



Child Protection Policy

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Preface

The purpose of this document is to ensure that the entire Rocklin International School community has shared definitions of child protection terms and agreed upon strategies for keeping children safe in the school context. When children feel safe, they can focus on growing into successful academic achievers and balanced learners.

Throughout this document "child" or "children" refers to someone under the age of 18 years old¹. Rocklin International School will not condone inappropriate or abusive behavior towards children and has a zero-tolerance regarding child abuse. Vigilance is the most effective way to prevent child abuse. Rocklin International School Kuala Lumpur exercises this vigilance by following high standards for interaction with children. Regarding the treatment of children, where Malaysian law is more prescriptive or strict than the guidelines here, then local law must be followed.

¹ Rocklin International School considers any student enrolled at the school to also be included in the definition and fall under the protection of these policies, even those who are 18 or older.

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Definitions

There are four major types of child maltreatment covered in this document:

1. *Physical abuse.* Physical abuse is any act that results in a non-accidental physical injury. Such acts may include, but are not limited to punching, beating, kicking, biting, shaking, burning, holding underwater, or pulling hair.
2. *Sexual abuse.* Sexual abuse is the involvement of a child in sexual activity with an adult or another child (as defined below) which includes but is not limited to:
 - a. *Verbal:* Remarks, which include sexual threats, solicitation, obscene or sexually explicit language (whether in person, on the telephone, or via text messaging or the internet); or any verbal expression with inappropriate sexual content.
 - b. *Visual:* Indecent exposure; masturbation or sexual activity in the presence of a child; showing or taking of suggestive pictures, pornographic material of genitals, or the showing of unclothed persons; any sexual activity or simulated sexual activity such as masturbation or intercourse; or inappropriate viewing or staring.
 - c. *Physical Touching:* Physical contact (or penetration by penis, fingers, or any other body part or object), with the exception of normal childcare or medical care, with a person's clothed or unclothed genitals, pubic area, buttocks, or in the case of a female, breast, or causing a child to perform any of these acts. Masturbation, rubbing, holding, or kissing for the purpose of sexual gratification.
 - d. *Grooming:* Befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, and the adults around the child, to gain access to and time alone with the child with the intention of lowering the child's inhibitions for child sexual abuse.
 - i. In the context of sexual abuse, grooming is best identified using the following six steps or characteristics:
 1. Identifying and targeting
 2. Offering specialized attention
 3. Manipulating the relationship to meet a child's needs,
 4. Isolating the child
 5. Creating secrecy around the relationship
 6. Initiating sexual abuse.
 - e. *Exploitation:* Using money, power, affection, etc. to manipulate or pressure a child into sexual activity, potentially for commercial profit, such as in the case of the production of child pornography.
3. *Emotional abuse.* Chronic patterns, acts or omissions by caregivers that have caused, or could cause, serious behavioral, cognitive, emotional, or mental harm.
4. *Neglect.* The ongoing failure to provide for the accepted standards* of a

child's physical, educational, emotional, social, or safety needs.

*Accepted standards of care will be based on Malaysian law. The Child Act of 2001 states that a child is in need of protection when "the parent or guardian of the child has neglected or is unwilling to provide for him adequate care, food, clothing and shelter".

Child Protection Policy

1. Rocklin International School is committed to the protection of children from all forms of abuse. Recognizing that definitions of abuse vary from country to country and that we are a multicultural community, Rocklin will use the following definitions based on internationally accepted definitions.
2. All staff and volunteers are required to read the Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct guidelines and sign the Child Protection Policy Agreement.
3. All staff and volunteers are required to complete the basic Child Protection training and yearly Child Protection refresher course.
4. Rocklin International School will not tolerate retaliation against any staff member for reporting suspected abuse.
5. If child abuse is established by the Child Protection Team, the Child Protection Team Lead will make recommendations regarding corrective or disciplinary action, ranging from verbal or written warnings up to and including immediate termination of employment or volunteer commitment, depending upon the circumstances. Other recommendations regarding care, support systems, health, and safety may also be made by the Child Protection Team Lead and required by Rocklin administration to affected parties.
6. Rocklin takes all abuse seriously and will respond with due diligence to any report of potential abuse.
7. Rocklin will terminate employment/service of any staff member or volunteer whose behavior towards a child meets our definition of child sexual abuse as determined by our internal inquiry and may terminate employment/service of any staff member or volunteer whose behavior meets our definition of other forms of child abuse. The option to resign is not offered when a finding of child abuse is determined which warrants termination. When such has been determined there is no option of future service paid or unpaid with Rocklin. Rocklin will also make a report to the local police in cases where it is warranted. Rocklin will make known the cause of dismissal if a request for information or reference is received. Rocklin does not employ or appoint anyone with a prior conviction for, or history of, child sexual abuse or related offenses at any time during his or her adult life.

Reporting Child Protection Concerns

1. Any observed, disclosed, or suspected incident of child abuse, as defined above, is to

be reported to any school Principals, the Child Protection Team Lead, or Health Service Coordinator within 24 hours.

2. If reported to a principal, the Child Protection Concern form should be completed and submitted to the Child Protection Team Lead without delay.
3. Only the Child Protection Team Lead is authorized to initiate a response to a Child Protection concern. The Child Protection Team Lead or his/her designate will initiate a response according to the Child Protection Protocol within 24 hours of receiving a report.
4. The Child Protection Team will secure the immediate safety of any child in imminent danger, then contact the Child Protection Team Lead immediately.
5. The Child Protection Team Lead will work closely with the administration to promptly create an intermediate safety plan, thoroughly respond to the incident, liaise with appropriate local authorities, and address concerns for the affected community.
6. Due to litigation risk, the demand for specialized experience, and the needs of the children involved, the Child Protection Team should defer to the Child Protection Team Lead in all aspects of the response and follow-up. In the case of historic concerns, the same process will be followed and all concerns, whether current or historic, and regardless of degree of possible harm caused, will be responded to.

Child-to-Child Cases

1. Child-to-child abuse includes all types of abuse as defined above.
2. In the event where both children are harmed, and the respondent is under the age of 18, it will typically be considered abuse if:
 - 2.1. there are more than three (3) years age difference (1095 days or more) between the children or;
 - 2.2. there is a difference in responsibility, trust, or power between them.
3. In the event where both children's age difference is less than three (3) years and there is not a significant difference in responsibility, trust, or power between them, what would normally be defined as abuse will be considered inappropriate behavior, with an action plan put in place to address the behaviors of concern and their effects.
4. Due to variable factors, child-to-child cases will be judged on a case-by-case basis.

Code of Conduct for Child Protection

This Code of Conduct is an overview of standards for Child Protection that all employees and volunteers should use as guidelines while serving at Rocklin International School. Note that the word 'child'² is used to define any person under 18 years of age. The Code of Conduct for Child Protection is aligned with the school wide objectives. Children who feel safe will be more likely to succeed in academics and become balanced learners who are physically and emotionally healthy.

1. Any interactions with children will be conducted in a way that minimizes risk as much as possible for the children, such as by:
 - **Visibility** - being visible to other unrelated adults when working with children. This can be accomplished by ensuring other adults are present, using rooms with windows, and by keeping doors open. CCTVs can also provide increased visibility, but should not be relied on exclusively and are not installed in high-risk areas, such as the washroom and changing rooms.
 - **Overcoming Isolation** - Precautions must be taken to ensure that children are not isolated with one adult or older child in-charge. An adequate number of adults should supervise all events, including extracurricular activities and especially overnight activities (see Field Trip Guidelines). Isolation can also be overcome by avoid being alone with one child. For example, take two or more children to the bathroom together, rather than only one. Do not use the student bathroom. Take two or more children with you in the lift.
 - **Accountability** - When working with a child involves one-on-one contact, the following procedures should be followed, as applicable:
 - Always be accountable to other adults regarding your interactions with children.
 - Parents and/or supervisors are to be notified beforehand of any extra activities with children. For example, before transporting a child, keeping a child after school, or when tutoring a child.
 - Counseling or other necessary confidential meetings with children should be done in a place with visibility. If unable, a second unrelated adult can be within close vicinity, aware that the meeting, and be willing to stay in the vicinity until it is completed. Mentoring/tutoring can be conducted in open and public spaces, where other people are always present.
 - In an emergency, such as needing to transport a child alone or supervise a child alone, find an additional person to be involved if possible, and/or notify the parents as soon as possible.

² Rocklin International School considers any student enrolled at the school to also be included in the definition and fall under the protection of these policies, even those who are 18 or older.

Balancing Power and Control - When working with children, balancing the age, size, strength, power, and authority between staff and children will help lower the risk. For example, invite two or more students to work on a project. When mentoring, mentor two children rather than one, group children together for play and work in the same age, or same size, or same gender groupings, also using the same examples mentioned in Overcoming Isolation (mentioned above).

- **Supervision** - Staff should periodically and randomly inspect classrooms, offices, work areas, play areas, and any other areas where children may be playing with other children, and where children and adults are together.
 - **Differential Treatment** - Adults should avoid favoring or showing differential treatment (favoritism) to particular children to the exclusion of and in the presence of others or excluding children in a derogatory or embarrassing way in the presence of others.
2. Staff will make a reasonable effort to protect children by the use of filtering technology and appropriate supervision from being exposed to pornographic material from the Internet and/or accessing inappropriate emails, chat rooms, social media, or movies on school devices. Staff will not view child pornography on or off campus.
 3. Discipline of children will strive to teach and correct, rather than punish in anger and will never be physical in nature.
 - 3.1. The following actions may involve abuse and **are not considered to be acceptable forms of discipline** and should be avoided: any form of discipline that causes bodily injury, derogatory name-calling, unsupervised seclusion, such as in a dark closet, ridicule, humiliation, or shaming, publicly singling out a child for negative treatment or exclusion, yelling (loud speech that harms by bringing emotional degradation), belittling a child or other forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.
 - 3.2. Students are not to be isolated unless it seems that violence to others is impending. In such cases, remove other children from the room and isolate the student until help arrives. Do not attempt to move a child in the middle of a destructive episode. If isolation fails, only then resort to restraint. Students should never be physically restrained or held against their will, unless in an emergency situation when self-violence or violence towards staff or other students is imminent and no other intervention strategies have been successful in de-escalating the situation. All incidences of restraint will be reported to the Child Protection Team Lead within 24 hours.
 4. Healthy caring touch is valuable to children, but unhealthy touch can be abusive. The following general guidelines apply:
 - Touch will be **open rather than secretive**. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors with a child not your own.
 - Touch will be **in response to the need of the child**, and not the need of the adult.

- Touch will be **age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child** rather than the adult. Touch will be **with the child's permission**, and any resistance from the child is to be respected. Touch will **communicate respect for the child**.
- 4.1. Appropriate interactions include verbal praise, and if accepted by the child, side hugs, shoulder-to-shoulder hugs, and pats on the shoulder, back, or head, depending on the cultural background of the child and if accepted by the child.
 - 4.2. For smaller children, verbal praise is encouraged and if accepted by the child, touching their hands, faces, shoulders and arms, arms around their shoulders, hugs, and holding them when others are present are considered generally appropriate, depending on their cultural background.
 - 4.3. Verbal praise is highly encouraged. Words can also be used to support and encourage a child, such as praise, positive reinforcement, and appropriate jokes.
5. To establish healthy boundaries, the following behaviors with children are **inappropriate**:
- Doing things of a personal nature for children that they are able to do for themselves, including dressing, using the toilet, etc.
 - Excessive use of physical force or restraint, unless in an emergency (see above). Even in cases of emergency restraint, the restraint should be employed for as little time with as little force as possible and only as a last resort.
 - Touching the body of a child for the purpose of sexual gratification.
 - Making comments that relate to physique or body development.
 - Acting flirtatious or giving seductive looks.
 - Making sexually suggestive comments.
 - Showing sexually suggestive videos or playing sexually suggestive games with any child.
 - Giving any form of affection that is unwanted by the child.
 - Shaming, belittling, humiliating, name-calling.
 - Using harsh language that may frighten, threaten, or humiliate the child.
 - Making derogatory remarks about the child.
 - Cursing.
 - Telling stories or jokes that are sexually inappropriate.
 - Telling inappropriate secrets, or inappropriate discussion of sexual

encounters or desires with children.

- Favoring or showing preferential treatment to particular children or youth to the exclusion of others, except as is appropriate in family relationships.
 - Messaging a student privately, whether on or off campus.
6. Rocklin staff are responsible for monitoring child-to-child behavior, encouraging children to interact with each other in healthy and appropriate ways. The following actions may involve abuse or inappropriate behavior of one child to another, and are to be discouraged and avoided:
- bullying³
 - hazing⁴
 - derogatory name-calling, ridicule, or humiliation
 - publicly singling out another child for negative treatment or exclusion (in the physical or virtual/cyber worlds)
 - child-to-child inappropriate sexual touch
 - inappropriate sexually explicit language
 - showing of sexually explicit images
 - hitting, slapping, pushing, holding against their will, or otherwise assaulting another child.
7. A disclosure of self-harm or suicidal intent/ideation by a student should also be reported to the Child Protection Team.

³ Non accidental, repeated, and targeted aggressive behavior between children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.

⁴ Harassing, exacting humiliating tasks as a form of initiation into a group, playing rough practical jokes