

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for Distance Learning

Addendum (December 2021 - January 2022)

This policy links to the following documents:

- [EIS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Guidelines and Procedures](#)
- [EIS Family Handbook 2021 - 2022](#)

EIS is committed to the safeguarding and protection of children and the prevention of child maltreatment in any form. The purpose of this policy is to inform and provide guidance to EIS staff and parents in matters related to safeguarding and child protection during distance learning in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Online technologies present many possibilities for our students to continue their learning, communicate with friends and family, learn new skills and be creative during the current lockdown. However, online technologies can also bring risks and even cause harm to our students. EIS staff as well as parents have a responsibility to ensure that our students are using the internet safely and responsibly and to protect them from harm.

The Council of International Schools (CIS) in consultation with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (ICMEC), Childnet International, the International School Counseling Association (ISCA), International Child Protection Advisors (ICPA) and Nine Consulting Ltd have outlined the key safeguarding and child protection considerations for distance learning. The Child Protection Team at EIS has reviewed these considerations when implementing the distance learning program.

What are the key safeguarding risks during distance learning?

The safeguarding risks associated with distance learning are similar to those associated with learning in school. These include sexual abuse, emotional abuse, grooming and peer-on-peer abuse. Most forms of child maltreatment can take place online as well as offline. Examples of online harm are cyberbullying, online grooming, harmful content online, pressure to send sexual images, use of threats or blackmail, online sexual harassment and abuse. During times of self-isolation, online harm and harm to students living in abusive home environments are a greater concern. Furthermore, it is important to consider the wellbeing and mental health of students and other members of our community. Anxiety around COVID-19 and challenges of self-isolation are likely to affect mental health. Students who were already suffering from mental health problems, may find it particularly difficult to manage these challenges.

Guidelines and expectations for EIS Staff

Online teaching can increase the blurring of boundaries and it is important that staff maintain professional boundaries at all times during distance learning. The guidelines below are in addition to the [EIS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Guidelines and Procedures](#):

- **Professional boundaries:** staff are expected to maintain the same professional boundaries with students *online* as they are required to maintain *in person*.
- **Location:** EIS staff will be engaged in distance learning from a common space in their house. Staff should never teach online lessons or communicate with students on Microsoft Teams from their bedroom. Staff can show themselves in their lessons (recorded or on Microsoft Teams) but should have their background switched to 'blur' or teach from a neutral space. Staff should be aware not to have any personal items in view for students during online learning.

- Dress code: staff are expected to be dressed as they would for lessons in school (see 4.2.1 Dress and appearance in Staff Code of Conduct).
- Digital communications between staff and students: All correspondence with students should be through school accounts and must not involve social media, personal emails, personal contact information, use of non-school sponsored apps, or other personal software. Personal phone numbers of students may only be exchanged in special circumstances and with written consent from parents.
- Recording lessons or meetings: staff are not allowed to record live lessons or meetings with students on Microsoft Teams.
- Responding to inappropriate use of technology: staff are required to report inappropriate use of technology to the Head of Primary or Head of Secondary.
- Responding to inappropriate or harmful content: staff must report any inappropriate or harmful content shared online with students to the DSL or School Counsellor (see 3. Reporting concerns).
- Monitoring of online lessons: staff are required to invite at least one member of the leadership team to live lessons so they can periodically enter and observe their virtual classrooms. The monitoring of lessons will mirror the monitoring EIS has in place for in-school lessons.
- Break-out sessions: staff can use break-out rooms on Microsoft Teams to support their teaching. Staff should always be able to join and monitor break-out sessions with student-only groups.
- One on one sessions (T&L) in PYP: staff may facilitate one on one sessions with students for instruction or support. However, all unnecessary individual meetings with students are discouraged. If staff do meet with individual students, parents must consent and stay in the same room as the student at all times.
- One on one sessions (T&L) in MYP: staff may facilitate one on one sessions with students for instruction or support. However, all unnecessary individual meetings with students are discouraged. If staff do meet with individual students, at least one member of the leadership team or other member of staff must be invited and parents should be informed so they are aware and may drop in.
- Safeguarding concerns: **All EIS staff have a responsibility to report any concerns regarding safeguarding and child protection.** Concerns should be reported to the DSL or School Counsellor (see 3. Reporting concerns).
- Emergency situations: There can be many different situations in which to act urgently. Examples of situations in which immediate action is required are if you see a parent / other adult hard-hitting a child or if a student confides in you about severe maltreatment at home. In case of an emergency, you must contact the police on 112 (see 3.5 emergency situations).

Additional Guidelines for the School Counsellor

- The school counsellor will continue to provide services across all domains of school counselling, direct and indirect, including individual counselling sessions.
- The school counsellor will adhere to the same ethical guidelines online as in school.
- Individual counselling sessions (PYP): parents must be informed about online individual counselling sessions with PYP students and will be asked to be present or in the same room as their child. Online counselling sessions will only take place on Microsoft Teams and the video may be switched on with parent consent.
- Individual counselling sessions (MYP): parents will not always be informed about online individual counselling sessions with MYP students. The same guidelines will be followed as for individual counselling sessions in school. Online counselling sessions will only take place on Microsoft Teams and one member of the leadership to be invited to each session. The video will only be used if parents have been informed.

- Online sessions must be documented in counsellor notes.

Guidelines and expectations for EIS PYP students and parents

The PYP distance learning model includes both synchronous and asynchronous learning. The main platforms for distance learning in Primary are Seesaw, IXL & Razkids (asynchronous learning) and Microsoft Teams (synchronous learning). Other platforms may be shared through Seesaw. Parents have received login codes and links for the above platforms.

These are the expectations and guidelines for distance learning in the Primary School:

- Students only join the classes they are associated with.
- Students are expected to be dressed (no pyjamas) for online lessons or meetings.
- Class rules are to be followed by students within the Microsoft Teams meeting.
- All synchronous lessons or meetings are supervised and with parent consent.
- A parent must be in the same room as the student during each lesson or meeting.
- Students should join lessons or meetings from a common space in their house.
- Students can switch on their video to show themselves in lessons or meetings. The background should be neutral backgrounds (no distractions).
- Siblings or other children must not be in the video during synchronous lessons or meetings.
- Recording synchronous lessons or meetings is not allowed.
- PYP4 – PYP6 students and their parents have signed the EIS Digital Responsible Use Agreement for Primary Students. By signing this document, students and their parents have agreed to follow the terms of acceptable use and expected standards of behaviour set out in this agreement.

Guidelines and expectations for MYP students and parents

The MYP distance learning model includes both synchronous and asynchronous learning. Managebac and Microsoft Office 365 (including Microsoft Teams) are the main online platforms for distance learning. Microsoft Teams will be used for all synchronous learning. Other supporting platforms for key learning areas such as Khan Academy, Dr Frost, Youtube, Padlet, Quizlet, etc. may all be used and shared for online learning by subject teachers.

These are the expectations and guidelines for distance learning in the Secondary School:

- While students are engaged in distance learning they must be located in a common space in their house and in the presence of a parent or other adult. Students should not participate in online lessons from their bedroom.
- Students are expected to be dressed appropriately for online lessons.
- Students are not allowed to open a group chat on Microsoft Teams during class time without permission.
- Students can only write in the chat section, with permission when they are asked to (eg. give a thumb up etc) or to ask a sensible question (don't understand, can you repeat that, etc)
- Students are only allowed to open a Teams chat with other students if they have permission from their HR or subject teacher. The HR teacher or subject teacher should always be invited to a Teams chat with students.
- No one is to remain in the lesson after the teacher has ended it, the teacher will request for all students to leave.
- If a student kicks out or mutes another student during lesson time - this will be addressed as a bullying incident.

- It is the student's responsibility to ensure only they are using their microphone during class time, when requested to do so.
- Students can switch on their camera to show themselves during lessons if requested to do so by the teacher, however, this is not mandatory. If students switch on their camera, they should have their background switched to 'blur' and not change the background during the class time. In HR, students may be asked to change it to a fun one!
- Microsoft Teams should not be used by students after 3.00pm and in the weekends.
- All students should be familiar with the modified EIS iPledges for distance learning and agree to be a safe, responsible and ethical technology user at all times.

Modified EIS iPledges for Distance Learning (MYP)

When I use any technology, I agree to be a safe, responsible and ethical user at all times.

- Devices are only to be used for the tasks I have been assigned in the class I am currently in, or homework when permitted (no messenger services, social media, games, downloads)
- I am responsible for my own actions and I need to respect all devices (mine and anyone else's).
- My passwords and private information will be kept to myself. I will only use my own accounts.
- If I do not recognise the sender of an email, I will not open it. I will not click any suspicious-looking links.
- I am responsible for whatever my computer accesses / gives access to.
- I will frequently update my device at home.
- I will not carry out any actions that impact hardware, data of other users or network systems.
- I will get permission before taking, sharing or posting any images, videos or information of others.
- I will make myself aware of the terms and conditions of anything I access or sign up to e.g. age restrictions.
- I am responsible for my online activities in and outside of school time; I will be kind and respectful.
- I will report any misuse of technology that I see, or content that makes me feel unsafe / uncomfortable, to a parent or teacher.
- I will follow copyright and intellectual property regulations, asking for permission to use images, text, audio and video, and citing references.
- I will check my emails at least once a day.

References

International Child Protection Advisors (ICPA), Coronavirus (Covid-19) Crisis Safer Online Learning. 2020: <https://www.icpa.co.uk/online-learning-safeguarding.html>

International School Counselor Association (ISCA), Position Statement: Role of the International School Counselor During School Closures. 2020: <https://iscainfo.com/resources/Documents/Position%20Statement%20Role%20of%20the%20International%20School%20Counselor%20During%20School%20Closures.pdf>

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