

Name of Policy:	Child Protection-Raising Concerns
Applicable to:	Whole school
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Safeguarding Children: Voicing Concerns

NCBIS Mission Statement

To provide a learning environment that supports academic achievement whilst promoting personal growth through the attributes of the IB Learner profile, within a caring international community committed to the traditional values of honesty, courtesy, respect, integrity and fair play.

Purpose and Scope of Policy

NCBIS aims to provide a safe and happy environment for all of our students so that learning can take place in a safe and secure atmosphere. This Voicing Concerns (Raising Concerns) Guidance supports Article 3.1 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, which states that “in all actions concerning children...the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration”. We are committed to preventing child abuse and protecting children within the NCBIS community.

This guidance sets out to outline the actions that will be taken to ensure that all students are protected from all forms of abuse. It also explains the procedures that anyone working here should follow if he or she has concerns that the practice of any adult within NCBIS may be harming pupils. The guidance should be read in conjunction with the following school guidance and procedures:

- > Safeguarding Children: Child Protection
- > Anti-bullying
- > Peer on Peer Abuse
- > Children Missing Education

Aims

This guidance is written for staff working with children and young people at NCBIS.

Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Although this can be difficult, this is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express your concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues or you may fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or young person continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember it is often the most vulnerable children or young persons who are targeted. These children need someone like you to safeguard their welfare.

Principles

We all have a duty to protect children/young people from harm.

- Adults working in a school are often the first to realise that the behaviour of someone is causing, or is likely to cause, harm to a child/student.
- Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour in order to protect or reduce the risks to others, to prevent the problem worsening and to protect other staff and the school/college.
- We recognise that the decision to report a concern is difficult. We will not tolerate harassment or victimisation and will take all possible measures to protect anyone who raises concerns in good faith.
- If you raise concerns in good faith that are proved to be unfounded, no action will be taken against you.
- Where it is concluded that allegations have been made maliciously, disciplinary action may be taken.
- We recognise that Raising concerns can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support will be offered by the school management.

Don't think “what if I'm wrong?” – think, “what if I'm right?”

Reasons for Raising concerns

- Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour
- To prevent the problem worsening or widening
- To protect or reduce risks to others
- To prevent becoming implicated yourself

What stops people from voicing concerns

- Fear of starting a chain of events which spirals out of control
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear of escalation
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- Fear of not being believed
- Fear of reprisal

NCBIS Procedural Guidelines in the event of a concern

How to raise a concern

- You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can. The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner action can be taken.
- Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning you and why.
- Let the facts speak for themselves. Communicate the concern in a professional, calm and factual manner. Think about the who, what, how, where and when.
- Approach your Designated Safeguarding Lead, Head Teacher or Principal.
- If your concern is about your immediate manager/Head teacher, speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Make sure you get a satisfactory response - don't let matters rest.
- Ideally, you should put your concerns in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places wherever you can. Concerns that relate to a student should be recorded using the online "Safeguard" platform.

A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern.

What happens next?

- You will be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries.
- NCBIS has a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation.
- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.
- Malicious allegations may be considered as a disciplinary offence.

Self-reporting

There may be occasions where a member of staff has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so professional and personal support can be offered to the member of staff concerned. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children.

Further advice and support

It is recognised that raising concerns can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support is available from your Head of School, and/or the School Counsellor or mentoring team.

Confidentiality

All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal your identity if you so wish. At the appropriate time, however, you may need to come forward as a witness.

Untrue allegations

If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you. If, however, you make an allegation frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against you.