



# GOOD SHEPHERD INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY





## IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

### INQUIRERS

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

### KNOWLEDGEABLE

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

### THINKERS

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

### COMMUNICATORS

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

### PRINCIPLED

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

### OPEN-MINDED

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

### CARING

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

### RISK-TAKERS

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

### BALANCED

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

### REFLECTIVE

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.



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## **VISION STATEMENT**

Good Shepherd International School, in its pursuit of a holistic education, envisages inspiring and fostering a community of caring, progressive, lifelong learners to embrace and celebrate all Creation.

## **MISSION STATEMENT AND DESCRIPTORS**

Good Shepherd International School endeavours to prepare each student for academic social and personal success by creating a community of empowered and diverse learners striving to be globally minded citizens in an atmosphere of mutual respect, understanding and trust.

### **GSIS is an International School by:**

- ❖ maintaining a global perspective in an Asian context wherein it is situated
- ❖ embracing a diversity of cultures represented by its staff and students
- ❖ being sensitive and accepting of all cultures
- ❖ upholding a secular perspective within the School community
- ❖ offering national and international curriculums

### **Academic Success at GSIS is:**

- ❖ acquisition of academic skills
- ❖ training to apply knowledge to real life situations
- ❖ provision of qualified staff to ensure quality education
- ❖ being in a residential set-up that facilitates holistic academic growth and development
- ❖ benchmarked results and learning outcomes on global standards
- ❖ entry into leading colleges/universities in the country and worldwide

### **Social Success at GSIS is:**

- ❖ development of a strong identity and self worth
- ❖ ability to relate, connect and communicate effectively with others
- ❖ cultural sensitivity and acceptance
- ❖ valuing justice and fairness in social living
- ❖ being service oriented unconditionally
- ❖ having an acceptable level of decorum

### **Personal Success at GSIS is:**

- ❖ being a life long learner equipped with a keen spirit of inquiry
- ❖ developing a value based and ethical outlook on life
- ❖ imbibing cognitive and behavioral skills to take on the world
- ❖ acquiring a sense of purpose and being goal oriented
- ❖ possessing a sense of equanimity and ability to balance reason and emotion
- ❖ having acceptable standards of deportment
- ❖ having a spiritual rootedness within a secular context

### **Community Life at GSIS means:**

- ❖ staff and students living in a multi-cultural ambience / context
- ❖ having a sense of being in a 'family'
- ❖ developing a sense of belonging and togetherness in all we do
- ❖ allowing for personal space within a structured environment
- ❖ experiencing the joy / art of living – joie de vivre

### **Empowered Learners at GSIS:**

- ❖ take responsibility and are accountable for one's learning
- ❖ value and enjoy the process of learning as much as the outcome
- ❖ share and transmit knowledge
- ❖ develop initiative and leadership skills

### **Diverse Learners at GSIS:**

- ❖ acquire holistic learning and development through a wide variety of academic / extra curricular activities
- ❖ have varied curricular options to choose from catering to their diverse needs and backgrounds
- ❖ are recognized and accepted for their multiple ability levels and learning styles
- ❖ learn from each other in the diverse community they live, learn and work in

### **Globally minded Citizens at GSIS:**

- ❖ value the human spirit beyond the constraints of cultural boundaries
- ❖ develop awareness and sensitivity

to global issues encompassing all aspects of life

- ❖ understand the impact of one's thoughts and actions on the world at large
- ❖ think globally and act locally

#### **Mutual Respect at GSIS means:**

- ❖ upholding the sanctity of teacher students roles
- ❖ appreciating and accepting individuality and diversity
- ❖ safeguarding and promoting the values ethos of the institution
- ❖ preserving and maintaining the environment we live and work in

#### **Understanding and Trust at GSIS means:**

- ❖ Truth / Trust / Triumph (our school motto)
- ❖ caring for individual needs even as we live in the community
- ❖ belief in the goodness of the individual and the human race
- ❖ developing empathy and rapport amongst members of the community
- ❖ being active listeners and critical thinkers before being judgemental

#### **OBJECTIVES**

1. **VALUE EDUCATION** : To create a climate that encourages freedom of thought while inculcating the savor of self-discipline, punctuality, fair play and industry.
2. **HOME AWAY FROM HOME** : To actualize a 'home away from home' atmosphere where a right proportion of care and control is administered catering to the emotional and intellectual needs of a child.
3. **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE** : To nurture heuristic, lifelong learners and who excel in conventional academic demands; explore and discover the interconnectivity of disciplines and grow into active generators of knowledge.
4. **CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES** : To ensure that ALL students gain experience, and appreciate ALL the creative and performing arts thereby promoting the acquisition of team spirit

and development of individual skills needed for a holistic growth.

5. **TEACHING STRATEGY** : To practice tailored teaching strategies incorporating latest technology to facilitate the diverse learning styles and intelligence quotients of the student.
6. **COMMUNITY SERVICE** : To disseminate awareness of environmental concerns and humanitarian issues and kindle a sense of responsibility towards the amelioration of the needy by working with charity organizations.
7. **TECHNOLOGY** : To allow opportunities for a guided, constructive and age appropriate use of technology and other resources within and throughout the academic program.
8. **INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION** : To discover the latent potentials in each child through individual attention and providing them with opportunities to hone them to their full potential.
9. **COUNSELLING** : To monitor a complementary growth of social, cognitive and spiritual facets of a child and aid in making fulfilling career choices.
10. **MULTICULTURAL** : To foster respect for and tolerance of other cultures and creed by constructing a multicultural and secular ambience.
11. **TO GROW FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH** : To conduct periodic review of all programs and procedures to ensure consistency and continuous improvement in line with the ideals espoused in the Mission statement and Motto of the school.

#### **INTERNATIONALISM**

GSIS fosters an ethically and culturally diverse learning environment wherein students transcend barriers through communication and mutual understanding which inspires them not only to become courageous leaders but also responsible citizens in the service of local and global communities.

# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

## 1. Policy Context

- 1.1 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child enshrines the right of every child to protection from harm and abuse. The government of India is a signatory to the convention, having ratified it on 11th December 1992. It is incumbent on all authorities dealing with children and indeed all adults who are part of Indian society to ensure that all children are protected from harm and abuse, either by adults or peers, to the best of their ability.
- 1.2 Teachers and other child care professionals have a particular responsibility to ensure that children are safeguarded, in particular but not exclusively, those children who are entrusted to them.

## 2. The context for GSIS

- 2.1 All schools have a responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of their students. It is particularly important for a school like GSIS, with a wholly residential student population, and to whom parents have entrusted their children in good faith, to be very vigilant in the task of safeguarding the welfare of students.
- 2.2 By all accepted definitions, GSIS is a closed environment from which students have no access to the local community and no physical access to parents or guardians during term time; the latter only by prior arrangement. Because of this there is an added imperative for staff to be vigilant and aware of behaviours exhibited by students. They should also be clear about their responsibilities for safeguarding the welfare of children. It is especially important that children should be heard in an open and honest way and that they should be aware that any disclosures or allegations they may make cannot remain confidential between the student and member of staff. Thus if a child asks for a promise of confidentiality, it should not be given unconditionally by the adult. This should be clear from the outset.

2.3 While GSIS is described above as a closed environment, there is an understanding that children can be guaranteed safety from harm and abuse while within the GSIS campus. This is not necessarily the case and there is the possibility that staff may be confronted with an allegation by a student against a member of staff. While this is a difficult matter to deal with, the child must be listened to and the allegation investigated by Academic Council members. At no time from the point of allegation to conclusion of the investigation should the student be scapegoated by any adult and due process should be completed in an impartial manner. Clearly the parents of the child making the allegation should be contacted and involved in the investigation. Such an allegation should not result in the student being sent away from the school summarily in view of the substantial emotional and intellectual damage that such a move would cause to the student. In the event of a false allegation being made by a student against a member of staff, normal disciplinary procedures against the student would be applied. In the event of an allegation by a student being upheld after due process, the member of staff would be subject to instant dismissal and could face criminal charges.

2.4 Despite the fact that GSIS is a closed environment during term time, children do go home for holidays and the school is not in a position to guarantee a child's safety during such periods. However some children are subjected to abuse within families; statistically children are more likely to be sexually abused, for example, by a family member or close family contact than by a stranger. Physical punishment and emotional abuse do happen within families and staff should be aware of how such experiences may affect children's behaviour on their return to the school.

2.5 This policy gives definitions of the widely understood categories of child abuse.

### **3. Defining child abuse**

3.1 Child care professionals agree internationally that child abuse falls within four categories:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

3.2 In India the term *ragging* has been widely used in reference to bullying in schools and other institutions of learning. Ragging is a wide ranging concept most frequently used to describe physical bullying and harassment of students by their peers. The term may however cover aspects of the first three categories in the list above, not simply physical abuse but with elements of sexual and emotional abuse as well.

3.3 Extract of D.O. No. 12-19/2012-RSMA dated 8 November 2016 issued by the government which contains broad policy statements, advice and guidance for schools in combatting bullying and ragging is contained as an appendix to this policy document and should be read and understood by all teaching, boarding, co-curricular, administrative staff and Coordinators in the institution.

3.4 **Physical abuse** covers all aspects of physical punishment, beating, slapping and the use of excessive force against a child. Children may display the external traits of excessive physical punishment, the most obvious being bruising and abrasions to the skin some of which may be old or faded.

3.5 **Sexual abuse** covers all aspects of inappropriate sexual behaviours between children and adults and children and children. Inappropriate touching, observing and displaying of the sexual organs represent sexual abuse. Sexual penetration of a child by an adult, or of a younger child by an older child is the most serious example of child abuse.

3.6 **Emotional abuse** can take many forms but the intention behind such abusive behaviour is to belittle the child and to undermine their feelings of self-worth. Emotional abuse can involve insulting behaviour, rejection and withdrawal of emotional warmth, blaming and sarcasm.

- 3.7 **Neglect** is widely regarded as pernicious lack of care for a child. Often children are neglected as part of a cycle of generational neglect within a family, where good parenting has never been learned or practised from generation to generation. Neglect is often demonstrated through inconsistent parenting, lack of physical care, poor hygiene and nutrition. It is unlikely, but not impossible, that students coming to GSIS will have suffered wilful neglect at home.

## 4 Identifying abuse

- 4.1 All staff should be vigilant in observing students' behaviours. It is not a simple matter to identify traits in behaviour and to readily attribute causes. Students who spend a number of years in an academic institution, particularly a closed one, mature and develop naturally and will exhibit differing behaviours as they mature and develop an understanding of their place in the world. Nonetheless a sympathetic staff member will always be sensitive to the needs of the students with whom they have been entrusted and should be open and available as a first point of contact should they be approached. Staff in the boarding section must be particularly vigilant in assuring that all students are protected from bullying and ragging of any kind. Any incidents must be reported to Counsellors / Coordinators immediately.

## 5 Staff behaviour

- 5.1 Staff should make themselves aware of their responsibilities towards the students with whom they have been entrusted. Because they operate within a closed community setting, staff should be aware that their behaviour in relation to students will be open to scrutiny by colleagues and students alike. There is no possibility of hiding abusive behaviour and all staff and students have a duty to report what they see as abusive behaviour by staff and students alike.
- 5.2 No member of staff will engage in physical punishment against a student. This includes any form of beating, slapping or use of any instrument to inflict pain on a child. These examples are not exhaustive but constitute physical abuse and criminal behaviour.

5.3 No member of staff will engage in humiliating treatment of a student. This includes excessive shouting, name calling, humiliating language or gestures. This also includes kneeling, bowing or other unnatural body positions. These examples are not exhaustive but constitute emotional abuse and criminal behaviour.

5.4 No member of staff will engage in any form of intimate relationship with a student. This includes sharing of personal information including photographs of a sexual nature. These examples are not exhaustive but constitute sexual abuse and criminal behaviour.

## **6 Staff safety**

6.1 Staff should act in a responsible manner at all times in relation to students. On very rare occasions children make false allegations against adults who are entrusted with their care. These false allegations may be as a result of a desire to harm a teacher. What is certain is that whether or not an allegation is subsequently proven to be untrue, the reputation of a teacher can be destroyed along with considerable emotional damage being inflicted on the teacher and his or her family. All staff should take steps to protect themselves from unwarranted accusations of unprofessional conduct including abuse by acting at all times in a professional manner.

## **7 Conclusion**

7.1 Good Shepherd International School thrives on its reputation for high standards of academic achievement, encouragement of intellectual growth through innovative teaching and co-curricular programmes of learning. The physical and emotional wellbeing of students is a fundamental building block in the school's philosophy ensuring that students are successful learners, ready to grow into confident individuals who are responsible citizens and effective contributors to their society. We all have a shared responsibility to them as responsible adults to protect them from harm and safeguard their welfare.

**Extract of D.O. No. 12-19/2012-RMSA-1 dated 8th November, 2016**

**Subject:- Prevention of Bullying and Ragging in Schools**

There have been reports in the media of instances of bullying and ragging in schools. Recent research in school education indicates that a major issue and cause for concern among students in schools is bullying. In addition, MHRD had also received requests to commission a report and initiate prevention programme on bullying / ragging in schools.

Bullying/ ragging is a damaging feature in schools. Nature of bullying can be, diverse and complex. It is often not recognized as a major problem and same assume it is negligible and therefore do not pay much attention to its occurrence.

Bullying can be directly from the bully to the victim (eg, through physical intimidation or attacks, verbal abuse, unwanted attention and advances, damaging property), or it can be indirect (eg, through spreading malicious rumours). It can also include cyber-bullying (eg, sending unpleasant sms messages, photographs or emails, to the victim or to others).

Bullying has severe detrimental effects on those who are bullied. The effects can be immediate. They can also be long-term and can cause lifelong damage. In every bullying situation, there are typically three key parties: the victim, the bully or bullies, and those who stand by, who are aware of the bullying. Each of these three parties is affected negatively by bullying.

The responsibility of preventing any undesirable aspect of bullying and ragging rests jointly and also individually on all stakeholders, which includes the head of the institution teacher, non-teaching staff, students, parents and local community.

A systematic response to the bullying problem is needed within schools, backed up by systems and processes at the State and District levels. Where necessary, these should also be instituted at Cluster and Block levels.

Some indicative interventions which States might consider at State, District and School level are outlined below.

**State level interventions.**

1. Develop an appropriate Action Plan based on anti-bullying policy and effective strategies, including both preventive and intervention measures and integrate anti-bullying policy into the state education policy framework .
2. Establish a working group or standing committee to develop anti-bullying policy and monitor its implementation in the state through engaging relevant sectors outside the education system, including health, social work, women, children, police and suitable NGOs and prominent citizens.
3. An independent State Level monitoring agency and monitoring mechanisms in schools may be set up that ensures that each case of reported bullying is brought to a logical conclusion and the prescribed regulations are being followed. This Monitoring Agency may assist the Government Regulatory / School authorities, as a Secretariat, in terms management of complaints, and report on non-compliance, collection of information and data , provide regular and

- periodic reports and work with existing legal institutions and assist concerned authorities to take action .
- An Anti-Bullying Helpline, on parallels of Child Line– operated confidentially, independently and remotely to help students in distress and for reporting incidences of bullying and/or reprisals or suppression of reporting may be set up. It can be a common toll-free phone number, which can be operated regionally or centrally at the State level.
  - Develop and disseminate advocacy and information resource material to schools and to District bodies. There are various ways through which the community can be sensitized on this issue. Schools can conduct Anti-Bullying Campaigns and lay down a calendar of activities and events for different age groups - such as painting competitions for the younger students and essay writing/slogan writing for the elder ones. Inter-school competitions may be conducted and documentaries may be shown to spread awareness.. Life skills camps/leadership camps may be organized in schools to spread awareness and educate students on issue of bullying.

#### **District level interventions**

- At the District level, a District team/ cell ( which may be the Guidance and Counselling cell) may be set up which would ensure anti-bullying measures / mechanisms are set up in schools in their supervision and school development programme activities.
- This team/ cell may monitor and review anti -bullying measures/ mechanisms at School level and also compile reports of incidences reported.
- Develop and hold training programmes for teachers, parents and other stakeholders.

#### **School level interventions**

- The message in all schools that “Bullying is strictly prohibited inside the school premises and no such act will go unnoticed or unpunished” may be clearly stated in the school prospectus and other guidelines circulated by the school.
- Schools must create an amiable environment where learning can take place peacefully. They must build a trusting, respectful relationship among students, school administration and families. They should provide a confidential way for students to report about any incidence which is of concern to them. Structures and procedures must be established to provide accessible, confidential, secure and effective means of reporting incidents of bullying, for victims and for bystanders who are aware of it taking place and to identify and manage incidents of bullying, including appropriate counselling and sanctions /punishments on those engaged in bullying . For eg; an Anti- Bullying Committee may be constituted in school, comprising of Vice- Principal, a Senior teacher, School Doctor, Counsellor, PTA representative, School Management representative , Legal representative, etc whose roles and responsibilities would include (i) development and review of School Bullying Prevention Plan,(ii) development and implementing bullying prevention programmes,(iii) developing training programmes for staff, students, and parents, (i) creating awareness through various programmes(v) being vigilant and observing signs of bullying and

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responding quickly and sensitively(vi) names and contact numbers of members of the committee should be clearly displayed everywhere in the school premises , etc.

3. Arrangements for a Counsellor for Primary, and Middle, and for Secondary and Senior Secondary school may be made where possible, occurrence of acts of bullying and ragging has more probability in case of residential schools due to the amount of time spent together by students, making it essential that Counsellors and Wardens in boarding and residential schools need to be sensitized to the changing dynamics of student interaction. They should be empathetic and approachable so that students can confide in them. "Sentinels/ Monitors" may be appointed by the school management. These sentinels may be from the prefectorial /school council board of the schools or those who had been victims of bullying. Sentinels should be keen observers and thoroughly trained for 'risky situations'. They must report cases of bullying in a non-threatening/polite manner.
4. The right attitude is formed only at the formative period of schooling. Thus it is necessary that students are sensitized about human rights, democratic values, respect for diversity and equality, and respect for privacy and dignity of others. Schools must take initiative to conduct activities to educate and develop the understanding of students, staff and parents about the problem and effects of bullying. It is essential that schools take initiatives to provide Adolescence Education , Life Skills education, Values Education, Human Rights, Gender Sensitivity, Self-Esteem, Empathy, Interpersonal Communication, coping with stress and emotions, dealing with anger, and resisting peer pressure need to be conscientiously taken up in the activity periods. These can take the form of role plays, street- theatre (nukkad-natak), group-discussions, debates, special assemblies in schools, poster competitions, etc. Anti-bullying campaigns and training programmes may also be organized.
5. The family background and values play a very crucial role in emotional and psychological well-being of a child. The role of parents must be reinforced in Parent Teacher Meetings and representation in various other school Committees. There is a need for orientation and sensitization of the community and thus parents should also be oriented parents must be motivated to support the school in bullying-prevention efforts. They must be sensitized to report in confidence about any act of bullying which is brought to their notice by their child. Orientation programmes may be conducted for the school staff and teachers on regular basis.
6. Curriculum for Teacher training courses should mandatorily include topics on sensitization and prevention of bullying in schools.
7. The methods of intervention are as important as methods of prevention. It is recommended that there be a graded response system to address the cases of bullying and a clear cut process needs to be followed by schools as there might be cases which deserve utmost attention and stringent action. The responsibility and authority of school administration must be defined. The implications of neglect must also be clearly defined. School's decision, taken after following process of fair investigation, should not be ordinarily challengeable. Comprehensive guidelines may be developed for School Management which includes the various actions and penalties which may be taken by the School Management as per

observation and understanding the gravity of the misconduct. Some of the recommended actions include:

- (i) Oral/written warning.
- (ii) Suspension from attending classes/school for a specified period.
- (iii) Withholding or cancelling the results.
- (iv) Imposition of fine upto a specified amount
- (v) Expulsion/rustication from school in rarest of rare cases.
- (vi) The option of transferring a student from one school to another school may also be looked into.

8. It is the responsibility of the school that the post-bullying atmosphere is calmed down. The school must be cautious that the victim/bully is not branded and he/she might be given opportunities for change.
9. It is very critical to promote an atmosphere of confidence and trust among every student and to provide a platform to students where they can raise their concerns. A confident reporting system may be established that allows students to report victimization. Schools may keep a complaint/ suggestion box and regularly monitor the feedback received. The necessary issues may be discussed and appropriately addressed. If there are any good suggestions received from the students, these should be announced in assemblies and be articulated in school functions. Strategies may be developed to reward students for positive behaviour. For younger children, age appropriate communication strategies should be developed and teachers should engage in dialogue with them to identify any problem. The role of class teacher, counsellor, school nurse/doctor may be enriched and children should be motivated and made aware with whom they can discuss such matters with confidentiality.
10. Engage all students, teaching and non-teaching staff and parents in the effort against bullying on a continual basis, as part of the moral and administrative fabric of the school.





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