

# Child Protection Policy

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## Introduction

The Ostrava International School (TOIS) strives to ensure the welfare and safety of all its students and attempts to create an environment in which the students feel safe and secure. At times, this may involve addressing issues that take place outside of the school building itself.

The health, safety and well-being of all our students are of paramount importance to the entire school staff. Students have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have the right to be safe in school.

Abuse and neglect can result in underachievement. TOIS strives to ensure that all students make good educational progress.

### It is the intention of this document to:

- provide guidance to staff, parents/guardians and students in relation to Child Protection in compliance with national law and CIS standards
- provide clear expectations about child safety and the school's response to concerns or allegations of harm
- establish responsibilities of all adults to protect children and the rights of children enrolled in TOIS and impacted by the operations of TOIS to be free from harm
- establish clear recruitment and hiring expectations to enable diligent screening and selection of staff, faculty, volunteers, and other TOIS identified trusted adults
- outline continued professional development for staff, student prevention education and parent/guardian support around the child protection prevention of harm and response to harm if it occurs
- support continued communication and shared understanding about childhood abuse definitions, signs and indicators, and response when risk of harm is evident, or harm occurs
- establish that TOIS prioritises the wellbeing of students and acknowledges that children cannot consent to abuse
- TOIS staff and Board members are accountable to this policy which is linked to TOIS strategic planning, budgeting, recruitment, performance management, external partnership, risk management, etc.

## TOIS Child Protection Team

The TOIS Child Protection Team consists of the following:

- **Child Protection Officers:**
  - Early Years Centre - Head of Early Years Centre, Jelena Ščerbová
  - Primary School - Head of Primary School, Renáta Paličková
  - Secondary School - Head of Secondary School, Phil Corkill
- **Student Well-Being Services Coordinator** - Petra Kavková
- **TOIS Advocate** - Nikola Gray Jirousek
- **School Director** - Brett Gray

Each member of staff is responsible for being aware of any changes in a student's appearance, behaviour, or psychological state, which may be related to a suspicion of child abuse, and to report this to the relevant Child Protection Officer.

After a suspicion of child abuse is reported, TOIS Child Protection Team immediately convenes to determine what further steps should be taken in the particular case, based on the available evidence, national law and student wellbeing.

In case of absence of the Child Protection Officer, members of staff must report the suspicion of child abuse to:

- Early Years Centre/ Primary School
  - PYP Coordinator - Elina Prokharava
- Secondary
  - if MYP student is involved, MYP Coordinator - Jiří Svoboda
  - if DP student is involved, DP Coordinator - Paul Ahuja

## Forms of abuse

- **Physical abuse** involves hitting, shaking or other physical contact with a child that can cause actual bodily harm.
- **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child into sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This includes non-contact situations, such as showing children pornography.
- **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of children, such as frightening them, or putting them in positions of danger. It is also an abuse to convey to children the feeling that they are worthless or unloved.
- **Neglect** is also a form of abuse. This could involve failure to provide proper food and warmth, but it might also be a failure to see to the emotional well-being of the child.

## Warning signs of abuse

Staff should be concerned about a child if they:

- have an injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with children's injuries,
- have regular, unexplained injuries,
- have frequent injuries (even when apparently reasonable explanations are given),
- give confused or conflicting explanations on how injuries were sustained,
- exhibit significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude, or is constantly tired, or withdrawn,
- indulge in sexual behaviour which is unusually explicit and/or inappropriate to his or her age,
- disclose an experience in which he or she may have been significantly harmed,
- bully other students,
- come to school unwashed and in dirty clothes.

## School procedures

### Essential guidelines

- If a member of staff suspects that a child in their class may be a victim of abuse, they should not try to investigate, but should immediately inform the relevant Child Protection Officer about their concerns.

- If a child discloses to a member of staff any information about abuse, that member of staff must pass this information onto the Child Protection Officer.
- Staff must not inform parents/guardians of suspected or reported abuse.
- School employees must keep all information related to individual child protection issues confidential.

### Dealing with a disclosure

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff should:

- Listen carefully to what is being said.
- Accept what is being said.
- Allow the child to speak freely.
- Reassure the child, but do not make promises that might not be possible to keep.
- Not promise confidentiality - it may be necessary to refer to the Head, General Practitioner (GP), and to Social Services or Police in specific cases.
- Reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault.
- Emphasise that it was the right decision to talk.
- Listen, rather than ask direct questions.
- Do not criticise.
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.

### Record keeping

When a child has made a disclosure, the member of staff should:

- Immediately notify the relevant Child Protection Officer.
- Make notes as soon as possible after the conversation.
- Do not destroy the original notes, in the event that they are needed for future proceedings.
- Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child. Do not write down assumptions, just describe what was said.
- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury.

### Child Protection Officer responsibilities

- documenting any signs or symptoms of abuse when they have occurred, and immediately informing the Director of TOIS.
- ensuring that the school effectively monitors children who have been identified as 'at risk'.
- providing guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support.

### The School Director responsibilities

- meeting with TOIS Child Protection Team and the member of staff who reported the potential abuse to determine the course of action to be taken.
- implementing the course of action, which may involve informing guardians, General Practitioner (GP), Child Protection Services of the Czech Republic (OSPOD) and /or the Police.

- keeping records of all meetings, noting the actions taken.

### Allegations involving school staff (or external partners)

- If a child, guardian or teacher makes any complaint of abuse against a member of staff, or a staff member of an external partner organisation of the school, the person receiving the complaint must take it seriously and immediately inform the relevant TOIS Child Protection Officer who will pass the information onto the School Director.
- The Director will investigate the allegation itself, taking detailed, written statements, and decide what action to take and if to refer to the state authorities.

## System of Social and Legal Protection of Children in the Czech Republic

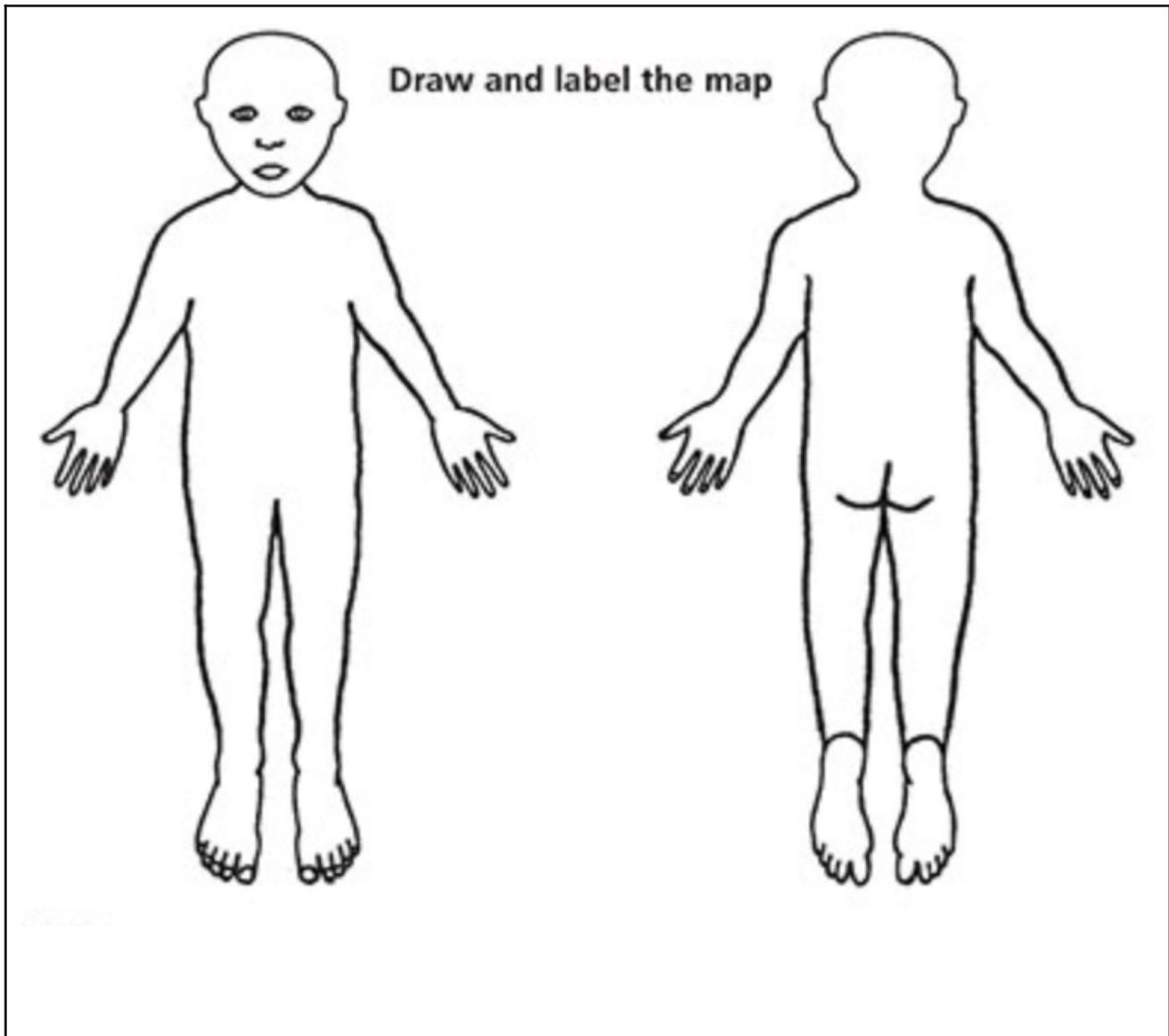
- All the information concerning Child Protection in the Czech Republic can be found on the **Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs** official website, which is regularly updated in case of any amendment to the existing law:

[System of Social and Legal Protection of Children in the Czech Republic](#)

## Appendix 1. - Child Protection Report Template (Disclosure Form)

<b>TOIS Child Protection Report</b>
<b>Part 1: To be completed by the staff member making the report</b>
<b>Staff Member Leading the Response</b>
<b>Name of the staff member:</b>
<b>Role:</b>
<b>Relationship to child:</b>
<b>Child's information:</b>
<b>Child's Name:</b>
<b>Gender:</b>
<b>Grade:</b>
<b>Age:</b>
<b>Other details: (note here any other background details that may be relevant to this child protection report)</b>

Details of the Incident, Disclosure or Suspicion
<p>Full Name of person making the report:</p> <p>Staff role and/or relationship to student:</p> <p>Contact details:</p>
<p>Date of incident or disclosure:</p> <p>Time of incident or disclosure:</p> <p>Location of incident or disclosure:</p> <p>Name of alleged perpetrator (if known):</p> <p>Relationship to child:</p>
<p>Details of the incident, disclosure or suspicion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Provide a clear account of the incident or disclosure noting how became aware of the incident and include the names of witnesses, if relevant.</li><li>● Be as specific as you can. Use names to add clarity to your statements.</li><li>● Where possible, use the exact words of the student(s) and note this using quotation marks.</li><li>● Avoid speculation or personal conclusions, for example, say the child was crying, not the child was upset.</li><li>● If reporting a suspicion, what are the indicators or instances which led you to consider that a child may be subject to harm or at risk of harm (including family violence). Consider physical, behavioural and emotional indicators of abuse and any patterns of behaviour that have raised a suspicion.</li><li>● Attach a body map, if appropriate, to indicate the injury shape, location, and colour.</li></ul>



**Part 2: To be completed by the member of TOIS Child Protection Team**

**Action taken: TOIS**

- Report any action taken, e.g. safety planning, referrals, disciplinary action, etc..
- Provide details of discussions with the TOIS Child Protection Team, incl. discussions outcomes
- Provide details of discussions with any member of the multidisciplinary team that may have been consulted
- Provide details of discussions with school leadership, including discussion outcomes

**Action taken: Parents/Guardians**

- Provide details of your discussion with the child's parents/guardians and any follow-up action that may have been taken. Include who was involved in the discussion(s).
- If parents/guardians were not informed of the incident or disclosure, state reasons why this was not deemed appropriate (eg. family members involved in abusing the child, someone may be put in danger or informing parents may interfere with a

criminal investigation).

- Note if any external agencies have been informed of this concern, eg. embassy, police, local support services, etc..

Signature:

Date of report:

#### Planned Actions and Ongoing Support

- Note here any further action, responses, or recommendations from the Child Protection Team have been undertaken to support the child, including any referral to specialised services. These should include risk assessment, risk mitigating actions, and safety plans with the names of those accountable for following up.
- Include the names of anyone to whom information of the incident was shared.

#### Safety and well-being review

- Complete this section 4-6 weeks following the reporting of an incident.

Is the child safe from abuse or harm?

- Yes
- No

*If not, what steps need to be taken?*

Does the child have any well-being issues that are not currently being addressed?

- Yes
- No

*Are further actions or supports needed to improve the well-being and mental health of this child?*

Does the person/staff member that made the report need any support?

- Yes
- No

What actions, if any, were made to support the member of staff and was this adequate?

Does the school need to take any further action? Tick all that may be appropriate:

- Review child protection policies and procedures
- Review and adapt safety plans for child/ren involved
- Engage child's parents/guardian
- Are there any learning's from this incident that can be used to prevent harm to children

Signature of the member of TOIS Child Protection Team:

Date:

Signature of Head of EYC/Primary/Secondary School and/or Student Well-Being Services Coordinator:

Date:

Signature of TOIS Director:

Date: