

# Paragon International School Cambodia

## Child and Youth Protection Policy

### Introduction

Paragon International School Cambodia (Paragon ISC) believes that every child is precious and therefore deserves to grow up in a safe and loving environment. All children should have the opportunity to achieve their full potential in both an academic and social sense.

Paragon ISC is committed to protecting children's rights and in keeping with the School's core values and mission statement, it has adopted the **Child and Youth Protection Policy (CYPP)** to act as the guiding literature for these very important topics.

The **CYPP** is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>1</sup> (UNCRC) and adheres to the four guiding principles of the UNCRC:

**Non-Discrimination:** Whatever their race, colour, gender, language, belief or status, all children should enjoy equal opportunities;

**The Best Interests of the Child:** Actions or decisions affecting our children should benefit them in the best possible way;

**The Right to Survival, Development and Protection:** Every child is precious. Every child deserves to grow up in a safe and loving environment free from bullying, neglect, or abuse of any kind. Every child should achieve his/her full potential.

**The Views of the Child:** Every child has the right to be heard and have their taken views seriously in all decisions which may affect their life.

The Paragon ISC' Child and Youth Protection Policy is based both on national and international law. The following articles address protection to children In the Constitution of Kingdom of Cambodia<sup>2</sup>:

#### Article 38

*The law forbids any physical abuse against any individual. The law protects the life, the honour and the dignity of all citizens.*

#### Article 47

*A mother and father shall have the obligation to take care of their children, to bring them up and to educate them in order to become good citizens.*

#### Article 48

*The State shall assure the protection of children's rights as enshrined in the convention on children, especially, the right to life, the right to education, the right to protection during wartime and the right to protection from economic or sexual exploitation.*

*The State shall protect children from all kinds of labour that can be detrimental to their education and their schooling, or to their health or their welfare.*

The Kingdom of Cambodia is also a signatory in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The following which the protection to children that instrument aims to give:

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights\\_overview.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/kh/kh009en.pdf>

### **Article 19 – Protection from abuse and neglect**

*The State shall protect the child from all forms of maltreatment by parents or others responsible for the care of the child and establish appropriate social programmes for the prevention of abuse and the treatment of victims.*

As a result of the enrolment of a student at Paragon ISC, the parents of those children, as well as other community members who have contact with them, agree to work in partnership with the School and abide by the Child Protection Policy adopted by the Paragon ISC School Board. All those at Paragon ISC wish to make it known that they genuinely value the partnership with those responsible adults, and will always do their utmost to provide the safety and care they believe is a right of each student. It is for this reason that Paragon ISC has endorsed a Child and Youth Protection Policy that *defines the standards* by which all Paragon ISC students should be treated. That is with respect and dignity at all times.

### **The Educational Components of the Paragon ISC Child and Youth Protection Policy**

As part of the School's overall educational programmes, and specific to the School's shared responsibility to educate children, to protect them, and to allow them to learn and grow in a safe environment, Paragon ISC will:

- 1) Provide age-appropriate seminars and/or meetings for students of all grades to help them understand issues relating to personal safety, the basic requirements one needs in life as well as their rights as children and as humans.
- 2) Provide required materials and information sessions to help parents better understand the School's programmes and policy.
- 3) Annually train faculty members to recognise and report issues of abuse and neglect.
- 4) Use visual aids such as posters, brochures and other display materials to increase student awareness of potential threats to them as young people and to inform them of the ways they can report and deal with such concerns.

### **Paragon ISC Policies and Procedures relating to the Child and Youth Protection Policy**

Paragon ISC has a set of Policies and Procedures, approved by the School Board, which are designed to ensure the school's Child and Youth Protection Policy is adhered to at all times. The full details of the framework which the School has in place to safeguard the welfare of students are stated here.

Paragon ISC aims to ensure that all students, on all of its campuses, are provided with a safe learning environment for the duration of their time with the School. Therefore, it has clear practices for its staff to follow which ultimately ensure all activity is supervised and meets the expectations stated within this policy.

The School has appropriate procedures to ensure any form of suspected child abuse, which may be thought to be occurring in or out of school, is reported immediately. The School makes it clear that reporting such incidents is the responsibility of any employee who suspects that a child may have been abused. It should be stated now that however trivial a member of staff feels a particular circumstance or event to be, if abuse is suspected, it should be reported immediately. If a student notifies a member of staff of abuse they are suffering, or which they suspect another member of the School is subject to, then this must also be reported

without delay. The School will investigate all reports of suspected abuses, in whichever form that may be, and will take appropriate action to ensure the safety of the child in accordance with The Kingdom of Cambodia's law and its own Child Protection Policy.

To clarify to all those working with students at Paragon ISC, the School uses the following recognised definition of child abuse:

**“The physical, sexual or psychological maltreatment or neglect of a child or children.”**

The above allows for a very broad range of situations and treatments a child may be placed in but the School states that even if a member of staff believes abuse is taking, but that abuse does not seem to fit with the above description, they should still, without hesitation, report the situation and follow the procedures which the School has in place. The School also reminds faculty members that an act of child abuse most often, but not always, is committed by an adult who has a close relationship with a child. Such relationships may include family members, caregivers, appropriate guardians or those with roles in the child's education.

Paragon ISC endorses and acts in accordance with the UNCRC Convention on the Rights of the Child of which the host country for the School, The Kingdom of Cambodia, is a signatory. Paragon ISC seeks to be a safe haven for students who may be experiencing abuse or neglect in any aspect of their lives and will always use the proper procedure and channels to improve any such situations a child may find themselves in.

It is the responsibility of the School to ensure this policy is distributed to not only its staff, but also to all parents with a child on one of its campuses. Each year the policy will be communicated and explained to students and the School will provide annual training for all staff regarding its contents and how it should be implemented. Paragon ISC makes every effort to ensure all the stated practices within the policy are followed and that therefore the safety and well-being of students remains priority at all times.

In the case of a staff member reported as an alleged offender, Paragon ISC will conduct a full investigation following a carefully designed course of due process.

The School states again that this policy and all procedures in place to ensure it is adhered to are endorsed by all acting members of the School Board.

## **Summary of Key Responsibilities and Applicability**

The Paragon ISC Child and Youth Protection Policy is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which The Kingdom of Cambodia is a signatory. In particular, its following article addresses what is meant by the 'protection from abuse and neglect' of children:

**Article 19 – Protection from abuse and neglect:** *The State shall protect the child from all forms of maltreatment by parents or others responsible for the care of the child and establish appropriate social programmes for the prevention of abuse and the treatment of victims.*

### **Key Responsibilities (Child and Youth Protection):**

- 1) All members of the Paragon ISC community are required to take reasonable precautions

and/or measures to ensure the safety and well-being of the school's students from all forms of bullying, neglect and abuse. These terms can include any of the following behaviours which are deemed detrimental to a child's safety and well-being: physical, emotional, sexual, sexual and commercially exploitative.

- 2) The School makes it completely clear that all community members within its School contribute to the school being a safe haven for children. It is therefore imperative that each member of staff understands their responsibility in putting the safety and well-being of students before anything else. If a member of staff is unsure of how to identify a form of child abuse, or feels they do not have the knowledge of the procedures to follow when child abuse is suspected, then they should raise this immediately with their Academic Coordinator or another senior member of staff.

**This School believes the two statements above are best achieved through:**

*(For Adults):*

1. Appropriate personal conduct whenever interacting with children; \*
2. awareness and enthusiasm to gain further understanding of potentially harmful conduct and behaviors related to abuse and neglect;
3. removal of a child from a situation which puts them in danger; and
4. the reporting of inappropriate conduct, neglect or abuse, or the suspicion of any of those behaviours stated.

*(For Children):*

5. Children should also always be respectful and show understanding towards one another, as well as to all members of the School's community. The way they are expected to behave and conduct themselves is outlined in the School's Code of Conduct.
6. Students should receive training and guidance on the conduct which is expected of them and be informed of how to report incidents related to child abuse and the procedures which are then followed. The guidance should be given on a regular basis by a trained member of staff and the age and grade of students should always be considered when sensitive topics are discussed. It is especially important to be aware of the age of a group of students when discussing abuse which may involve sexual conduct or any form of exploitation. If a member of staff feels they cannot judge what is or isn't appropriate when educating students on these matters then they should on no account continue with such educational sessions. They should immediately inform a senior member of staff regarding the matter and not continue to give such guidance until they fully understand the age appropriateness of the content involved in their instruction.

**Applicability:**

Members of the school community in which this policy applies include:

- All employees of Paragon ISC and employees of the School's affiliated organisations.
- Individuals and entities with contractual relationships with the School.
- Board Members/governors/owners and other school leaders and influencers.
- All students, parents and legal guardians, with an emphasis on upholding the School's Code of Conduct, retaining respect for each other at all times and the reporting of incidents/reasonable suspicions.

- All School chaperones and volunteers who work with students or who participate in school programmes involving its students.
- All visitors, vendors and guests on the School's premises.

Paragon ISC understands that 'appropriate personal conduct' can differ between cultures and will always prioritise compliance with the legal and ethical expectations and requirements regarding child abuse within Cambodia. In this regard, and as noted in this policy, the school attempts to inform and train its community members in the Cambodian context regarding such matters as well as within a more school-related sphere and in line with its own policy and procedures.

### **Code of Conduct and Common Agreement**

Each member of Paragon ISC staff, as well every students, is reminded that their conduct, both public and private, can have a positive effect on those with whom they interact as well as a negative and harmful one. Paragon ISC also believes that each individual in the school community should be treated with dignity and respect, and that there should be a particular obligation towards children which always remains at the forefront in all the School does and plans.

For this reason, it is a Paragon ISC requirement that members of the School's community review and periodically sign the Codes of Conduct applicable.

A school's Codes of Conduct help to define and clarify the boundaries of what is considered acceptable and professional behaviour. In addition, the School has in place a 'Common Agreement', which includes a set of written guidelines designed to safeguard children and all members of the School's community. It is there to further ensure that all teaching, behaviour and other practices which take place at school, are safe and carried out in the best interests of students.

For a copy of the School's Code of Conduct for applicable community members, see Appendix A or access it in the appropriate handbook.

### **Important Policy Terms, Definitions and Indicators**

#### **CHILD**

For the purposes of this document, a 'child' is defined as anyone under the age of 18, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

#### **CHILD ABUSE**

'Child abuse' or 'maltreatment' related to a child constitutes the following: "All forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity. In circumstances when abuse/maltreatment is found to have taken place it has usually been committed by an adult who has a relationship with the child and a position of responsibility, trust or power in that child's life."

#### **ABUSE IS:**

- Inflicting physical injury on a child by any purposeful action which cannot constitute an accident. This may lead to skin bruising, burns, disfigurement, impairment of physical or

emotional health or the loss or impairment of any function of any part of the body. If there are no obvious signs relating to physical abuse then it does not mean it hasn't necessarily taken place. In extreme cases physical abuse may lead to death.

- Putting a child at the potential risk of any manner of physical harm.
- Committing acts which are cruel or inhumane, these may or may not include physical injury to a child. Such acts may include, but are not limited to, extreme and unnecessary discipline, demonstrating a disregard of a child's pain and/or mental suffering, belittling and constantly making a child feel worthless and/or inadequate.
- Assaulting or criminally mistreating a child as defined by either The Kingdom of Cambodia's criminal code or school policy.
- Engaging in actions or demonstrating a lack of care which results in injury, or creates a substantial risk of injury happening, to a child.
- Behaviour resulting in the emotional stress of a child or which stifles their physical or mental development is also
- Falling to take reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any of the above.

## **CHILD PROTECTION**

A broad term to describe philosophies, policies, standards, guidelines and procedures to protect children from both intentional and unintentional harm. In the current context, it applies particularly to the duty of the School and individuals and/or organisations associated with the school.

### **Types Of Child Abuse and How To Recognise It**

**PHYSICAL ABUSE:** the intentional cause of physical harm to a child. This may include but not limited to slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving, biting, strangling, poisoning or otherwise physically hurting the child.

#### **POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE:**

- Unexplained bruises and welts on any part of the body.
- Bruises of different ages (various colors).
- Injuries reflecting a shape suggesting an article has been used (electric cord, belt, buckle, ping pong paddle, hand).
- Injuries that regularly appear after absence or vacation.
- Unexplained burns, especially to soles, palms, back or buttocks.
- Burns with a pattern from an electric burner, iron or cigarette.
- Rope burns on arms, legs, neck or torso.
- Injuries inconsistent with information offered by the child.
- Immersion burns with a distinct boundary line.
- Unexplained lacerations, abrasions or fractures.

**NEGLECT OR NEGLIGENT TREATMENT** is the failure to provide a child (within the context of resources reasonable available to the family or caregiver) with the requirements for them to grow both physically and mentally and have access to basic rights such as food and water, a safe home environment void from fear and access to the education provided for them in their community.

**NEGLECT MAY BE:**

- **Physical**

Including failure to provide necessary food or shelter or lack of appropriate adult/appropriate supervision. Leaving children unsupervised at home for an extended period of time may be deemed as physical abuse.

- **Medical**

Failure to provide any necessary medical or mental health treatment a child may require.

- **Emotional**

A pattern of actions, such as: inattention to a child's emotional needs, failure to provide psychological care or allowing a child to abuse substances such as alcohol or illegal drugs. Specific examples include the verbal humiliation, the refusal to acknowledge the presence of a child, the invasion of a child's privacy for no specific reason and/or violent threats.

**POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF NEGLECT:**

- A child behaves in a way which shows they feel unwanted or that their basic needs are not being met.
- Parents are uninterested in a child's academic performance.
- Parents do not respond to repeated communications from the school.
- A child does not want to go home.
- A child is left for extended periods of time (age appropriate) without parents or a guardian.
- Parents cannot be reached in the case of emergency.

**IMPORTANT NOTES:**

- A child displaying behavioral issues are not necessarily indicators of abuse or neglect.
- Behavioural issues should always be assessed using the procedure given by the School. If they are then found to exist with child neglect/abuse indicators such as confused family dynamics or physical marks on a child then a report must be made immediately to allow further investigation to take place.

**SEXUAL ABUSE:**

- Sexual abuse is committing or allowing to be committed any sexual offense against a child as defined in either The Kingdom of Cambodia's criminal code or the School's Policy. It can include intentionally touching, either directly or through clothing, the genitals, bottom or breasts of a child for any reason other than for medical or genuine care purposes.

- Sexual abuse has some different characteristics of child abuse that warrant special attention. While physical abuse is often the result of immediate stress and not usually planned, sexual abuse requires planning with results that are more insidious. When planning regarding sexual abuse takes place it is often referred to as grooming and can result in victims feeling that they are to blame for what has taken place. A child can often feel a sense of responsibility, guilt or shame for the sexual behavior of the

offender. Sexual abuse requires far more secrecy than other forms of child abuse, so is often more difficult to identify.

- Many victims, through the process of grooming, are taught that the sex is a form of love, so in some cases feel a connection or even a love for their offender. When this happens a child who is suffering sexual abuse may present as a happy and well-adjusted individual and display no obvious signs that they are being abused.
- Working with the sexual offender cannot be done by school counsellors. Outsourced professional assistance needs to be consulted.

### **POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE:**

- Sexual knowledge, behavior, or use of language not appropriate to age level.
- Unusual interpersonal relationship patterns.
- Venereal disease in a child of any age.
- Evidence of physical trauma or bleeding to the oral, genital, or anal areas.
- Difficulty in walking or sitting.
- Refusing to change into PE clothes, fear of bathrooms.
- Child running away from home and not giving any specific complaint.
- Not wanting to be alone with an individual.
- Pregnancy, especially at a young age.
- Extremely protective parenting.

### **EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child causing, or having the potential to cause, adverse effects on their health and emotional development. This form of abuse can include threats, rejection, isolation, belittling, name calling or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment which erodes social competency or self-esteem over time.

#### **POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE:**

- Inappropriate attention seeking
- Difficulty in forming relationships
- Disturbed sleep
- Bed-wetting
- Unexplained underachievement or over achievement
- Self-harming
- Being withdrawn

### **OTHER FORMS/TERMS RELATING TO THE ABUSE OF A CHILD**

**Domestic violence and abuse (DA):** Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour inflicted by a member of a family towards a younger member of that family. Violence or abuse inflicted by a member of a family on another member of that family.

**Controlling behaviour:** A range of acts designed to make a child subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, removing or threatening to remove from them essential resources and



depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance to abusive behaviour and escape from such acts of maltreatment. This form of harm often involves an adult regulating every area of a child's daily behaviour.

**Coercive behaviour:** An act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish or frighten a child.

**Female genital mutilation (FGM):** The procedures that include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious consequences, both at the time the mutilation is carried out and in later life.

**Forced marriage:** In forced marriage, one or both potential spouses do not or are prevented from consenting to the marriage. When this happens something called duress (forcing someone to do something against their own will) is taking place. The means by which someone can be forced into an arranged marriage can include physical, sexual, financial and emotional pressure. If families have to resort to violence or emotional abuse to make someone marry, the person has not given their consent freely and therefore it is considered a forced marriage. In relation to children it should be noted that in some cultures marriages take place younger than what the School perceives to be, and Cambodian law states to be, the legal age of 18. It should also be noted that in some cultures children may be told of a potential suitor to whom they will marry years before they reach the age of consent.

**Radicalisation:** Children and young people can be drawn into violence or exposed to the messages of extremist groups in many different ways. This can happen through the influence of family or friends, through direct contact with extremist groups, or increasingly, through the internet.

**Child sexual exploitation:** Child sexual exploitation is illegal activity by people who have power over children and young people and use it to sexually abuse them. This can include seemingly consensual relationships or sexual activity in exchange for attention, a place to stay, gifts, money, cigarettes or illegal substances. It can also include serious organised crime. Exploitative relationships are characterised by inequality, and the power wielded on a vulnerable child can include violence, intimidation and coercion.

**Bullying and online bullying:** Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

## **REPORTING INCIDENTS AND SUSPICIONS AND THE FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES**

### **What Happens When A Teacher Has Reasonable Cause To Believe Abuse/Neglect Has Or Is Taking Place?**

1. Indicators of abuse and neglect as identified in this policy should be used by the staff member as a guideline for immediately alerting a member of the Student and Staff Welfare Team or the Principal, who will then determine if the case needs further attention.
2. A report must be made when a staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse or neglect. It should be done immediately.
3. All reports must be confidential and only those stated in this procedure and policy should be informed.

### **What Happens After Suspected Abuse Or Neglect Is Reported?**

1. Where there is cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, it is the responsibility of the staff

member to report their suspicions to a member of the Student and Staff Welfare department or to the Principal.

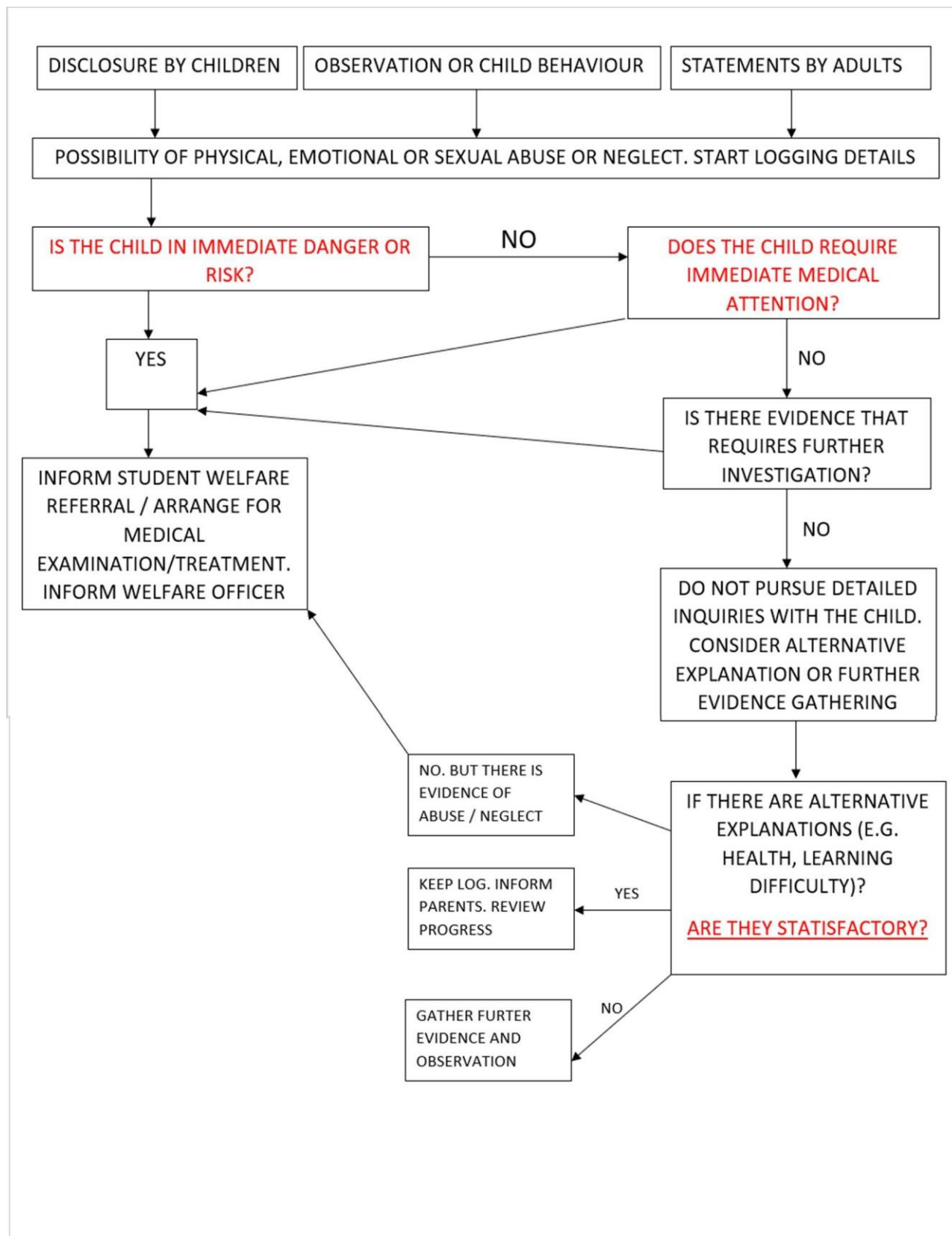
2. In all cases, the Principal and Head of Student and Staff Welfare must be notified.

It is the responsibility of the Principal to inform the Student and Staff Welfare Coordinator and the Head of Student and Staff Welfare of any suspected case of child abuse or neglect. (\*In the event that the abuse or neglect involves a staff member or other faculty member of the school, the Principal will also follow Head Office's policies pursuant to ethical professional behavior/conduct, including related disciplinary procedures.)

3. All staff, faculty and administrators are mandated to report incidences of abuse and neglect.
4. All reports of abuse and/or neglect must be made to the relevant campus' Student and Staff Welfare Coordinator within 24 hours or as soon as practically possible for immediate response.

### **STEPS FOLLOWED AFTER DISCLOSURE (FLOW-CHART) \***

\*Caution regarding the use of these guidelines: Each school incident can significantly vary when it comes to a child who is suffering from abuse or neglect. No one template or recommended flow-chart will be able to appropriately address all of the circumstances related to the reporting and handling of a child abuse disclosure incident. Individuals are encouraged to review the matter with the School's Principal or member of the Staff and Student Welfare department when in doubt.



## Clarification of 'Steps To Follow After Disclosure' (Flow-chart)

### Procedures for Reporting Suspected Cases of Child Abuse or Neglect

#### STEP 1

- When a child reports abuse or there is reasonable cause to believe that abuse is occurring, the teacher should seek advice from the campus' Student and Staff Welfare Coordinator, Head of Student and Staff Welfare or the Principal or as soon as is possible. The person they contact regarding the information will respond and act immediately.
- If a member of staff feels a child is in danger, respective authorities must be contacted immediately.
- A campus' Student and Staff Welfare Coordinator will take the initial steps to gather information regarding the reported incident and will form a school-based response team as needed to address the report. In the case of an incident deemed an emergency the Head of Student and Staff Welfare or Principal may take on this initial role and while the responsibility lies with the campus' Student and Staff Welfare Coordinator, that individual, should it be required, will always have the support of those two individuals.
- A response team is put together to oversee an investigation of reported abuse or maltreatment and to ensure a child is immediately free from any threatening or potentially harmful behaviour. A team may include the campus' Principal, School Nurse, other administrators or any other personnel the Student and Staff Welfare Department deems appropriate to be included. The department should gather a group of people who have the skills and experience to deal with the situation once considering the kind of abuse which has taken place and its severity.
- In all cases, follow-up activities will be conducted in a manner that ensures that information is documented factually correct and that strict confidentiality is maintained and in line with School Policy.
- The following procedure should be followed:
  - 1) Interview each staff member with a connection to a case, whether that relates to the person who initially raised concern or someone who played a role in gathering evidence regarding the situation, and document all information relevant to the case.
  - 2) Consult with school personnel to review the child's history in school and flag any previous behaviours or incidents which may have been related to the abuse or maltreatment which has been found to have taken place.
  - 3) Report the status of the case and show all findings to the Student and Staff Welfare Department.
  - 4) Determine the course of follow-up-actions which need to be taken. At this stage advice should be taken from those in the highest positions within the School and outside professionals should be called upon if required.

#### STEP 2

- Based on acquired information, a plan of action will be developed to assist the child and family.

• Actions that may take place are:

1. Discussions between the child and a member of the Student and Staff Welfare Department in order to ensure all information and facts are known regarding a case. Depending on the age of the child, these discussions may include drawing pictures and playing with dolls to elicit more information as to what may have occurred.
2. In-class observations of the child will most likely take place by regular teachers, who will only be given information regarding the situation which the Student and Staff Welfare Department has deemed necessary, as well as by a member of the Student and Staff Welfare Department and/or other School administrators.
3. Meetings with the family to present the School's concerns are likely to take place. Depending on the level of involvement or knowledge the family has had regarding the situation an external professional may be required for such a conference.
4. Referral of the student and family to external professional counselling. If it is felt the situation would be improved by such action, and that the child will be safe from harm with this as an ultimate process taking place, then authorities which would consider removing a child from a hostile home environment may not be required. If this kind of action is not felt necessary, and counselling is agreed to be the best option for the child, then it must be noted that the monitoring of a child, within the School, who has been found to have suffered abuse or maltreatment should be ongoing for the foreseeable, if not duration of, their education at the School.
5. Notifications to all those who are involved with the child for whom a concern has been raised. If a child's family is seen as the catalyst for issues which are concerning or harming the child then investigations should be carried out to find out if there are other children in the family who may be at risk. If this is found to be the case then the proper channels should be gone through to
6. Consultation with those in Cambodia who represent the interests of children within education and from a social point of view regarding neglect, harm and maltreatment may be informed. The proper channels for such reporting and the conversations which may pursue should be gone through and all action should be in line with Cambodia's law and procedures regarding the safeguarding of vulnerable children.
7. Consultation with local authorities regarding intervening and the possible immediate removal of a child from a community in which they are at risk may be advised to the authorities which in place in Cambodia to deal with such decision. Any such decision should be main by the leading administrators within the School and a report should be presented by the Student and Staff Welfare Department to those making any final decision.

**STEP 3:**

Subsequent to a reported and/or substantiated case of child abuse or neglect: [gcr@westernunion.com](mailto:gcr@westernunion.com)

- 1) The member of the Student and Staff Welfare Department will maintain contact with the child and their family to provide support and guidance as appropriate.
- 2) The designated member of the Student and Staff Welfare Department (likely to be the campus Student and Staff Welfare or the Head of Student and Staff Welfare) will provide the child's teachers and the Principal with ongoing support.
- 3) They will provide resource materials and strategies for teachers involved in the child's education to use.
- 4) They will maintain contact with outside therapists to give updates of the child's progress of in School.

All documentation related to the investigation will be kept in the student's confidential School records file. Records of a child who has been in a situation which has seen notes added to their file will have this flagged with schools to which they may be transferred to. The School will make every attempt to share this

information, in the most confidential way possible, to ensure the student is protected.

**MOST CASES OF SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT WILL BE HANDLED BY THE STUDENT AND STAFF WELFARE DEPARTMENT OR AN OUTSIDE COUNSELOR WITH SKILLS IN:**

- Student relationships with THEIR peers
- Parenting skills related to disciplining children at home
- Student-parent relationships
- Mental health issues such as mild depression, low self-esteem, grievance

**CASES WHICH MAY BE REFERRED TO OUTSIDE RESOURCES INCLUDE THOSE INVOLVING THE FOLLOWING:**

- Mental health issues caused by neglect, abuse or forms of bullying such as severe depression, psychosis, dissociation and suicide ideation
- Severe and ongoing physical abuse or neglect
- Sexual abuse and incest

**IN EXTREME CASES WHEN PERPETRATORS (IN MOST CASES FAMILIES OR A FAMILY MEMBER) DO NOT STOP THE ABUSE OR CONCERNS REMAIN ABOUT THE SAFETY OF THE CHILD, REPORTS COULD BE MADE TO:**

- The Student and Staff Welfare Coordinator and/or the Principal
- The School Board
- The Police
- The Cambodian authority designated for dealing with child neglect and abuse

**AT-RISK CHARACTERISTICS AND CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION PROTOCOLS**

**The Paragon ISC Child and Youth Protection Policy works for the child, the family and the community.**

- Child abuse is a multi-faceted issue that involves dynamics of the child, the family, and the community. The School's policy works to respond to all three levels:

**THE CHILD** At-risk children can include those who have challenging temperaments, health issues, social or academic difficulties and those who may be unaware of their rights to protection.



**Paragon ISC** promotes respect, study and social skills, teaches students about their rights to

protection, healthy relationships, assertiveness and using support systems.

**THE FAMILY** At-risk characteristics include parents under stress, families with less support mechanisms around them regarding the upbringing of children and care of children and/or access to resources. Families which are socially isolated for what could be a variety of reasons, those who place unusually high expectations on their children, or those who were treated/disciplined inappropriately when they were children are also at risk.



**Paragon ISC** works with parents to understand appropriate discipline, networks within the community from which they can share experiences and get support, as well as health services which may be able to provide help. Paragon ISC uses the Child and Youth Protection Policy when engaging with parents and educating them with regards to the importance of the safety of their children.

**THE COMMUNITY** At-risk characteristics include limited laws on Child and Youth Protection, limited resources to available to expat families, unusually high work stress placed on parents, acceptance of inappropriate behavior towards children (excessive corporal punishment), unusually high expectations placed on children to achieve.



**Paragon ISC** strictly implements the Child and Youth Protection Policy, trains teachers to recognise signs of abuse, trains staff in supporting families, trains and supports parents in protective behaviors, networks with community and health services for holistic referrals, networks with local authorities.

### **THE PARAGON ISC COMMITMENT TO USING INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED BEST PRACTICES (THE CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION PROGRAMME)**

#### **WHAT DOES A CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY AND PROGRAMME MEAN FOR THE PARAGON ISC COMMUNITY?**

- Paragon ISC is defining a standard of how all children should be treated. The School believes they be treated with respect and dignity at all times.
- Children have legal and moral rights to their individuality. Paragon ISC believes that when these vital elements of development are protected, then children will develop in such a way which will see them gain the academic and social abilities to meet the expectations of their family, community and global society. The Child and Youth Protection standards defined by Paragon ISC encompass all cultures and international law. When given reasonable cause to believe that these rights are violated, Paragon ISC will seek to whatever it can and is in its means to restore those rights.
- While the Paragon ISC Child and Youth Protection Policy is intended to disclose key components

and related procedures for the school's overall child safety framework, the school also strives to maintain additional guidelines and 'best practice' procedures for the school's ongoing and proactive Child and Youth Protection Programme.

• Some of those additional areas in which the school is also committed to with respect to its comprehensive Child and Youth Protection Program, but in which limited details have been included in this policy, include:

- Roles of the Child and Youth Protection Team and the Child and Youth Protection Officer (Student and Staff Welfare Coordinator)
- Recruitment/screening assessments and background checks for new employees
- School curriculum considerations related to Child and Youth Protection.
- Training requirements for leadership, staff, parents, and students (*The School has a scheduled program of regular, systematic professional training for contractors, faculty, and staff on student safeguarding, child abuse prevention, recognition, intervention, and reporting*).
- Other formal learning programs throughout the school experience related to Child and Youth Protection may cover areas such as bullying, personal safety, physical abuse, manipulation, grooming, online safety, healthy sexual behavior, neglect and negligent behavior, self-harm, staying safe away from home, commercial exploitation and disclosing abuse. (These programmes are to be delivered by members of faculty or external providers who are trained in these areas.)
- Overview of anti-bullying policies (including online safety).
- Special considerations for student trips & related transportation and lodging issues.
- School safety and security considerations (school environment, building and facilities, protective equipment).
- Procedures/response for dealing with an alleged staff offender.
- Procedures/response for dealing with a student who has been harmed.
- Confidentiality and record-keeping procedures
- Self-audit protocols (adherence to the child a protection policies and procedures are reviewed with sufficient regularity and systematically).



## Appendix A:

### Paragon ISC Code of Conduct

#### For Teachers, Teacher Assistants, Staff and Others

##### Effective Date:

*This Code of Conduct (“Code”) serves as a guide to ethical conduct and professional behavior standards at Paragon ISC.*

Paragon ISC is committed to the safety and protection of children and all members of our School community. The Code applies to all faculty, staff, employees, volunteers and students who represent the School and who interact with children or young people in a direct and/or indirect capacity.

#### **Introduction:**

The public and private conduct of faculty, staff, employees, students, and volunteers acting on behalf of Paragon ISC can inspire and motivate those with whom they interact, or can cause great harm if inappropriate. We must, at all times, be aware of the responsibilities that accompany our work, including procuring safe and healthy environments for all of our students.

The **Purpose** of this Code is to:

- Insure the health, welfare and safety of our students and other members of our School community.
- Define and clarify the parameters of professional behavioral expectations and practices with regards to our School.
- Assure our parent and community stakeholders, accreditation agencies, and others of the accountability of the educators/staff who work at our school.

**Background Checks** – Although Paragon ISC understands that no background checks offer a 100 per cent guarantee on the suitability of a potential candidate to work with children, Paragon ISC conducts professional background screening of the school’s personnel prior to employment and reserves the right to conduct periodic screenings of the School’s employees and other affiliate or contractors as may be deemed appropriate to insure the safety the School’s children and staff.

**Disciplinary Action** – Failure to maintain good moral and ethical standards with regard to children and model professionalism with colleagues, parents and others in the school community as may or may not be defined exclusively in this Code may result in reprimand, censure or dismissal.

**School Community Standards** – The following standards are intended to outline expectations and accountability for those individuals at our school who assume the important responsibility of working with children.

#### **Our School Community Standards:**

**Standard 1: Good Moral Character and Personal Fitness** — Because of the nature of their trusted positions, educators and staff members must exhibit good moral character and personal fitness. This is defined as one of the traits necessary to have contact with, teach, and/or perform supervision of children. These traits include but are not limited to those described in the school’s Handbook policies and in this Code.

In addition, all employees who work with children must undergo a **background check** providing reasonable assurance as to the lack of conviction of any crime involving:

- The physical neglect of a child
- The physical injury or death of a child

- The sexual exploitation of a child
- Sexual offenses involving children
- The production, distribution, reception, or possession of child pornography
- The sale or purchase of a child (related to exploitation and forms of sexual slavery)
- A conviction of any crime that would call into question the individual's worthiness to work with children

**Standard 2: Ethical Conduct toward Students** — School employees and support staff should always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and out of the classroom. They are all responsible for maintaining **physical, emotional, and sexual boundaries** in such interactions.

**Unethical and/or Illegal Conduct** that also violates such boundaries includes, but is not limited to:

- Striking, hurting, or causing a student physical pain
- Physical contact that exploits, abuses, or harasses
- Engaging in any harassing behavior on the basis of race, gender, sex, sexual identity, national origin, religion, or disability
- Covert or overt sexual behaviors involving students
- Any sexual advance or fostering an inappropriate relationship with a student; written, verbal, or physical
- Sexual intercourse or committing any unlawful sexual act
- Seductive speech or gestures
- Indecent exposure
- Furnishing or allowing students to consume tobacco, alcohol, illegal/unauthorized drugs or inappropriate reading materials
- Any other act of child abuse – including physical and verbal abuse, child endangerment, or acts of cruelty to children

**Communication with Children** is governed by the key safety concept of transparency. The following steps will reduce the risk of private or otherwise inappropriate communication between Paragon ISC parents, administration, teachers, personnel, volunteers, and minors:

- Where possible, email exchanges between a minor and a person acting on behalf of the school are to be made using a school email address.
- Faculty, staff and volunteers who use any form of online communications including social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and text messaging to communicate with minors may only do so for activities involving School business.
- Electronic communication that takes place over a school network or platform may be subject to periodic monitoring.

**General Physical Contact** – Physical contact with children can be misconstrued both by the recipient and by those who observe it, and should occur only when completely nonsexual and otherwise appropriate, and never in private. School employees and support staff should show **prudent discretion** before touching another person, especially children, and be aware of how physical touch will be perceived or received, and whether it would be an appropriate expression of greeting, care, concern, or celebration.

**One-on-one Meetings and After-School Related Activities** – Interactions with a child or youth are best held in a public area or in a room where the interaction can be (or is being) observed; or in a room with an open door or window that provides visibility; including informing another adult when appropriate. The same prudence should be applied for after-school activities.

**Student Discipline** – School personnel and volunteers are prohibited at all times from physically disciplining a child and should adhere to the school's handbook policies on discipline.

**Standard 3: Ethical Conduct toward Professional Colleagues** — Ethical conduct between colleagues and other community members upholds the following principles:

- A colleague does not engage in any verbal, physical, or sexual harassment of another colleague. **Sexual harassment** includes but is not limited to unwelcome sexual advances and invitations, requests for sexual favours, unwanted physical contact, as well as other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, such as the display or transmission of sexually suggestive objects, pictures or cartoons; physical gestures of a sexual nature; sexual epithets, jokes and insults; or any other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. **Harassment can also be**

based on characteristics other than sexual or gender related, such as race, religion, national origin, sexual identity, or disability. It can take the form of epithets, jokes and insults or other forms of mistreatment.

- A colleague does not make false statements about other colleagues; falsify or misrepresent his or her credentials, school-related activities, or the school community.
- A colleague does not reveal confidential information about colleagues unless required by the school administration for specific purposes as Child Protection issues.

**Standard 4: Ethical Conduct toward Performance and Confidentiality** — Ethical conduct by teachers and staff includes:

- Student Assessment and Reporting – Teachers must accurately report and record students’ test scores and provide fair and reliable assessments. Teachers are also strictly prohibited from assisting students during the taking of any standardised tests.
- Teacher Hiring and Evaluation Process – Supervisors should engage in practices that involve clearly defined rubrics, designed to ensure success, fairness, process integrity, and reliable evaluations.
- Falsification or Misrepresentation of Facts or Documents – School personnel must avoid the falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or the erroneously reporting of facts, reports, or other documents as may be requested from time to time from the school’s administration, outside police or governing authorities, or in the course of an official investigation.
- Unauthorised Professional Practices – Engagement in unauthorised professional practices such as the practice of medicine, including psychiatric medicine, or providing legal, financial, or medical advice (except in emergency situations where such behavior is used to protect the life of a student or colleague) is strictly prohibited.
- Other Professional & Ethical Practices -- includes maintaining the **confidentiality** of students and staff academic, health, disciplinary, and other personal records; and having an understanding as to when **transparency** is necessary (e.g., student has a nut allergy) in order to promote the health, welfare or safety of students/staff.

**Standard 5: Ethical Conduct in the Use of Alcohol or Controlled Substances in the Course of Working Hours** — Faculty, staff, employees, and volunteers should refrain from the illegal possession and/or illegal use of controlled substances and/or alcohol at all times, and from the use of tobacco products, alcohol and/or drugs when working with children.

**Standard 6: Ethical Conduct toward Remuneration and Gifts** — In the course of professional activity, coercing or forcing a student or parent to provide remuneration for items, services or favors as a private transaction is not allowed. This includes offering to pay students for favors, or taking money from students in return for goods or services. Other ethical conduct considerations are as follows:

- Vendors – School personnel are prohibited from accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal gain in which the appearance of a conflict of interest may exist.
- Gifts – School personnel should also not accept or give gifts to children without the knowledge of their parents or guardians.
- Tutoring – should adhere to the school’s handbook policies with regard to tutoring students or other services. While under a full-time contract with the School, personnel are prohibited from tutoring any students that study in this school.

**Standard 7: Ethical Conduct towards Honouring Employment Contracts** — School personnel should honor all of the terms as contained in their employment contracts other than for unforeseeable reasons in which the school may formally release the employee from the contract prior to the employee abandoning any of its provisions.

**Standard 8: Ethical Conduct toward School Property and Funds**

The Unauthorised, misuse, theft, or intentional damage of school property and the misappropriation of school funds is a violation of school policies and subject to severe discipline.

**Standard 9: Ethical Conduct toward Reporting Incidents** — School personnel must intervene when there is evidence of, or there is reasonable cause to suspect, that children are being abused in any way; or any other violation of this Code. Suspected abuse or neglect must be reported to the appropriate school authorities as further described in handbook/policy of the school. In particular, the following are prohibited:

- Knowing failure to report physical abuse or sexual misconduct by another school employee, parent or adult.
- Knowing failure to inform the school Principal, counselor or authority about the commission of an act of unprofessional conduct by another educational practitioner.

**Standard 10: Ethical Conduct toward Acknowledgement and Adherence to this Code** —Members of the School community to which this Code applies must read this Code in its entirety and periodically sign-off; that is, agreeing to all of the Code’s standards as summarized below.

### **Standard 11: Photography and the Use of Video**

Before photographing or filming a child for work related purposes, School personnel should assess and comply with school rules or restrictions on reproducing personal images as the following:

- Obtain informed consent from the child and/or parent or guardian of the child before photographing, recording or filming a child for educational purposes only.
- Not to take photos without prior permission of respective Paragon ISC administration. (Kindergarten and Primary School teachers are can take photos with their devices for student portfolios only, the photos taken must be deleted at the end of the day after the data transfer is complete.)
- The agreement of those photograph or record should be sought and the purpose of use should be clarified to respective administrators.
- After permission is granted from school administration, explanation of how the photograph or film will be used should be given to the child and their parent or guardian.
- My photography and video taking will be limited to my purpose.
- Take care to ensure local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images are adhered to before photographing or filming a child
- Respect the dignity of persons photographed in personnel’s own behaviour and in photographs or recordings.
- All photos and/or video recordings taken should ensure that children are adequately dressed.
- Remuneration or any kind of gifts should ever be given or offered for taking a photograph or film
- At no time making recordings or images which are or can be construed as sexually suggestive are allowed.
- Images are not allowed to use for public (including blog) or commercial purposes without Paragon ISC’s permission.
- All the images or video taken with permission of School administration should honestly represent the facts and context.

### **Standard 12: Respecting a student’s privacy and personal space**

All members of the School’s staff should respect that children are developing young people and it often requires careful thought when it comes to their privacy and personal space. For this reason the School sets out the following guidelines regarding these sensitive issues.

- Members of staff on the Secondary Campus should adhere to the rule that student toilets are to be used by students only, while enforcing that for no reason whatsoever should a student use staff toilets.
- On an occasion when an incident which may put a child at risk may be taking place in students’ toilets or may be committing an act of self-harm, then they should make a responsible decision regarding whether they need to enter. A child at any form of physical injury should usually be reason enough to enter student toilets.
- Admin or teacher on duty may require to check the same sex toilets only during the break times in a safe manner for children, solely for the safety reasons.
- On the Kindergarten and Primary campuses only teachers or teacher assistants assigned to aiding students

who may need help using the WC facilities should be in student toilets when their help is required.

- On the Secondary Campus, when students are getting changed for sporting or extracurricular activities then space should be given for them to do so where they are not in the view of adult members of staff. Only a member of staff who is supervising an activity should be present in the same area and male/female members of staff should only supervise students preparing for these kinds of activities if they are of the same sex. Again, this point may differ for the Primary and Kindergarten campuses if specific teachers have been assigned to aid students in getting changed or ready for or after certain campus activities.

## Appendix B: Paragon ISC Agreements

### PARAGON ISC 'S STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SIGNATURE

I promise to strictly follow all of the rules and guidelines as contained in the school's Code of Conduct as a condition of my contract which sees me teaching and/or providing services to the children participating in the school's programmes.

The Code includes the following key areas of my responsibility:

I will:

- To the best of my ability, promote the good health, welfare, and safety of all members of all members of our School community and uphold high ethical standards.
- Treat everyone with respect, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Conduct one-on-one meetings with children in settings that are open and visible to others; as well as never be alone during School activities without another adult being notified or present.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children, while also adhering to the School's policies on student discipline.
- Maintain appropriate physical boundaries at all times and touch children – when necessary – only in ways that are appropriate, public, and non-sexual.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children.
- Avoid transactions with students, parents, or vendors that may be perceived as conflicts of interest.
- Comply fully with the School's policies on anti-harassment, representation and confidentiality standards, safeguarding of property and funds, and the honoring of contracts.
- Comply fully with the School's mandatory reporting requirements and the School's policy to report suspected child abuse; and other violations of the Code of Conduct or other School policies.

I will not:

- Touch or speak to a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Inflict any physical or emotional abuse such as striking, spanking, shaking, slapping, humiliating, ridiculing, threatening or degrading children.
- Smoke or use tobacco products, or possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while working with children or on School premises.
- Accept or give gifts to children or youth without the knowledge of their parents or guardians.
- Communicate with children over unmonitored email.
- Use Twitter or similar forms of electronic or social media to communicate with students except for activities strictly involving school business.
- Take photos or videos of children without permission of the School administration. (The permission may cover the photo taking for the students portfolios in Kindergarten and Primary Campuses, under the supervision of the administration.)
- Use images and videos taken (with the School's permission) for any personal purposes, via any social media platform.

I understand that as a person working with and/or providing services to children under the auspices of Paragon ISC I am subject to a criminal history background check.

My signature confirms that I have read this Code of Conduct and that as a person working with children I agree to follow these standards. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from Paragon ISC.

**Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## PARAGON ISC COMMON AGREEMENT (EXPECTATIONS OF CONDUCT WITH CHILDREN)

*“To ensure the safety of children and the well-being of our school community”*

Every individual in the School community should be treated with dignity and respect. As a school we have a special obligation to children. As such, we promote a safe and positive community. The Paragon ISC Common Agreement is a set of written guidelines designed to safeguard children and all members of the school community, and ensure safe teaching, behavior, and practice within Paragon ISC.

### Appropriate Practice

It is our responsibility to promote the welfare of children. As a member of the Paragon ISC community,

I will:

- Act as a role model for students through my words and actions.
- Respond to student physical contact such as hugs or handshakes in a culturally-sensitive and age-appropriate manner.
- Ensure that bathroom visits are safe and respectful of student privacy.
- Exhibit and encourage open communication.
- Follow Paragon ISC protocols for child safety when supervising school field trips and overnight trips.
- Alert another staff member when working with students after school.
- Hold myself and others accountable for keeping children safe.
- Report suspected child abuse to my administrator.

### Inappropriate Practice

It is our responsibility to act if we have concerns about the welfare of a child.

I will not:

- Initiate or encourage any physical contact while alone with a student.
- Transport students without parent consent unless it is a medical emergency.
- Use alcohol or other inappropriate substances on school property or while attending student-related school functions away from Paragon ISC.
- Accept gifts or give gifts to students without the knowledge of their parents.
- Invite a student to my home or arrange to meet with a student away from school property without parent consent.
- Meet individually with a student in a closed or unobservable setting.
- Communicate privately with students by phone or through social media platforms for non-School related reasons.
- Post photos or other information about students for non-School related reasons that could increase the vulnerability of students.

I confirm that I have read and understood the Paragon ISC Common Agreement and agree to follow the above standards of practice. I understand that any action inconsistent with this, or failure to take action as mandated by this Common Agreement, may result in disciplinary action.

**Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C:

# PARAGON ISC Agreement for Visitors

**Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Purpose of the visit:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of the institution / company (if applicable)** \_\_\_\_\_

**I, \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name) agree that in the course of my association with the Paragon ISC,**

**I will:**

- Treat all children and young people with respect regardless of race, colour, sex, language, disability, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, birth or other status.
- Assist in providing a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all children, young people, parents, family, guardians, employees and volunteers.
- Encourage children, young people, parents, family, guardians, employees and volunteers to speak up about issues that affect them.
- Refrain from using corporal punishment on children.
- Immediately report concerns or allegations of child abuse in accordance with Paragon ISC reporting process.
- Comply with the Paragon ISC Child and Youth Child Protection Policy.

**I will not:**

- Use inappropriate language – whether of an offensive, discriminatory, demeaning, abusive or sexual nature – when speaking with or while in the presence of a child or young person.
- Engage in behaviour to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade a child or young person, or otherwise emotionally abuse a child or young person.
- Act in a sexually provocative manner or engage children in any form of sexual activity.
- Hold, kiss, cuddle or touch a child in an inappropriate, unnecessary or culturally insensitive way children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Discriminate against or in favour of particular children to the exclusion of others.
- Spend time outside authorised visits with any child or young person connected with Paragon ISC.
- Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves such as toileting them or changing their clothes.
- Take photos or videos on the School premises without prior permission from the designated person(s) in authority.
- Post images obtained with school permission in any of the social platforms without prior permission of School administration.
- Access or create sexually abusive images of children.
- Use computers, mobile phones, video or digital cameras or any other technology for the purpose of exploiting or harassing children

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_