relation to race and disability and avoidance of stereotypes. If you think we can improve the fairness of this policy, please contact the individual who has responsibility for its update.*

**Produced by Richard Tomlinson: March 2012**

**Last Reviewed by Sarah Tomlinson: January 2026**

**Reviewed Annually**

**Change made: 12/01/2026**