



Concordia International School

Student Safety Policies

Dear Faculty Member, Staff Member & Volunteer,

Welcome to Concordia International School!

At Concordia International School, we take our responsibility to educate and care for children very seriously. These guidelines are intended to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment in which children can learn and grow in a strong educational environment.

The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for CISHK volunteers and staff members. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for children, protecting children, you, and the mission of CISHK. The following procedures have been adopted and will be strictly enforced.

After you have carefully read this policy manual, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page.

Sincerely,

Concordia International School

Concordia International School

Safety Policies & Procedures

Contents:

Overview of Safety System.....	3
Child Safety Policy.....	4
• Abuse Tolerance	4
• Reporting Suspicious or Inappropriate Behaviors.....	4
• Enforcement of Policies	4
• Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse	5
• Consequences of Prohibited/Harmful Act	5
• Reporting Suspicions of Abuse to Law Enforcement Agencies	5
• Response to Report of Abuse	5
• When a Child has been Victimized	5
• Bathroom Supervision and Assistance	5
• Gift Giving.....	6
• Intoxicants.....	6
• Tobacco.....	6
• Nudity.....	6
• One-to-One Interactions with Children	6
- Individual Meetings	6
- Transportation.....	6
• Parental Contact and Involvement	7
• Physical Contact	7
• Sexually Oriented Conversations	7
• Sexually Oriented Materials	8
• Internet/Electronic Media.....	8
• Social Media/Networking	8
• Sleeping Arrangements.....	9
• Supervision.....	9
• Verbal Interactions.....	9

Overview of the CISHK Safety System

Because we care for children and desire to protect them, CISHK requires all faculty and staff members to complete **4 SAFETY STEPS** *before employment begins.*

STEP ONE: Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

CISHK policies and procedures require that faculty and staff members avoid abusive behavior of any kind. Faculty and staff members are required to report any policy violations to the Principal or a member of the CISHK Counseling Committee.

Faculty and staff members should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behaviors in ‘grooming’ a child for sexual abuse. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child’s trust (and the trust of the child’s parent or ‘gatekeeper’), manipulate the child into sexual activity and keep the child from disclosing the abuse.

To equip CISHK faculty and staff members with information necessary to protect a child from sexual abuse, CISHK requires all faculty and staff members to complete Sexual Abuse Awareness Training provided live or online through Abuse Prevention Systems (www.AbusePreventionSystems.com) or MinistrySafe (www.MinistrySafe.com).

This training will be renewed every year.

STEP TWO: Screening Process

Faculty and staff members are required to complete the CISHK Screening Process, which requires faculty and staff members to:

- complete an Employment Application
- complete the Safety Application
- complete a face-to-face interview
- provide references to be checked.

STEP THREE: Policies & Procedures

Faculty and staff members are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign the last page indicating he or she has read and understood the material, and agrees to comply with policy requirements.

STEP FOUR: Criminal Background Check

CISHK requires that all faculty and staff members undergo a criminal background check by an international authority appointed by the School and/or a Sexual Conviction Record Check by the Hong Kong Police Force. Depending upon position, differing levels or intensity of background check may be required.

Child Safety Policy

ABUSE TOLERANCE

CISHK has a **zero tolerance for abuse** in school programs and activities. It is the responsibility of every faculty and staff member at CISHK to act in the best interest of each child in every school program.

In the event that faculty or staff members observe any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is their responsibility to immediately report the information to the Child Protection Officer or to the Principal.

REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

CISHK is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and the law of Hong Kong, to the CISHK Child Protection Officer, the Principal and to the Family and Child Protective Services Unit of the Social Welfare Department.

CISHK supports and encourages a culture of communication related to abuse or suspected abuse of children. If you see or suspect inappropriate interaction with or between children, it is your responsibility to report the inappropriate interaction to a supervisor or a member of the CISHK Counseling Committee. This includes partial or inconclusive information concerning behavior, which may or may not be blameless.

Because sexual abusers ‘groom’ children for abuse, it is possible a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to ‘groom’ a child for sexual abuse. Staff members and volunteers are asked to report ‘grooming’ behavior, any policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to a supervisor or a member of the CISHK Counseling Committee.

ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES

CISHK staff members and volunteers who supervise other staff members or volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all CISHK policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment from positions for both volunteers and staff members. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the Principal or the Executive Director.

Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse

CONSEQUENCES OF PROHIBITED/HARMFUL ACT

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered by the school to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from all child interaction and school related activities. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or child protective agencies.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act may be prohibited from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming that involves children, students or vulnerable populations at CISHK. If the person is a staff member or employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from CISHK.

REPORTING SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Staff members and volunteers at CISHK are required to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect, or any inappropriate behavior of a colleague or co-worker to the Principal or Executive Director.

Staff members and volunteers are required to verbally report an incident to supervisory staff as soon as possible after the incident. After receiving a report from a staff member or volunteer, the Principal will speak with the person or volunteer to whom the child spoke in order to get detailed information about the entire conversation. The Principal or Executive Director will be notified as soon as reasonably possible.

RESPONSE TO REPORT OF ABUSE

The School Social Worker and CISHK Counseling Committee will take appropriate action on behalf of the school when a report of abuse occurs.

Any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously, and will be reported in accordance with this policy to the Principal or the Executive Director. If appropriate, the Family & Child Protective Services Unit of the Social Welfare Department will be notified. For more information regarding the procedures and responsibilities to report suspicions of abuse or neglect, please refer to Section F of the CISHK Child Protection Policy.

WHEN A CHILD HAS BEEN VICTIMIZED

If a staff member or volunteer has knowledge or a suspicion that a child is a victim of sexual abuse or other maltreatment, the information will be reported to supervisory staff and the appropriate authorities as outlined above.

BATHROOM SUPERVISION AND ASSISTANCE GUIDELINE

Staff members and faculty should avoid taking children to the restroom. If a staff member or faculty must go to the restroom to check up on an individual child they should:

- 1) Seek out another person to accompany them.
- 2) If another person is not available to accompany them they should go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask if the child needs assistance.
- 3) If the child requires assistance, the worker should leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and try to verbally assist the child in

completing their activities while the child remains behind the door of the bathroom stall.

- 4) Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should only be done in the presence of another staff or faculty.

GIFT GIVING

Staff members and faculty are prohibited from providing special gifts to any individual student. Special occasions or special accomplishments should receive group acknowledgement and can easily be rewarded with group recognition (i.e., give mention during announcements; have the entire class sing Happy Birthday, etc.) Any requests for variance from this policy must be addressed to the Principal.

INTOXICANTS

Staff members and faculty are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while in the facility, during a school activity, or while working with students at CISHK. Staff members and faculty are prohibited from providing alcohol or illegal drugs to students.

TOBACCO

CISHK is a tobacco-free facility. CISHK requires staff members and faculty to refrain from the use or possession of tobacco products in the facility, and while in the presence of children and students or their parents. CISHK staff members and faculty are prohibited from providing tobacco products to students.

NUDITY

Staff members and faculty at CISHK should never be nude in the presence of students in their care.

ONE-TO-ONE INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN AND STUDENTS

CISHK recognizes that meeting the educational needs of students may occasionally require that staff members and faculty interact with them on an individual basis. Workers should observe the following guidelines when interacting with students:

Individual Meetings

Staff members and faculty should conduct one-to-one meetings with an individual student at a time when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed. There will be no one-to-one meetings between a staff member or a faculty and a student behind closed doors. If a circumstance arises where a private one-to-one meeting does occur, the staff member or faculty will notify the Principal immediately before or after the meeting.

Transportation

Staff members and faculty may from time to time be in a position to provide transportation for students. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when workers are involved in the transportation of students:

- 1) Students should never be transported without parental permission or of the Principal.
- 2) Students should be transported directly to their destination. No unauthorized stops should be made.

- 3) Staff members and faculty should avoid physical contact with students while in vehicles.
- 4) No cell phones may be used by the driver while providing transportation for students.
- 5) Students should not use a vehicle belonging to a staff member or faculty.

PARENTAL CONTACT

Parents will be contacted if their child/student becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in school activities.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to be a part of any and all services and programs in which students are involved at CISHK. A parent accompanied by a child to any school program or activity is responsible for their child's safety.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

CISHK is committed to protecting the students in our care. The School has implemented a physical contact policy that will promote a positive, nurturing environment while protecting our students. Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of CISHK staff or faculty must foster trust at all times – personal conduct must be above reproach. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working in School programs:

1. Hugging, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between staff or faculty and students are important for student's development, and are generally suitable in the school setting.
2. Physical affection should be appropriate to the student's age. Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection should be immediately reported to the Principal.
3. Physical contact and affection should only be given when in the presence of other children or School staff and faculty. It is much less likely that touches will be inappropriate or misinterpreted as such when more than two individuals are present and the touch is open to observation.
4. Do not force any physical contact, touch or affection upon a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.

SEXUALLY ORIENTED CONVERSATIONS

Staff members and faculty are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with students. However, it is expected that from time to time staff may be called upon to address students regarding human sexuality and purity. Staff members and faculty are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating, or sexual activities with any student in the School. This provision includes the use of cellular phones, text messages, e-mail, instant messaging and online chat rooms.

POSSESSION OF SEXUALLY ORIENTED MATERIALS

CISHK staff members and faculty are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, etc.) on School property or in the presence of students. If any such materials are purportedly necessary for classroom instruction, they must be approved in advance by the Principal.

INTERNET/ELECTRONIC MEDIA

No computer at or related to CISHK is to be used by staff members, faculty or students to engage in computer chat room discussions or visit pornographic or sexually inappropriate websites. Violation of this policy can lead to discipline from the Principal. Any questions about inappropriate use of computers or the suitability of a particular website should be discussed with the Principal.

SOCIAL MEDIA/NETWORKING

CISHK establishes a social networking policy to safeguard the students, employees, and the reputation of CISHK and to provide guidelines to assist employees in using this communication vehicle. The absence of, or lack of explicit reference to a specific site does not limit the extent of the application of this policy.

Students

Employees are prohibited from ‘friending’ and/or accepting friend requests from current students. Employees are prohibited from posting anything on a social site of a current student unless the employee is the parent or guardian of that student. Please immediately unfriend any students who are your friends on Facebook or any other social network.

Parents

Use caution when ‘friending’ current CISHK parents. CISHK expects each employee to maintain a professional relationship with parents. Should you choose to participate in social networking with parents please be aware that at all times you are a representative of CISHK. Anything you post, including pictures, is a reflection upon CISHK.

Alumnae

It is acceptable to accept social network ‘friend requests’ with alumnae over the age of 18. However, it is best not to initiate friend contacts with alumnae. Understand that uneven power dynamics of the school environment, in which adults have authority over former students, might continue to shape those relationships. Consider that recent alumnae are in some ways similar to current students because of proximity and age, and because they likely perceive faculty and staff member as authority figures.

Other Friends

Remind other members of your network of your position at CISHK and that your profile may be accessed by current or former students, and to monitor their posts to your network accordingly. Conversely, be judicious in your postings to all friends’ sites, and act immediately to remove any material that may be inappropriate from your site whether posted by you or someone else.

Privacy

Recognize that there is no such thing as complete privacy on a social networking site. Take care in anything you post online. Keep your privacy settings at appropriate levels to protect

yourself. Any violation in this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS

It is anticipated that certain CISHK activities may occasionally require that overnight sleeping arrangements be made for students and staff members or faculty. In the event that an activity requires sleeping arrangements, staff members and faculty will strictly observe the following rules; any exceptions to the below policies must be approved in advance by the Principal:

1. Staff members and faculty will monitor sleeping students periodically conducting visual bed checks to ensure that sleeping students remain in designated sleeping areas.
2. Only students of the same sex will be permitted to sleep in the same room.
3. At times, a staff member or faculty will sleep in the same room as students or in an adjoining room. However, staff members or faculty are prohibited from sleeping in a 1:1 ratio setting with students for any reason, unless the staff member or faculty is an immediate family member of the student.
4. In the event that overnight arrangements do not include standard beds, each staff member, faculty, and/or student will use single sleeping bags or blankets. In these instances a “one-person-to-one-bag or blanket” rule will be observed.
5. Staff members, faculty, and students will be required to wear both top and bottom clothing while sleeping.

SUPERVISION

CISHK staff members and faculty are expected to provide adequate supervision for children in their care while working at the School. Some group activities away from the School may permit youth to function in small, unsupervised groups for brief time periods. When group activities allow for this type of unsupervised functioning, staff members and faculty should set clear expectations for students concerning times to meet and “check-in” with staff members or workers in charge of the activity.

VERBAL INTERACTIONS

Verbal interactions between staff members or faculty and students should be positive and uplifting. CISHK staff members and faculty should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and be ever mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the educating children. Staff members and faculty are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of students.

- End -