



GLOBAL SCHOOL PARTNERS Child Safeguarding Policy



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www.globalschoolpartners.org.au

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CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY - 2020



Global School Partners facilitates partnerships between schools in Australia and schools in developing nations to enable students from across the globe to connect, share and learn with one another. In addition, we encourage Australians to support our work through sponsorship of students and funding of school projects and programs.

Our aim is to work collaboratively with community groups (schools) and individuals, to achieve mutually agreed goals that build capacity to both alleviate poverty through education and better health and raise awareness of how education can overcome poverty.

We inform students and school communities in Australia about the culture and circumstances experienced by students in their partner school in the developing country. We empower Australian students to make a positive, direct and tangible difference in the lives of students at their partner school.

Global School Partners recognises that by the nature of our work, our operations may pose a risk to children; therefore, we have developed this child safeguarding policy to proactively work to mitigate those risks.

Global School Partners believes that all children have the right to be safe at all times. We will proactively work to provide safe and protective programs, activities and environments.

This Child Safeguarding Policy has been developed to provide a practical guide to prevent child abuse in Global School Partners programs. It outlines a range of risk management strategies that will be implemented to reduce the risk of children being harmed through abuse and exploitation of any kind and create and maintain protective environments.

Note: In addition, refer to Global School Partners Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy (PSEAH) and the Global School Partners PSEAH Risk Management document.

Global School Partners works with some of the most vulnerable of the world's children. The nature of our work means we are potentially at risk of being targeted by people whom seek access to vulnerable children through our programs.

1. Child Safeguarding Policy

This policy statement affirms Global School Partners (GSP) commitment to the welfare of children and their safeguarding from exploitation and abuse. Any and all exploitation and abuse are entirely unacceptable to Global School Partners both in Australia and in our partner schools around the world. Global School Partners is committed to promoting and ensuring appropriate risk-based child safeguarding standards at all times and will immediately and comprehensively address any instances of alleged abuse, exploitation or misconduct occurring in its programs.

Our child safeguarding policy is based on the definition of a child being considered a person under the age of 18 years.

The policy applies to the following:

- all GSP board members
- all GSP staff, both in Australia and in-country
- all GSP volunteers and interns, both in Australia and in-country
- all GSP partner schools, both in Australia and in-country
- in-country service providers
- Australian citizens who participate in an in-country visit facilitated by Global School Partners.

Effective leadership to enable the safeguarding of children

To ensure effective leadership is in place to safeguard children, all board members of Global School Partners must have a Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) card from the state or territory in which they reside. This ensures the leadership team designing the Global School Partners Child Safeguarding Policy is fit for this duty.

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Communication of the Child Safeguarding Policy

Global School Partners communicates the Child Safeguarding Policy by;

- making the policy and associated appendix available on the Global School Partners website,
- providing a copy of the policy and associated appendix to all directors, staff, volunteers, and nominated representatives of partner schools and service providers.

Working with our partners

Global School Partners works with partner organisations in-country, such as GSP-Kenya Chapter and Kenyan Partner Schools.

These partner organisations are required to comply with the Global School Partners Child Safeguarding Policy and this is referred to in the Memorandum of Understanding between Global School Partners and our partner organisations.

Global School Partners is committed to working with our partner organisations to build awareness of the risk factors, signs and the prevalence of abuse and exploitation. In addition, to assist with tools, training and resources to mitigate risks and respond to situations.

Use of images and personal information

Before using images or personal information of a child, Global School Partners obtains informed consent from their recognised guardian. Records of consent are kept by Global School Partners staff in-country and reported to the board monthly. Global School Partners does not collect images or personal information relating to children in Australia.

In relation to the creation of images of any child, persons operating on behalf of Global School Partners are to:

- before photographing or filming a child, assess and endeavour to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images
- before photographing or filming a child, explain to the child or a parent or guardian of the child how the photograph or film will be used
- before photographing or filming a child, obtain consent from the child or a parent or guardian of the child for the photograph or film to be created
- create photographs, films, videos and DVDs that present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner
 - Children should be adequately clothed and must not be represented in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive.
- create images that are factual representations of the context and circumstances of the child
- use file labels that do not include identifying information about a child when sending images electronically.

Child safeguarding provisions for all in-country visits facilitated by Global School Partners that enable access to children and young people.

- Global School Partners acknowledge that the children and communities in the countries where we work are vulnerable. Therefore, **all** staff, directors and volunteers engaged in Global School Partners' activities, where they will have any contact with children or are involved in policy making regarding children, must undergo the following GSP child-safe recruitment and screening processes prior to commencement of activities:
 - Obtain and maintain a Working With Vulnerable People (WWVP) check or other relevant state or territory based working with children employment screening procedure.



- Participate in an interview (which includes behavior-based questions) with relevant GSP board members.
- Provide the name and contact details of two referees able to confirm suitability for the role based upon professional or personal knowledge of you within the last two years - verbal referee reports.

All staff, directors and volunteers engaged in Global School Partners activities must complete the following documentation annually:

1. Sign the 'Global School Partners Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct' (Appendix A) which includes reading, understanding, and acknowledging the Global School Partners Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy.
2. Sign the 'Global School Partners Use of children's images and personal information' (Appendix B).

Child safeguarding training for personnel

Global School Partners recruits staff members with appropriate experience and qualifications to work with children. A discussion about the Child Safeguarding Policy is part of staff induction and where appropriate requirement to undertake ACFID Child Protection online modules. Global School Partners requires ACFID Child Protection online modules to be completed annually for those in contact with children or responding to incidents relating to children. In addition Global School Partners will provide opportunities for additional professional development training on child protection when available, as per the Global School Partners HR Policy. Global School Partners staff in-country are available to provide counsel to partner schools and service providers if they seek advice on additional child safeguarding training or have questions regarding the Child Safeguarding Policy.

Employment contracts which contain provisions for the prevention of a person from working with children if they present an unacceptable risk to children

Global School Partners will not permit personnel to work with children if they pose an unacceptable risk to children's safety or wellbeing.

Global School Partners personnel are required to sign Appendix A 'Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct' and Appendix B 'Use of children's images and personal information' as a term of employment.

Global School Partners has an appointed child safeguarding incident reporting focal person in-country, the GSP Program Officer, and one in Australia.

Global School Partners reserves the right to dismiss or transfer to other duties personnel who breach the Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct. If there is a reportable breach, Global Schools Partners will apply and act consistently with relevant legislation, including compliance with mandatory reporting responsibilities.

If there is a breach, it is dealt with according to the following principles:

- safeguarding of all parties involved in the complaint or concern
- confidentiality (as distinct from secrecy)
- expedient reporting
- consideration of facts
- fairness
- professionalism.

Provisions for dismissal or suspension for breach of the Child Safeguarding Policy are contained in the HR Policy.



Regular reviews of the child safeguarding policy

The leadership team reviews the Child Safeguarding Policy and associated appendix annually, ensuring there are current signed copies of Appendix A 'Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct' & B 'Use of children's images and personal information' for all directors, staff, and nominated representatives of partner schools and service providers. This review is a standing agenda item at the Global School Partners Annual General Meeting.

2. Incident reporting

The guiding principles of the incident reporting process are;

- safeguarding of all parties involved in the complaint of concern
- confidentiality (as distinct from secrecy)
- expedient reporting
- truthfulness
- fairness
- professionalism

Incident reporting process must always comply with relevant legislation, including compliance with mandatory reporting responsibilities in the applicable jurisdiction (either Australia or in-country).

Reporting can occur via either in an informal communication or on a completed [GSP Child Incident Notification Form](#) available on the GSP website:

- email to admin@globalschoolpartners.org.au
- website at <https://www.globalschoolpartners.org.au/contact>
- contact GSP Kenya based Child Safeguarding Focal Person – Lonah Maiko on +254 705 834 784

On receipt of an incident report from any source the Global School Partners CEO will inform the Board Safety Committee chair. The Chair/CEO will seek to verify the facts around the report and call a Safety Committee meeting, if identified as appropriate. The Safety Committee, upon verification of the facts, will inform the GSP Board who will authorise action as required.

Potential actions may include suspension from duties to permanent expulsion from GSP activities and programs.

The MoU signed with school partners includes a clause that requires them to report any known breaches of the Child Safeguarding Policy, specifically Appendix A 'Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct'.

Global School Partners will immediately report to DFAT any incidents involving child exploitation and abuse suspicions or allegations, code of conduct or policy non-compliance, where DFAT funding is involved.

3. Child-friendly complaints handling process

- Investigated by the Program Officer, who regularly visits the children and is known to them and their families, she is independent of the GSP Partner Schools.
NOTE: The Program Officer works with the children on a monthly basis and is trained in childhood education. The Program Officer has the trust and communication skills to relate in a child-friendly manner with children using verbal, writing or drawing communication techniques.
- Children can report to their school (e.g. if it is about the Program Officer) and all school directors are required to report complaints to GSP, as per the MoU. GSP Board will then determine process for investigating and handling the complaint. Refer GSP Governance Policy for detail on complaints handling policy.

Related Policies and Documents:

GSP Governance Policy

GSP PSEAH Policy

GSP Child Safeguarding and PSEAH Risk Mitigation

Next review June 2025.

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APPENDIX A

GLOBAL SCHOOL PARTNERS CHILD SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT

I, _____ (full name)

of _____ (organisation)

am engaged by or volunteering with or representing a Partner School, in association with Global School Partners Ltd, agree that I will:

- treat children with respect regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status
- not use language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate
- not engage children in any form of sexual activity or acts, including paying for sexual services or acts, where under the law(s) applicable to the child (including Part IIIA of the Australian Crimes Act 1914 (Cth) as amended), the child is below the age of consent or the act(s) are an offence under relevant laws
- wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children
- not invite unaccompanied children into my home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger
- not sleep close to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case I must obtain my supervisor's permission, and ensure that another adult is present
- use any computers, mobile phones, or video and digital cameras appropriately, and never to exploit or harass children or to access child pornography through any medium (see Appendix B of this policy 'Use of children's images and personal information for work related purposes')
- refrain from hiring or using children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury
- comply with all relevant Australian and local legislation, including labour laws in relation to child labour
- involve children in making decisions about activities, policies and processes that concern them wherever possible
- listen and respond to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they communicate (verbally or non-verbally) that they do not feel safe or well
- NOT provide any form of gifts, alcohol or drugs to children
- apply for and maintain an appropriate working with children employment screening clearance as per relevant state, territory or national legislation
- immediately report concerns or allegations of child abuse in accordance with Global School Partners policy and procedure
- respond to any concerns or complaints of child harm or abuse promptly and in line with Global School Partners policy and procedure for receiving and responding to complaints.
- comply with the Global School Partners Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy.

Name and position:

Signed:

Date:

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APPENDIX B

GLOBAL SCHOOL PARTNERS USE OF CHILDREN'S IMAGES AND PERSONAL INFORMATION

I, _____ (full name)

of _____ (organisation)

am engaged by or volunteering with or representing a Partner School, in association with Global School Partners Ltd, agree that when photographing or filming a child, I must:

- before photographing or filming a child, assess and endeavour to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images
- before photographing or filming a child, explain to the child or a parent or guardian of the child how the photograph or film will be used
- obtain consent for the photograph or film to be created from the child or a parent or guardian of the child
- create photographs, films, videos and DVDs that present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner
 - Children should be adequately clothed and must not be represented in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive.
- create images that are honest representations of the context and the facts
- use file labels that do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically.

I understand that the onus is on me, as a person engaged by or associated with Global School Partners, to avoid actions or behaviours that could be perceived by a child, a parent or guardian or any other third party as child abuse when implementing Global School Partner activities.

Name and position:

Signed:

Date:



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