



STANDARDS FOR THE PROTECTION OF MINORS

at SAIL International School in Szczecin

INTRODUCTION

The well-being and safety of children at SAIL International School in Szczecin are the priorities of all actions taken by the staff for the benefit of children. School employees treat every student with respect and consider their needs. While carrying out the School's tasks, employees act within the framework of applicable laws, internal regulations, and their competencies. It is unacceptable for a School employee to use any form of violence against a child.

This Child Protection Standards/ Standards for the Protection of Minors outline intervention procedures, preventive and educational actions, rules for preventing the abuse of students, and in cases where abuse has occurred, specifies the principles for mitigating its effects through proper and effective assistance to the student. It also defines the responsibility of the School staff for the safety of children attending the School.

These Child Protection Standards have been published on the School's website. They are widely promoted among all staff, parents/guardians, and children attending the School. Various groups of children are actively acquainted with these Standards through educational and informational activities.

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CHAPTER 1 BASIC TERMS

§ 1

- 1) Minor/child - means a person from birth to the age of 18 years. Children between the ages of 3 years and 18 years attend the School.
- 2) Staff - any member of staff of the School regardless of form of employment, including an associate, trainee, volunteer or other person who, by virtue of their role or tasks, has (even potential) contact with young people.
- 3) Statutory Representative - means a parent with parental responsibility or a legal guardian (a person representing a child, appointed by the court, in a situation where parents do not have parental responsibility or where the parents are deceased).
- 4) Heads/School Management - the person, body or entity which, within the structure of a school, has the authority to make decisions.
- 5) School - means SAIL International School in Szczecin.
- 6) Partner cooperating with the School - it should be understood as persons performing tasks commissioned on the school premises under separate regulations or agreement.
- 7) Consent of the minor's guardian - this should be understood as the consent of at least one of the minor's legal representatives. However, in the event of disagreement between the minor's guardians, they should be informed that the case must be decided by the family court.
- 8) **Harming a minor** - it should be understood as committing a criminal act or a criminal act to the detriment of a minor by any person, including an employee of the School, or threatening the welfare of a minor, including neglect of a minor.

9) **Abuse of a minor** – this should be understood as the commission of a prohibited or punishable act to the detriment of a minor by any person, including a School employee, or a threat to the well-being of the minor, including neglect.

10) Pupil's Personal Data - shall mean any information that allows the identification of a pupil of SAIL International School in Szczecin.

11) Person in charge of the Standards for the Protection of Minors - shall mean the employee designated by the Head of School to supervise the implementation of these Standards.

12) Person in charge of the Internet - shall mean the employee designated by the Head of School to supervise the use of the Internet by students on School premises and the safety of minors on the Internet.

CHAPTER 2

PRINCIPLES FOR SECURE RECRUITMENT

§ 2

1. The person responsible for preparing the staff of the School for the application of the Standards for the Protection of Minors is the Head of the School.
2. The School Management shall familiarise the staff with the Standards for the Protection of Minors and shall collect from each staff member employed a statement that he/she is familiar with the Standards for the Protection of Minors in force at the School.
A specimen of the employee's statement (Appendix 1).

3. Staff members newly employed at the School shall be familiarised with the Standards during their first week of work and the statement referred to in paragraph 2 shall be collected from them at that time.
4. Safe recruitment principles for employees:
 - 1) Before employing a candidate, the School Management obtains information from the National Criminal Register about the candidate's non-criminal record regarding offenses specified in Chapters XIX and XXV of the Penal Code, in Articles 189a and 207 of the Penal Code, and in the Act on Counteracting Drug Addiction, or equivalent prohibited acts specified in foreign law.
 - 2) If the person has citizenship other than Polish, they should also provide information from the criminal register of their country of citizenship obtained for professional or volunteer activities involving contact with children, or information from the criminal register if the law of that country does not provide for issuing information for the purposes.
 - 3) From candidates who have citizenship other than Polish, the School Management also collects a statement about the country or countries of residence within the last 20 years other than the Republic of Poland and the country of citizenship, submitted under the penalty of perjury.
 - 4) If the law of the country from which the criminal record information is to be provided does not provide for issuing such information or does not maintain a criminal register, the candidate is required to submit a statement under the penalty of perjury regarding this fact along with a statement that they have not been legally convicted in that country for acts corresponding to the offenses specified in Chapters XIX and XXV of the Penal Code, in Articles 189a and 207 of the Penal Code, and in the Act on Counteracting Drug Addiction, and no other judgment has been issued against them stating that they committed such prohibited acts, and that they are not subject to any prohibition resulting from a court judgment,

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other authorized body, or law, from occupying any or specific positions, performing any or specific professions, or activities related to upbringing, education, recreation, treatment, providing psychological advice, spiritual development, practicing sports, or pursuing other interests with minors or caring for them.

- 5) Statements submitted under the penalty of perjury must include the following declaration: *“ I am aware of the criminal liability for making a false statement. This statement replaces the instruction of the authority on the criminal liability for making a false statement.”*
- 6) The School Management is obliged to demand a certificate from the National Criminal Register from the person employed as a teacher. **Note! Certificates from the NCR can only be demanded in cases where legal regulations explicitly state that employees in certain professions or positions are required to have a clean criminal record. The requirement of a clean criminal record applies, among others, to local government employees and teachers, including those employed in public and non-public institutions.**
- 7) In case of the inability to provide a certificate from the National Criminal Register, the School Management obtains a statement from the candidate about their non-criminal record and any ongoing preparatory, court, and disciplinary proceedings. The template for the statement of non-criminal record (Annex No. 2).

CHAPTER 3**RISK FACTORS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE TOWARDS STUDENTS –
PRINCIPLES OF IDENTIFICATION AND RESPONSE****§ 3**

1. The School Staff is familiar with and adheres to the principles of safe relationships between Staff and children, and between children themselves, as established in the School.
2. The School Staff is knowledgeable about the risk factors and symptoms of child abuse and pays attention to them as part of their duties.
3. The School Staff monitors the situation and well-being of minors attending the School.
4. In case of identifying risk factors, the School Staff engages in a conversation with the legal guardians, providing information about available support services and motivating them to seek help.

§ 4

1. Principles of safe relationships between School staff and its students:

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- 1) The fundamental principle of all actions undertaken by the School staff is to act in the best interest of the student. The staff treats the student with respect, considering their dignity and needs. Any form of violence towards a child is unacceptable.
- 2) The principles of safe relationships between Staff and students apply to all employees, interns, volunteers, and invited guests.
- 3) Knowledge and acceptance of the principles are confirmed by signing a statement.

2. In contact with students, the School Staff:

I. **Relationships between School Staff and students:**

Every School employee is obligated to maintain a professional relationship with students and always consider whether their reaction, communication, or action towards a child is appropriate, safe, justified, and fair to other students. Each employee is required to act in an open and transparent manner to minimize the risk of misinterpretation of their behaviour.

II. **Communication with children:**

2. In communication with children at School, the employee is obligated to:

a. Maintain patience and respect,

b. Listen carefully to the student and respond appropriately to their age and situation,

- c. Inform the child about decisions made concerning them, considering their expectations,
 - d. Respect the child's right to privacy; if confidentiality needs to be breached to protect the student, this should be explained to them as soon as possible; if a private conversation with the student is necessary, the door should be left opened, and the meeting should be within the sight of others; another employee can also be asked to be present during such a conversation,
 - e. Assure students that if they feel uncomfortable in any situation or due to specific behaviour or words, they can talk to a teacher/school employee or a designated person (according to the intervention procedures adopted at the School) and expect an appropriate reaction and/or help.
3. Employees are prohibited from:
- a. Shaming, humiliating, disregarding, and insulting a child, as well as raising their voice at a student in situations other than those concerning the student's or other students' safety,
 - b. Disclosing sensitive information about a student to unauthorized persons, including other students; this includes the student's image, information about their family, economic, medical, care, and legal situation,

c. Behaving inappropriately in the presence of students; this includes using vulgar words, gestures, and jokes, making offensive comments, referring to sexual activities or attractiveness, and exploiting the power or physical advantage over a student (intimidation, coercion, threats).

III. Actions undertaken with children:

4. The School staff is obliged to:

a. Appreciate and respect the child's contribution to undertaken actions, actively engage them, and treat them equally regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, ability/disability, social, ethnic, cultural, religious status, and worldview,

b. Avoid favouritism among students.

5. Employees are prohibited from:

a. Establishing any romantic or sexual relationships with students, making inappropriate propositions; this includes sexual comments, jokes, gestures, and sharing erotic and pornographic content with children regardless of its form,

b. Recording the image of a child (filming, voice recording, photographing) for private purposes; this also includes allowing third parties to record the images of students if the School Management has not been informed, has not given consent, and has not obtained the consent of legal guardians and the children themselves,

- c. Offering children alcohol, tobacco products, illegal substances, and using them in the presence of students,
 - d. Accepting money, gifts from students, or their legal guardians,
 - e. Entering into any dependency relationships with children or their legal guardians, behaving in a way that might suggest to others the existence of such dependency and leading to accusations of unequal treatment or deriving financial and other benefits; this does not apply to occasional gifts related to school holidays, e.g., flowers, group gifts, or small presents.
6. All risky situations involving infatuation with a student by an employee or vice versa must be reported to the School Management. If staff witness such situations, they are obliged to react firmly but sensitively to preserve the dignity of the involved parties.

IV. Physical contact with children:

1. Any violent action towards a minor is unacceptable. However, there are situations where physical contact with a child may be appropriate and adheres to the principles of safe contact: it is a response to the student's needs at the moment, considering their age, developmental stage, gender, cultural and situational context. Nevertheless, it is impossible to determine the universal appropriateness of every such physical contact, as behaviour appropriate for one minor may be inappropriate for another.
2. The staff is obliged to:



- a. Always use their professional judgment, listen, observe, and note the student's reactions, ask for their consent to physical contact (e.g., hugging), and be aware that even with good intentions, such contact can be misinterpreted by the child or third parties,
- b. Always be prepared to explain their actions,
- c. Be especially cautious of a student who has experienced abuse and harm, including sexual, physical or neglect; such experiences can sometimes cause him or her to seek inappropriate or inadequate physical contact with adults; in such situations, Staff should respond sensitively but firmly and help the student understand the importance of personal boundaries.

3. Employees are prohibited from:

- a. Hitting, poking, pushing, or otherwise violating the physical integrity of a minor,
- b. Touching a student in a manner that may be considered indecent or inappropriate,
- c. Engaging in activities such as tickling, mock fighting with students, or rough physical play.

4. In situations requiring caregiving and hygiene activities towards a student, the staff is obliged to avoid physical contact other than necessary. In every caregiving and hygiene activity, related to helping the student dress and undress, eat, wash, change, or use the toilet, the employee should be assisted by another person employed at the School. If caregiving and hygiene care for students is part of an employee's duties, they will receive appropriate training in this regard.

5. During trips and excursions longer than one day, it is forbidden to sleep in the same bed or room with a student.
6. Physical contact with a child must be open, unhidden, and not involve any reward or result from a power relationship. If staff witness any of the above-described behaviours and/or situations from other adults or students, they are always obliged to inform the responsible person (e.g., teacher, Management) and/or follow the intervention procedures in place.

V. Contact with children outside working hours:

1. The principle is that contact with students attending the School should only occur during working hours and pertain to educational or upbringing purposes.
2. Employees are prohibited from inviting children to their place of residence, meeting with them outside working hours; this also includes contacts with students through private communication channels (private phone, email, messengers, social media profiles).
3. If necessary, the appropriate form of communication with students and their legal guardians outside working hours is through official channels (e-register, email, work phone).
4. If there is a need to meet with students outside working hours, the employee must inform the School Management, and the legal guardians of the students must consent to such contact.
5. Maintaining social or family relationships (if students and their legal guardians are close to the employee) requires keeping confidential all information regarding other students, their parents, and guardians.

VI. Online safety:



1. Employees should be aware of digital threats and risks arising from recording their private online activities through applications and algorithms, as well as their actions on the internet. This includes liking specific pages, using dating apps where they might encounter students, following certain people/pages on social media, and privacy settings of the accounts they use. If an employee's profile is publicly accessible, students and their legal guardians also have access to the employee's digital activities.
2. Employees are obliged to turn off or mute personal electronic devices during lessons and disable Bluetooth functionality on the School premises.
3. Employees are prohibited from establishing contacts with students through accepting or sending friend requests on social media.

CHAPTER 4

PROCEDURE FOR INTERVENTION IN CASES OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

§ 5

1. School staff possess knowledge of and, in the course of their duties, pay attention to the risk factors and symptoms of child abuse. (Attachments 6-8).
2. If risk factors are identified, School staff engage in a conversation with the legal guardian, providing information about available support options and motivating them to seek help.

3. School staff monitor the situation and well-being of the child.

§ 6 If School staff suspect that a child is being abused, the staff member is obligated to draft an official note and pass the obtained information to the School Management.

1. The special education teacher/psychologist/Head calls in the legal guardians of the child suspected of being abused and informs them of the suspicion.
2. A person designated by the Head (psychologist, pedagogue, or special education teacher) drafts a description of the child's school and family situation based on conversations with the child, teachers, form teacher, and legal guardians, and develops a support plan for the child
3. The support plan should include recommendations regarding:
 - a) actions the School will take to ensure the child's safety, including reporting suspected abuse to the appropriate institution,
 - b) the support the School will provide to the child,
 - c) referring the child to a specialized child assistance facility if necessary.

§ 7

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1. In more complex cases (involving sexual abuse and physical and psychological maltreatment), the Head forms an Intervention Team, consisting of a pedagogue, special education teacher, psychologist, form teacher, teaching staff, Principal or Vice-Principal, and other employees with knowledge of the child's abuse or about the child (hereinafter referred to as the Intervention Team).
2. The Intervention Team drafts a support plan for the child, meeting the requirements based on the description prepared by the school pedagogue/special education teacher and other information obtained by team members.
3. If the suspicion of abuse is reported by the child's legal guardians, forming the Team is mandatory. The Intervention Team calls the child's legal guardians to an explanatory meeting, during which they may propose diagnosing the reported suspicion at an external, impartial institution. A report of the meeting is prepared.

§ 8

1. The support plan for the child is presented by the pedagogue/psychologist to the legal guardians with a recommendation to cooperate in its implementation.
2. The pedagogue/psychologist informs the legal guardians of the School's obligation to report suspected child abuse to the appropriate institution (prosecutor's office/police or family court, social welfare centre, or Head of the interdisciplinary team – the "Blue Card" procedure – depending on the diagnosed type of abuse and the corresponding intervention).
3. After informing the legal guardians as per the previous point, the School Management files a report of suspected crime to the prosecutor's office/police or a request for an investigation into the family's situation to the district court, family and juvenile division, social welfare centre, or sends the "Blue Card – A" form to the Head of the interdisciplinary team.

4. The further course of action is the responsibility of the institutions mentioned in the previous point.
5. If the suspicion of abuse is reported by the child's legal guardians, and the suspicion is not confirmed, the legal guardians of the child must be informed of this fact in writing.

§ 9

1. In every case of noticing child abuse, an Intervention Card should be completed - template (attachment no. 3).
2. The card is attached to the child's file located in the Head's office.

CHAPTER 5

PRINCIPLES OF CHILD'S IMAGE PROTECTION

§ 10

The School staff, recognizing the child's right to privacy and personal rights protection, ensures the protection of the student's image.

1. School staff are not allowed to permit media representatives to capture the image of a child (i.e., filming, photographing) on School premises without written consent from the child's legal guardian.

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2. To obtain the legal guardian's consent for capturing the child's image or using other data, form teachers provide the legal guardians with a statement at the beginning of the school year, where the parent/guardian can grant or deny permission for the publication of the child's image. The form teacher retains this information in the form teacher's file.
3. It is unacceptable to provide a media representative with the contact details of the child's legal guardian without their knowledge and consent.
4. If the child's image is merely an incidental part of a whole, such as a gathering, landscape, public event, consent from the child's legal guardians to capture the image is not required.

§ 11

1. The public disclosure by a School employee of a child's image captured in any form (i.e., photograph, audio-video recording) requires written consent from the legal guardian. This does not apply when the child's image is merely an incidental part of a whole, such as a gathering, landscape, public event, etc.
2. Before capturing a child's image, the child and their legal guardian must be informed about where the recorded image will be placed and in what context it will be used (e.g., that it will be posted on YouTube for promotional purposes).
3. In the case of event recording by external persons (hired photographer or videographer):
 - 1) the individuals/companies recording the event are required to comply with these guidelines,
 - 2) the individuals/companies recording the event are required to wear identification during the event,

- 3) ensuring that the individual/company recording does not remain with students unsupervised by a SAIL International School employee.
4. Storing photographs and recordings containing the images of students is done in a legally compliant and safe manner for children:
 - 1) Electronic media containing photos and recordings are stored in a protected folder with access limited to authorized personnel of the School. The media will be stored for the period required by archiving regulations and/or the period specified by the School in its data protection policy.
 - 2) Electronic materials containing images of children are not stored on unencrypted or mobile media, such as mobile phones and portable memory devices (e.g., USB drives).
 - 3) School staff may use personal recording devices (i.e., mobile phones, cameras, camcorders) to record students' images only during events organized by the School and for the School's needs.

CHAPTER 6

RULES FOR THE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES WITH ACCESS TO THE INTERNET. PROCEDURES FOR THE PROTECTION OF MINORS FROM HARMFUL CONTENT AND DANGERS ON THE WEB AND FIXED IN ANOTHER FORM

§ 12

1. The School, providing children with access to the Internet, takes measures to protect them from accessing content that may pose a threat to their proper development (OSE protection).

2. On the premises of the School, student access to the Internet is possible under the supervision of a teacher of the School during computer classes.
3. In the case that access to the Internet at the School is carried out under the supervision of another teacher, they shall be obliged to inform students about the rules of safe use of the Internet and watch over their safety while using the Internet during classes.
4. The person in charge of Internet access at the School shall conduct training with students on safe use of the Internet.

§ 13

1. The school has protection against access to undesirable content provided by OSE, which blocks users' access to undesirable content.
2. A designated employee provides the School Management with information about the findings made (e.g., about a child who was using the computer at the time of the introduction of dangerous content). The School Head immediately arranges for the student to speak with a psychologist or pedagogue.
3. A conversation with the child on the subject of safety on the Internet shall be conducted by the school pedagogue/special educator/psychologist.
4. If, as a result of the conversation, the pedagogue/special educator/psychologist obtains information that a child is being abused, they shall take the actions described in Chapter 4 of these Standards - "Principles and procedure for intervening in situations of suspected abuse of a child."

CHAPTER 7

RULES FOR ESTABLISHING A PLAN TO SUPPORT A MINOR AFTER DISCLOSURE OF HARM

§ 14

1. Independently of the intervention procedure, the Head of School shall set up a support group for the victimised child.
2. The group shall always include the class teacher, a psychologist/pedagogue.
3. The support group meets to determine what help the child will need immediately and in the longer term.
4. The support group creates an IAP (Individual Action Plan), which is a document that is recorded and kept in the Head's office.
5. The IAP includes, in particular, information about the actions taken, a schedule of meetings with specialists/teachers and the likely duration of support.
6. Findings from meetings with the pedagogue and school psychologist constitute sensitive data and are not included in the IAP. An exception is a life or health-threatening situation (e.g. planned suicide).

CHAPTER 8

THE 'BLUE CARD' PROCEDURES

§ 15

1. The main purpose of the "Blue Card" is to improve the assistance offered by SAIL International School in Szczecin.

2. If a child comes forward to any member of staff at the School and reports that violence is being used against him/her, that member of staff should initiate the 'Blue Card' procedure. Any knowledge that violence is occurring dictates that action is taken.
3. The "Blue Card" procedure shall be used whenever an intervention is taken in a situation of suspected child abuse.
4. The "Blue Card" procedure is a separate document.

CHAPTER 9

PRINCIPLES FOR UPDATING THE STANDARDS FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PREPARATION OF SCHOOL STAFF ON THE APPLICATION OF STANDARDS FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

§ 16

1. The procedure for updating the Standards shall take place at least once every 2 years.
2. The School Head shall appoint a person responsible for updating the procedure of Child Protection Standards.
3. The person designated by the Director shall monitor the implementation of the Standards, respond to violations and coordinate changes to the Standards. He/she maintains a record of notifications and proposed changes.
4. The person responsible for the implementation of the Standards is obliged to conduct a survey among the employees of the School (at least once a year) - model (Annex No. 4).

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5. Following the survey, the person in charge compiles the completed surveys and prepares a report from them, which he/she presents to the School Management.
6. In the survey, School employees may suggest changes to the Standards and indicate violations of the Standards at the School.
7. In monitoring the Standards, the School's Management may appoint a person to conduct a survey among pupils regarding their awareness of the forms of assistance provided by the School. The survey (appendix no. 5).
8. The person responsible for the implementation of the Standards may appoint a coordinating team if he/she considers that such a team will contribute to better implementation of the Standards or will allow for a quicker response when the Child Protection Standards need to be updated.
9. If necessary, develops amendments to the applicable Standards and submits them to the School Management for approval.
10. The School Management makes the necessary changes to the Standards and announces the new wording of the document to the School Staff: Child Protection Standards.

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CHAPTER 10

RULES ON MAKING THE CHILD PROTECTION STANDARDS AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS AND THEIR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVES

§ 17

1. The document "Child Protection Standards" is a document of the School that is publicly available to staff, students and their legal representatives.
2. The document is published on the website of SAIL International School and is also available at the School's secretariat.
3. The legal representatives of the child shall familiarise themselves with the content of the document posted on the SAIL International School website and also located at the School's secretariat.
4. The legal representatives of the student acknowledge with their signature in the documents that they have read the document "Child Protection Standards" in force at SAIL International School.
5. Form teachers are required to familiarise their students with the Standards and discuss them in such a way that children can understand it regardless of their age and intellectual ability.

CHAPTER 11
FINAL PROVISIONS

§ 18

1. These Child Protection Standards shall come into force on the day of publication.
2. The announcement shall be made in a manner that is accessible to the School's staff, students and their legal representatives, in particular by posting on the notice board or in another conspicuous place on the School's premises or by sending the text of the Standards to the staff and the students' legal representatives electronically, or by posting on the School's website and posting an abridged version - intended for children.

The material was developed on the basis of the provisions of the Act of 28 July 2023 amending the Act - Family and Guardianship Code and some other acts (Journal of Laws of 2023, item 1606), which introduces the term 'standards of protection of minors', the manual Standards of child protection in nurseries and educational institutions edited by Agata Sotomska from the "Dajemy Dzieciom Siłę" Foundation and numerous trainings on the creation of Standards of Protection of Minors in primary and secondary schools.