



THE BRIDGE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

TBIS Child Protection Policy

Rationale

As an international child-centered School, TBIS is committed to ensuring the fulfillment of children's rights including their rights to protection. TBIS is committed to protecting children from harm and ensuring children's right to protection. We take seriously our responsibility to promote child safe practices and protect children from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation in any form. In addition, we will take positive actions to prevent abuse towards TBIS students. Our decisions and actions in response to Child protection concerns and breaches of this policy will be guided by the principle of 'the best interest of the child'.

Definitions under the Child Protection Policy

Child - The word child differs in age between English and French Cameroon being 21years for the French and 18years for the English both acceptable under the law in Cameroon. For the purpose of this policy a Child is defined as any person under the age of 18 years.

Child Abuse – Child abuse is defined as all forms of physical abuse, emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect or negligent treatment, or other exploitation of a child and includes any actions that result in actual or potential harm to a child. Child abuse may be a deliberate act or it may be failing to act to prevent harm. Child abuse consists of anything which individuals, institutions do or fail to do, intentionally or unintentionally, which harms a child or damages their wellbeing, dignity and prospect of safe and healthy development into adulthood.

Child Protection - is defined in this policy as the responsibilities, preventative and responsive measures and activities that TBIS undertakes to protect children ensuring that no Child is subject to Child abuse as a result attending school at TBIS, their contact with TBIS Staff, TBIS Associates and TBIS Visitors.

In addition, it incorporates our responsibility to ensure that where there are concerns over a Child's welfare or where a Child has been subject to Child abuse, actions are taken to address

this; concerns are reported and responded to appropriately and in line with the local procedures; and incidents are analyzed so as to ensure continued learning and growth in the field of child protection.

TBIS Staff - refers to individuals who receive a regular salary for work in any department at TBIS.

TBIS Visitors - refers to a range of persons who visit our School and may come into contact with children through TBIS, including journalists.

Scope of the Child Protection Policy

The Child Protection Policy applies to all TBIS Staff and TBIS Visitors who must comply with its requirements and understand the sanctions that may be applied for breaches of the policy. It is intended that this policy will set a standard for all TBIS Staff and Visitors.

Principles

This policy is based on a set of principles that are derived from the UNCRC (The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**) and include:

1. All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation.
2. Each child has a fundamental right to life, survival and development.
3. All children should be encouraged to fulfill their potential through formal and informal education
4. Children will be assured the right to express their views freely and this will be given 'due weight' in accordance with their age and level of maturity. We will not discriminate against the child. The child will be treated with respect irrespective of gender, nationality or ethnic origin, religious or political beliefs, age, sexual preference and gender identity, family, socio-economic and cultural background.
5. Everybody has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children.

TBIS's Vision For Child Protection

TBIS creates a safe environment for children where they are respected, protected and empowered as their capacities evolve to contribute actively to their development

These policies aim to ensure that TBIS Staff and Visitors are skilled, confident, understand, accept and are well supported in meeting their Child protection responsibilities and that they engage positively with children in ways that enhance growth, confidence and high self-esteem.

TBIS Staff and Visitor Responsibilities

Everyone who works with and engages with TBIS has a responsibility to ensure that Children are protected. The responsibilities detailed below are mandatory for those who fall within the scope of the policy.

TBIS Staff and Visitors:

1. Never abuse and/or exploit a Child or act/ behave in any way that places a child at risk of harm.
2. Report any Child abuse and Child protection concerns they have to the Head Teacher.
3. Respond to a Child who may have been abused or exploited in accordance with this policy.
4. Cooperate fully and confidentially in any investigation of concerns or allegations of Child abuse.
5. Contribute to building an environment where children are respected and encouraged to discuss their concerns and rights.
6. Always treat children in a manner which is respectful of their rights, integrity and dignity, considers their best interests and does not expose them to, or place them at risk of harm
7. Never disclose, or support the disclosure of, information that identifies families or children, through any medium, unless that disclosure is in accordance with standard TBIS policies and procedures and/or has the explicit consent from the parents. Media include paper, photographs and social media.

Personal Conduct after Working Hours

TBIS does not dictate the belief and value systems by which TBIS Staff conduct their personal lives. However, actions taken by them out of working hours that are seen to contradict this policy will be considered a violation of this policy.

Implementation, Monitoring and Sanctions

Breaches of this policy and failure to comply with these responsibilities may incur the following sanctions:

For TBIS Staff - disciplinary action that may be taken include termination of services with the school, suspension or warning letter. The Head teacher will determine this on a case by case basis.

For TBIS Visitors - up to and including termination of all relations including contractual and partnership agreements with TBIS

Where relevant - appropriate legal or other such actions