

Appendix 1 - UEF Child Protection Policy

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The Utahloy Education Foundation (UEF) goal is to ensure that all members of the UEF community work together to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children. The policy stresses the process to be followed in cases of suspected child abuse. The term “child” refers to a person under the care of a UEF school. The term "community" includes all staff, students, parents and relevant stakeholders.

The UEF Schools play a vital role in their local communities as protectors of children. The UEF aims to ensure that all children in their care are afforded a safe and secure environment to grow and develop. The UEF Board recognises that:

- the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance
- the education of all members of the UEF School communities is critical for the implementation of this child protection policy.

The UEF Schools:

- maintain policies and procedures that ensure safe practice that minimizes the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children
- adopt procedures to protect staff from conduct which may leave them open to accusations of abuse or neglect
- develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in ensuring the protection of their children
- fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters, subject to reporting requirements
- fully cooperate with the relevant authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters
- ensure that policies, procedures and handbooks are kept up to date and accessible to the community.

This policy is based on the accepted practices and procedures in schools. The UEF endorses the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which the host country, China, is a signatory and seeks to be a safe haven for students, who may be experiencing abuse or neglect. The policy further seeks to comply with Chinese child protection laws. The UEF Superintendent shall be responsible for developing all necessary education, training, policy planning and case management in order to prevent, identify and respond to child abuse and neglect.

1. Defining Abuse and Neglect

Definitions of abuse are complex, a primary determinant of abuse is that it is dependent on some form of a relationship that is used to meet the need of the more powerful person, either a member of the child's family, a teacher, a friend, or other person.

ABUSE

Abuse is: Inflicting physical injury on a child by other than accidental means, causing skin bruising, burns, disfigurement, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function. This also includes death and/or creating a substantial risk of physical harm to a child's bodily functioning, and/or committing acts that are cruel or inhumane, regardless of observable injury, including instances of extreme discipline, demonstrating a disregard for the child's pain or mental suffering. Finally, abuse also extends to assaulting or criminally mistreating a child. *This is not an exhaustive list.*

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse is committing, or allowing to be committed, any sexual offense against a child as defined in either the criminal code of the host country (China), or school policy. At the UEF schools, sexual abuse is defined as intentionally touching either directly or through clothing, the genitals, anus or breasts of a child for other than hygienic or child care purposes. Sexual abuse is also any act that forces or entices a child to participate in sexual activities. Some non-contact activities which are considered sexual abuse include: encouraging a child to behave sexually inappropriately, taking or sharing sexual pictures of children or sharing sexual pictures or videos with children.

The UEF recognises that failing to take reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any of the above, is also defined as abuse.

NEGLECT

Neglect is failure to provide for a child's basic needs within their own environment.

Neglect may be:

Physical, this is the failure to provide necessary food, shelter or appropriate supervision. This includes failure to provide proper adult guardianship, such as leaving children unsupervised at home for any extended period of time. This also includes extended absences of parents resulting in the need for others to care for the child's physical needs.

Medical, the failure to provide necessary and timely medical or mental health treatment. This includes extended absences of parents resulting in the need for others to medically care for the child's needs.

Emotional, this is a pattern of actions such as: inattention to a child's emotional needs, failure to provide psychological care, permitting the child to use alcohol or other drugs, refusing to acknowledge the presence of a child, violent threats. This includes extended absences of parents resulting in the need for others to care for the child's emotional needs.

The UEF recognises that failing to take reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any of the above descriptors, is defined as neglect.

2. Training

The UEF Schools will deliver mandatory staff training to ensure that all staff members are knowledgeable and up to date about the signs of potential abuse, how to recognise harmful behavior and the mandatory reporting policy and procedures. In addition, there will be an age appropriate educational programme for students, focusing on identifying abusive behaviors and how to effectively deal with such, amongst other issues.

3. Mandatory Reporters

When there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child has/is being mistreated or abused – physically, emotionally or sexually – or is neglected, a report must be made. This report includes all abuse and/or neglect seen and/or reported at a UEF school.

This policy mandates that all adults, any individual over the age of 18, must report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to a member of the UEF response team. At the UEF schools, the school counselors fulfill a role on the response team. The mandatory reporter requirement applies to any person who knows about child abuse or has a good faith reason to suspect that someone has committed/is committing child abuse. This means any member of the school's community, including all faculty or staff employed in any full or part time position and all school volunteers. Any failure of a mandatory reporter to make a report, may result in disciplinary action. Cases of suspected child abuse or neglect may be reported to the respective consulate in Guangzhou, to the appropriate child protection agency in the home country and/or to local authorities.

4. Rights of Mandated Reporters

Mandated reporters are entitled to immunity with regards to any report of child abuse or neglect, as long as the report is made in good faith. The UEF schools will fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters. Any anonymous calls/reports of sexual harassment, shall be considered as an unofficial report of any such event. Thus, formal charges can not be pressed against the accused person based on this report. However, any such reports requesting anonymity, will be considered as an unofficial means to inform the UEF school that a sexual harassment incident may have occurred.

5. The UEF Schools' Response Team

The relevant schools' response team will look into the accuracy of any report of child abuse or neglect, under the supervision of the UEF Superintendent. The UEF schools will fully cooperate with any relevant authorities when evaluating the accuracy of all reports of abuse or neglect. By enrolling the child at a UEF school, the parents or guardians give permission for the relevant school's response team to conduct the evaluation. The parents or guardians also agree to fully cooperate.

The UEF schools will distribute responsibilities in conjunction with this policy to all parents and staff. The duty to examine, evaluate the validity of an accusation and take any action is not imposed on the reporter, but rather on the school's response team.

6. Vetting of Prospective Staff

All staff, both employed and voluntary, will be vetted in accordance with accepted practices. The School administration will require that a police clearance certificate be provided from the last country of residence and/or that a criminal background check be completed. The most thorough level of background check for each employee will be required and will be stated by the administration. In addition, as part of the employment process, all employees and volunteers will be required to disclose any criminal child abuse convictions as part of the application and employment process. Failure to provide this information will be grounds for dismissal.

7. Vetting of Current Staff

The school reserves the right to request from all current staff, both employed and voluntary, a police clearance certificate. Failure to cooperate with this request may result in dismissal.

8. Confidentiality

The UEF will fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.