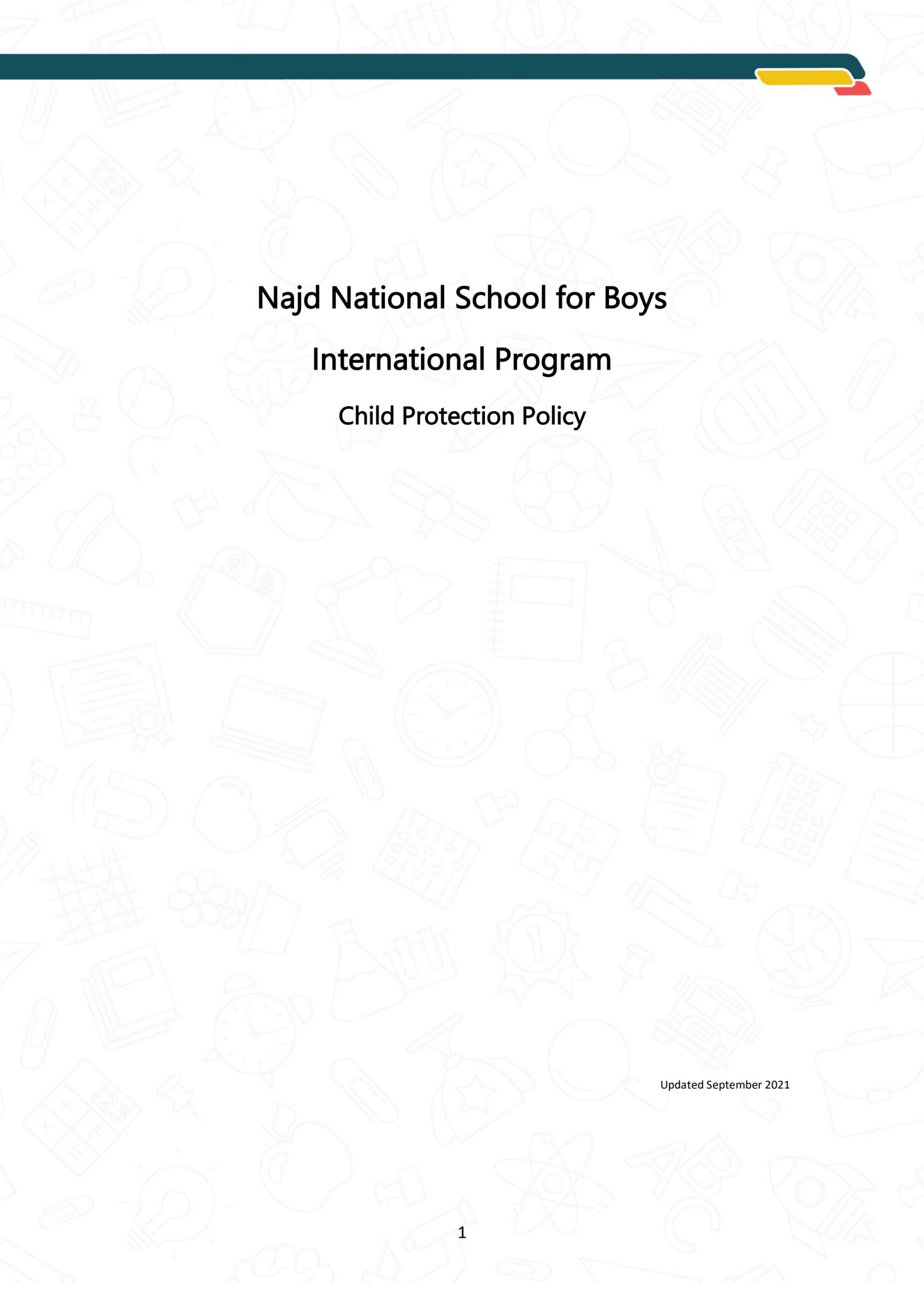




Najd National Schools  
International Program

# Child Protection Policy



# **Najd National School for Boys**

## **International Program**

### **Child Protection Policy**

Updated September 2021

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## Najd National Schools-International Program Guiding Statements

### **Vision**

To promote global citizenship and learner autonomy within a secure and supportive school environment where students can achieve their utmost potential.

### **Mission**

To expedite the implementation of student-centered learning by shifting our paradigm from teacher-centered instruction to learner-centered instruction. We will bring about change in our educational programs, instructional approaches, learning experience, and academic support strategies to serve the interests of our students.

### **Definition of Learning**

Learning is a self-driven process that empowers students to set authentic goals, explore, make connections to key concepts, relate new information to prior knowledge, modify existing knowledge, develop new ideas, and reflect on academic progress in a secure equal-opportunity environment that respects diversity.

### **School Core Values**

We believe that:

- Embracing cultural diversity helps us become globally aware and unbiased to bring about a positive change.
- Consolidating ethics and integrity in the classroom is fundamental to building ethical future generations.
- Consistency is a prerequisite to creating space for constructive learning environments.
- Learning by sharing builds positive relationships among students and helps improve academic performance.
- Curiosity stimulates the brain for learning and makes the learning process a more rewarding experience.
- Sincerity and empathy bring about positive social experiences.

## **I. Policy Statement**

Najd International School recognizes that children have the right to be protected from inappropriate behavior inside or outside school premises. Because students' welfare is our central attention, we have adopted a zero-tolerance policy against all kinds of abuse to give a chance for our students to grow up in a safe and healthy environment.

To deter abuse, we educate our faculty and staff to identify and report all physical, sexual, and emotional abuse cases. We also train them to identify sexual exploitation, neglect, and inappropriate behavior between children.

We guide faculty, staff, and parents to identify any case of abuse in school or at home. We also expect all the people we employ to be up to the level of awareness of abuse.

## **II. Scope**

The scope of this policy applies to faculty, staff, volunteers, students, or anyone on behalf of Najd International School.

## **III. Objectives**

This policy and inclusive guidelines were devised to ensure that children would feel safe during the learning process. The purpose of the policy is to:

- Inform the recruitment procedure
- Create a healthy educational environment that offers protection to all students
- Define child abuse practices
- Protect the children who receive Najd International School's services while respecting their right to confidentiality
- Provide staff and volunteers with a policy that reflects our approach to child protection
- Provide assessment tools for more precise identification of abuse
- Present staff with a framework for reporting abuse

## **IV. Abuse**

We will define the various types of abuse, including physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, sexual and commercial exploitation, child neglect, and inappropriate behavior towards other children. Each section will include a detailed definition, plus an indicator section.

### **IV. 1. Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse refers to a non-accidental act on a child that is carried out to cause physical harm. This kind of harm includes choking, slapping, pinching, pushing, or boxing someone. Faculty and staff will inquire about any visible sign of physical harm to know whether it is a result of physical abuse or not. In some cases, students might disclose instances of physical abuse, but sometimes you have to look for the following to spot students who are physically abused:

- Signs of bruising, burning, red bulges on the skin
- Unexplained black patches around the eye
- Crying and refusing to go back home or go to school
- Any physical injury that relates to specific categories of physical abuse
- Looking worried when a particular individual approaches the subject
- Agitation as if something wrong is going to happen
- Recoiling when touched
- Aggression towards other students

### **IV. 2. Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment to causes severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. This form of abuse has detrimental effects that are no less harmful than physical abuse. The problem with emotional abuse is that it can sometimes be hard to detect. Emotional abuse includes shouting, silencing, ridiculing, bullying, degrading, mocking, or emotionally blackmailing children. All types of emotional abuse affect children's attention span drastically and impact the child's social, emotional, and physical development. Faculty, staff, and parents should investigate the situation if the child:

- Seems anxious or afraid
- Appears socially detached and unresponsive
- Lacks of attachment to parents
- Displays aggression or extreme behavior
- Underachieves or loses concentration
- Practices attention-seeking behavior
- Looks anxious more frequently
- Becomes highly passive or aggressive
- Has delayed physical, emotional, and mental growth
- Thieves compulsively
- It is characterized by unwavering tiredness

#### **IV. 3. Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves enticing or forcing a child to participate in sexual activities including rape, kissing, touching, masturbating, or involving children in looking at photos of sexual nature or any sexually suggestive behavior. Sexual abuse can bring about shame, self-guilt, suicidal thoughts, psychological agony, addiction, and self-abrasion. Molesters use traditional or online grooming to lure their victims into illicit sexual behavior. In cases of sexual abuse, children will have the following signs and indicators:

- Pain or irritation to the genital area
- Difficulty urinating <sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>
- Shying away from a specific person
- Having sexually transmitted diseases
- Change in mood or appetite
- Age inappropriate sexual behavior, or sexually provocative
- STDs
- Withdrawing from friends or family members

- Flashing one's genitals to others
- Mentioning getting special attention from a secret friend
- Adopting more childish mannerism
- Thumb sucking, baby talk, or any sign of regressive behavior
- Abdominal pain or discomfort while sitting or walking
- Experiencing unexplained physical illness

#### **IV. 4. Sexual Exploitation & Commercial Sexual Exploitation**

Sexual exploitation is the act of taking advantage of a person's sexuality and attractiveness for personal gain. It is the act of attempted or practical abuse of someone's power or trust for sexual purposes. Children may be tricked into believing that they are in a loving relationship; eventually, they trust their abuser without comprehending that they are being abused. Sexual exploitation thrives in a school environment where there is access to children. This act violates human rights and is a betrayal of the fundamental values of Najd International School.

Sexual exploitation includes observing another person's external genitalia or exposing genitalia to another person. Sexual exploitation also includes taking photos or videos of one's nakedness, intimate body parts, or any form of sexual activity without prior consent. A child's sexual exploitation doesn't necessarily have to be face-to-face; it can take place online.

Online sexual exploitation can take the form of grooming, where an adult develops a relationship with a child for indecent purposes. Sexual offenders use fake identities to convince their victims that they are potential boyfriends or girlfriends. Then they steer the conversation towards sexual experiences or ask the victim to send nude photos or videos. The presence of social media, messaging, and live streaming can facilitate this offense. Child sexual offenders can view live streaming channels that display the sexual content of sexual offenders and their victims. Sometimes child sexual offenders pay facilitators to stream live sexual abuse involving a child with an offender.



Commercial sexual exploitation is another form of exploitation and involves exchanging favors; a favor might be a promise of good grades or protection. In this form of exploitation, the abuser promises the child money, gifts, food, clothes, or good grades in return for a sexual favor.

Signs of sexual exploitation include:

- Sudden secretive behavior of a child
- Physical or mental developmental disabilities
- Skipping school
- Making trouble in class
- Possession of unexplained gifts
- Emotional instability (Mood swings)
- Switching to a new page on the mobile phone when you approach the child
- Improper sexual behavior
- Over-familiarity with strangers
- Sexting
- Mysterious physical harm like bruising or cigarette burns

\* Note that some signs and indicators do not necessarily indicate abuse.

#### **IV. 5. Neglect**

Child neglect is an ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs, like clothing, proper sustenance, adequate shelter, medical care, or emotional needs. This form of abuse leaves a child with emotional scars and physical manifestations. Neglectful parents might abandon children at home or in a room for a long time or sometimes leave them on the street playing with friends without checking on them. Parents might also abandon children in a dangerous situation that could harm them; for instance, children would be running around the place and messing with plugged electrical appliances, matches, or the stove. The following are signs and indicators of neglect:

- Dehydration due to deficiency of water intake
- Poor hygiene and infestations
- A body odor smell of urine or feces

- Poor dental care and hygiene
- Dirty uncut nails, unclean hair
- Weight loss
- Repeated late arrival to school or non-attendance
- Low self-esteem
- Fatigue because of nutritional deficiency
- Absence of adaptive aids needed for the child (glasses, medication, etc.)
- Extreme loneliness or need for affection
- Compulsive thieving

#### **IV. 6. Inappropriate Behavior of Children towards Other Children**

Young children are curious by nature about their body parts. In Grade School, children develop social awareness about the sensitivity of sexuality, so this topic becomes secretive and hidden from adults. By the age of ten, children start showing the first signs of puberty, bringing more interest in their sexuality. At that point, they become fully aware of their sexuality and start indulging in masturbation and experimental sexual activity with other children; sometimes, it involves children of the same sex. Professional help is required when the developmental sexual activity involves children of different ages or when forced sex is used in any context. We also need to intervene if the sexual activity interferes with children's daily lives, activities, and interests.

- Excessive obsession with sexual body parts
- Regular, determined sex play with other children, even after being warned not to
- Flashing body parts at other children
- A pattern of inappropriate sexual act
- Mimicking sexual intercourse with other children
- Forced sexual behavior
- Masturbation in front of other children
- Any sexual activity causing physical or psychological harm

## **V. Procedures / Responsibilities**

Najd International Schools intend to ensure that all faculty and staff comprehend their roles and responsibilities in the process of helping us combat all forms of abuse. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure the application of this policy. Faculty and staff must be attentive and fully aware of potential or actual abuse signs and indicators. They will be responsible for reporting concerns, suspicions, or accusations of suspected cases of abuse, even if a child does not want to disclose a personal issue of abuse. Faculty and staff should be aware of the array of situations they have to deal with, including cases of abuse involving a child with another child or a child with a staff member.

### **V. 1. Child Protection Officer**

Najd International School has assigned a child protection officer whose primary role is to receive and act upon any reported concerns. The Child Protection Officer (CPO) has to fulfill the following responsibilities:

- Implement the Child Protection Policy and promote best safeguarding practice
- Introduce the Child Protection Policy to new staff during the induction week
- Conduct presentations on various topics relating to child protection
- Report incidents of abuse to the child protection committee
- Raise awareness of the code of conduct that articulates the values of Najd International School
- Attend to any breach of the staff code of conduct immediately
- Keep the Child Protection Policy up to date with the latest developments in the child protection field
- Initiate and retain contact with local and statutory agencies
- Report to the child protection committee
- Liaise with statutory and civil child protection agencies
- Lock and secure, confidential records of all reported cases and their resolution

## **V. 2. School Clinic**

The school clinic staff have to record any case of corporal punishment or any non-accidental body hand marks or bruises they find on children's bodies. They will record any cuts or bruises using a paper illustration of the human body to mark them on it. Then, they will send this illustration to the child protection officer, who will act upon this recorded evidence of abuse.

## **V. 3. Child Protection Committee**

A child protection committee will be responsible for receiving concerns about any child. This committee consisting of the principal, the educational expert, the head of the international track, and the child protection officer, will act on the information they receive and choose the most appropriate response to any alleged abuse case.

## **V. 4. Child Protection Procedures**

### **V. 4.1. Reporting**

All faculty and staff should do whatever is best for the child's interest. In a suspected or alleged case of abuse, the first person to be notified of the case is the CPO. If the CPO is not available, report the incident to the child protection committee principal. Staff must not conduct investigations or attempt to solve any case of child abuse on their own. Any concerns reported to staff should be addressed as soon as possible. After a staff or faculty member notifies the CPO, a decision will be made to seek further guidance or notify the Social Services Department in Riyadh. All reported cases should be addressed asap. In direct disclosure, it is essential to listen attentively to children and take whatever they say seriously. Any failure to report a concern about a child is a breach of the rights of children and will incur potential legal issues.

## **V. 4.2. Confidentiality**

No promise of secrecy should be given when the abuse is alleged. Staff must share all the information they know with the CPO and concerned agencies. All the case information must not be shared with people who have nothing to do with the investigation. The child protection committee principal should inform the family of the abuse about all the procedures involved in the investigation. Disclosure of information to the committee helps the investigation and helps eliminate or lessen any potential future threat.

## **V. 4.3. Filing**

It is the responsibility of the CPO to record all cases of abuse in writing and secure them in a child protection file.

## **V. 4.4. Dealing with Disclosures of Abuse (Speakout Cases)**

Abused children only disclose their concerns to the people they trust. If children trust you, you show sympathy because abused children are susceptible and have low self-esteem and might withdraw if they don't see these traits in you. The staff member should follow the **5Rs process**.

### **V. 4.4.1. Receive**

This initiation stage is the most sensitive one. Listen to the child attentively; this is not an investigation, so do not press for information. Any mistake in this stage will hinder the smooth progression of the investigation.

### **V. 4.4.2 Reassure**

Children sometimes feel guilty for disclosing any concern they deem sensitive. You need to reassure them with the thought that choosing to report is a wise decision. Do not promise children that their case will be a secret.

### **V. 4.4.3. Respond**

At this stage, you should focus on objective narration of the story and avoid asking leading subjective questions like yes/no questions. Be cognizant when you ask



children to narrate the incident because we do not want children to narrate their version of the alleged case.

#### **V. 4.4.4. Record**

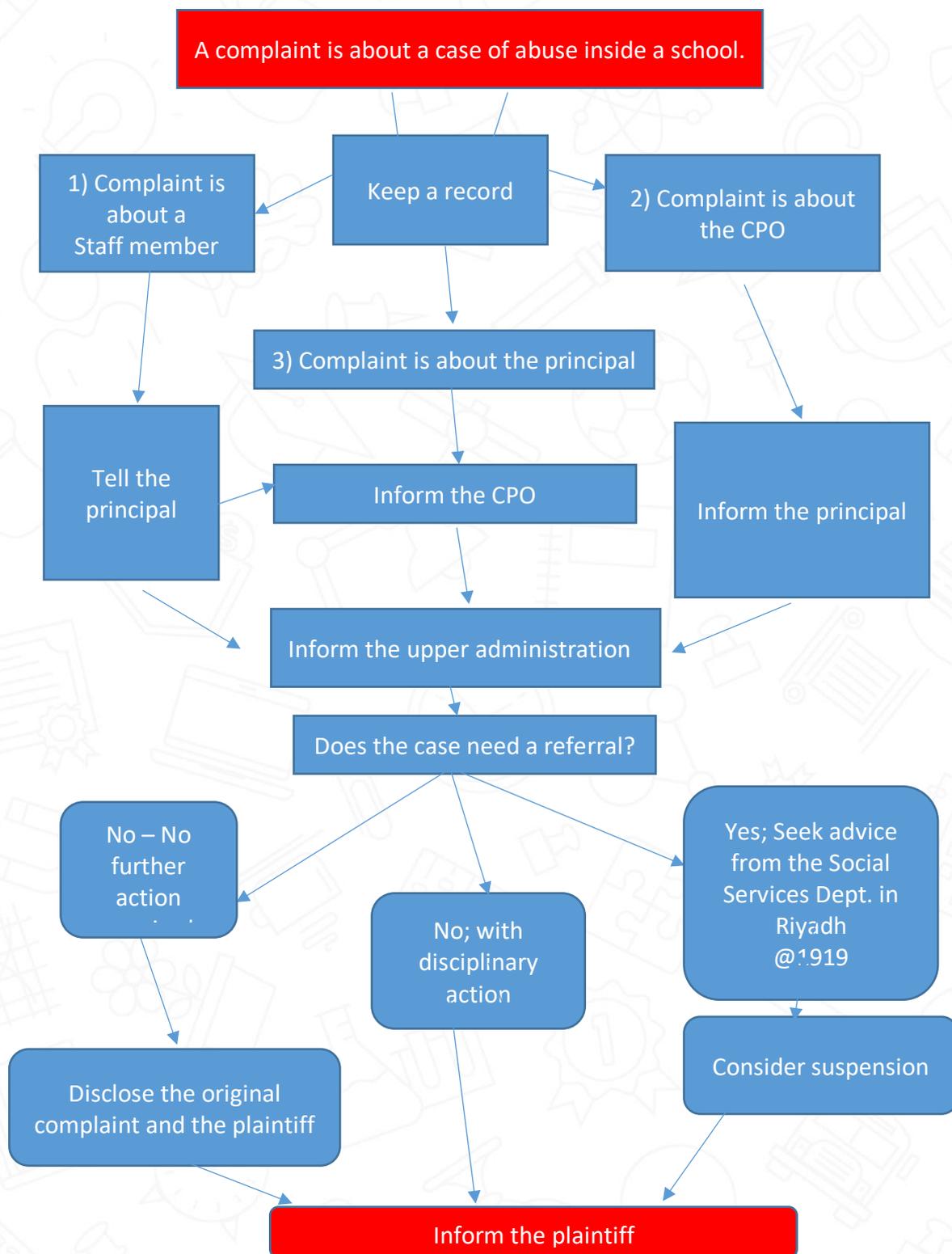
You should write the discussion immediately; include your name, the name of your colleague if present, time, place, and date when you write down the discussion, quote what the child has said whenever possible. Write down or sketch any injuries a child has endured. Ask the school clinic to provide you with an illustration of the human body to record any non-accidental body hand marks or bruises (**Appendix A**). Note that what you write might be used in court proceedings.

#### **V. 4.4.5. Report**

You have no official consent to solve the problem. You should report this incident immediately to the CPO. If you couldn't reach the CPO, report the incident to the child protection committee principal. Any information you reveal to people not involved in the investigation may be considered libelous to the alleged.

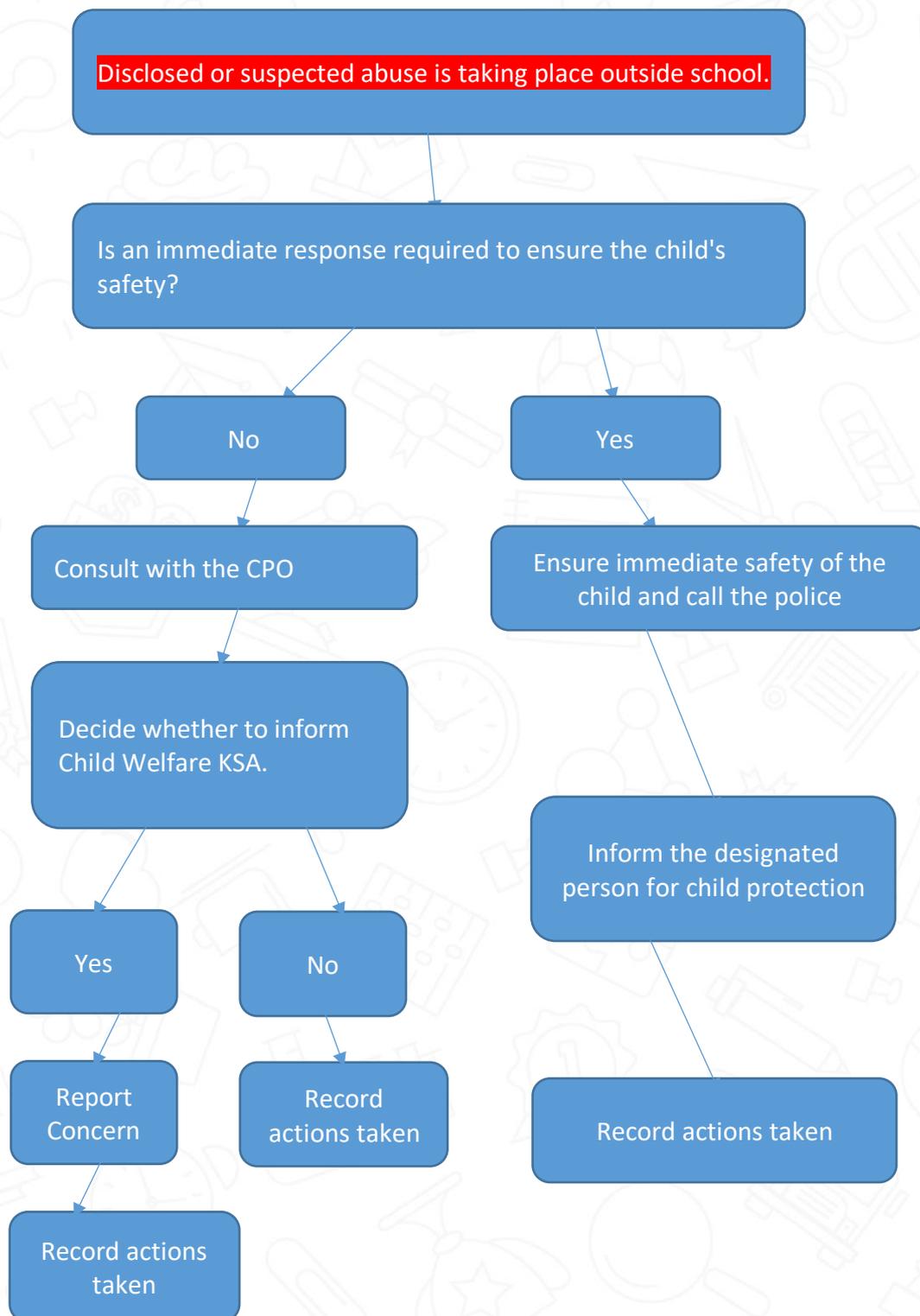
### V. 4.4.5.1. Reporting a Case of Abuse that Took Place Inside School

In this scenario, you will deal with a suspected or disclosed case of abuse inside the school.



### V. 4.4.5.2. Reporting a Case of Abuse That Took Place Outside School

In this scenario, you will deal with a suspected or disclosed case of abuse outside school.



## V. 5. Najd International School in-school Code of Conduct

To promote child welfare practices, all faculty and staff must abide by the following guidelines while dealing with students:

- Never sit privately with a student, and if this is inevitable, keep the door open or ask another adult to join you.
- In interviewing a child, use a room with a door containing an unobstructed visual panel.
- Avoid physical contact with students.
- Touching students is not allowed in cases other than dealing with accidents or injuries.
- Never rest your hand on a child's shoulder.
- Never cuddle, play with, or hold a child.
- All obvious or intimate contact must be avoided.
- Inform the CPO immediately, in writing, in the case of incidents where you think a student misinterpreted your actions; for instance, you need to restrain a child physically not to harm himself or others.
- All forms of corporal punishment are prohibited; you are not allowed to hit, pinch, push, or pull a student at any given circumstance.
- If possible, avoid contact with children in toilets, classrooms, or minibusses.
- Report a colleague if you suspect abusive behavior; you will be accused of attempted cover-up and face prosecution if you do not.
- Your relationship with your students must be age-appropriate.
- Never use sexually suggestive comments in front of children.
- Make sure you watch all material you plan to present in your classroom and make sure it doesn't contain socially-sensitivity material, discussion, or theme.
- Never offer to transport any of your present or previous students during or outside working hours.

## **V. 6. Partnership**

We partner with parents, experts, and child protection organizations to serve our child protection policy.

## **V. 7. Policy Review**

The child protection committee is responsible for the review and application of the policy. The team consists of the school principal, the educational expert, the team leader of the international program, and the child protection officer. This policy will be reviewed and updated regularly in light of its operational experience and in line with changes in legislation or designated guidelines.

## **VI. Legal Framework**

We believe that all children, regardless of their age, race, disability, sexual orientation, have equal protection rights protected by many Saudi and international laws.

- The Sharia Law for Preserving Children Dignity against Abuse and Neglect
- Conventions on the Rights of a Child (1989) (Royal Decree No. M/7 of 11 Sept. 1995)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child in Islam (2004)
- The Executive Bylaw of Protection from Harm (2014)
- Suspicion Child Abuse and Neglect (2008)
- The Protection from Abuse Act (2011 – Saudi Shura Council)



## VII. Definitions

### Child

For use in this policy, the word child refers to a boy or girl under 18.

### Staff

The word 'staff' in this policy refers to managers, board of trustees, contractors, or anyone on behalf of Najd International School.