



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Created	August 2020
Previous Review	August 2024
Current policy	June 2025

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students at ISIB are safeguarded and protected from harm. It sets out the procedures, responsibilities and guiding principles for identifying, reporting, and responding to concerns about the welfare of children and young people in our care.

This policy provides a clear framework for all staff, volunteers and external partners to follow, ensuring a consistent and proactive approach to safeguarding and child protection. It reflects both Danish legislation and international safeguarding standards, including the duty to notify concerns and to act in the best interests of the child.

By promoting a safe, inclusive, and responsive school environment, the policy supports the wellbeing, development, and learning of all students—particularly those who may be vulnerable or at risk of harm.

This policy applies to all students at ISIB. For safeguarding purposes, any student under the age of 18 is regarded as a child, although external agencies may treat those aged 18 and over as adults.

All staff are responsible for implementing this policy and must know the identities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs).

Any safeguarding or child protection concern must be reported immediately to the DSL, or in their absence, to a DDSL.

All staff must read and follow '*Professional Concern – A Guide for Private Independent Schools on Children and Young People Who Have Welfare Issues and Are in Need of Special Support*', published by the Danish Ministry of Education.

Safeguarding concerns must always be handled with the highest level of confidentiality.

Key Contacts

School Contacts	
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DLS)	Jordan Icke NPQH – jordanicke@isib.dk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Niall Connell MEd – niallconnell@isib.dk
External Contacts	
Ikast-Brande Kommune Family, Children and Youth	https://ikast-brande.dk/borger/boern-og-unge
Ikast-Brande Police	https://politi.dk/midt-og-vestjyllands-politi/ikast-brande-naerstation
Reference Documents	
Professional Concern Document	<p>English Version:</p> <p>https://www.uvm.dk/-/media/filer/uvm/udd/frie/pdf14/140207-uk-publikation-den-professionelle-bekymring.pdf</p> <p>Danish Version:</p> <p>https://www.uvm.dk/-/media/filer/uvm/udd/frie/pdf13/131014-uvm-publikation-den-professionelle-bekymring.pdf</p>
‘The Danish Approach to Countering and Preventing Extremism and Radicalization’	<p>English Version:</p> <p>https://www.ft.dk/samling/20151/almdel/reu/bilag/248/1617692.pdf</p>

Introduction

ISIB is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people. We expect every member of staff, as well as volunteers and external partners, to share this commitment and to act in the best interests of every student.

This policy applies to all adults working with students on school premises or during any off-site activities, including educational visits, events, and placements. It complements and reinforces a range of related school policies, such as those concerning Behaviour, Health and Safety, Educational Trips, and Complaints. Safeguarding considerations are embedded in all aspects of school development and planning.

Our core safeguarding principles are as follows:

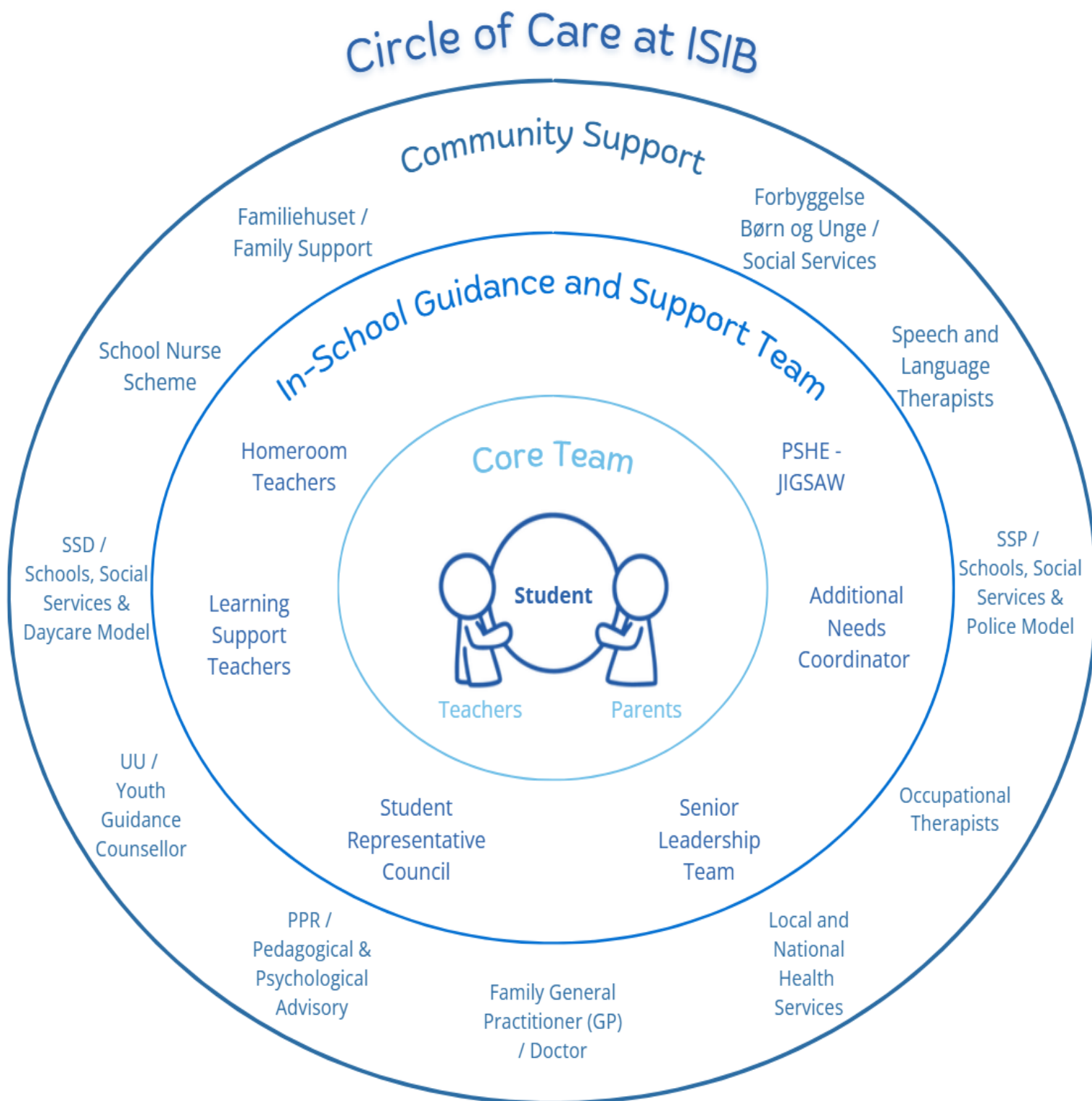
- ✓ The school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance.
- ✓ Safeguarding is a shared responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families plays a part in keeping them safe.
- ✓ Listening to children and to all members of our community is essential and is always in the best interests of the child.
- ✓ We foster a 'speak up' culture, where all concerns—no matter how small—are taken seriously. Early intervention allows for timely and effective support.
- ✓ Early identification of a child in need of help is fundamental to our safeguarding practice.
- ✓ All staff must adopt the mindset that 'it could happen here'.
- ✓ Safe, supported children are more confident and successful learners.
- ✓ The safeguarding policy is developed in consultation with the wider school community, including staff, students and parents.
- ✓ This and related policies are reviewed annually, or sooner if required due to new guidance, legislation or a significant incident.

Definition

Term	Definition	Reference
Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children	The process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of health or development, ensuring they grow up with safe and effective care, and taking action to help them achieve the best possible outcomes.	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC); Danish Consolidation Act on Social Services §46
Child protection	The specific actions taken to protect children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm.	Danish Consolidation Act on Social Services §§152–155
Staff	All individuals working for or on behalf of the school, whether full-time or part-time, paid or unpaid, including contractors, supply staff, volunteers, and cleaners.	ISIB Internal Policy; Professional Concern (UVM, 2014)
Child	Any individual under the age of 18. While Danish law may consider those over 18 as adults, ISIB treats all students under 18 as children for safeguarding purposes.	Danish Consolidation Act on Social Services §153; UNCRC Article 1
Parent	A person with parental responsibility, including biological parents, legal guardians, step-parents, foster carers, or adoptive parents.	Danish Parental Responsibility Act (Forældreansvarsloven); ISIB Admissions Policy

Circle of Care at ISIB

The following diagram outlines the support available for all students at International School Ikast-Brande.



Safeguarding in Context

The diagram below illustrates the key components that underpin ISIB's approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Each area represents an essential aspect of school life where safeguarding responsibilities are actively embedded, ensuring a comprehensive and proactive safeguarding culture across the whole community.



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Child Protection Statement

ISIB fully recognises its moral and statutory responsibility in Denmark, as well as meeting international standards to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

ISIB's Commitment to Safeguarding

At ISIB, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is our highest priority. All staff, volunteers, and external partners are expected to share this commitment and act to ensure that every child is safe, listened to, and supported to thrive.

We aim to:

- Provide a safe, inclusive environment where students can learn, grow, and develop resilience.
- Teach children how to stay safe—online, in the community, and in their relationships.
- Ensure that safeguarding is embedded at every level of school leadership and governance.
- Raise awareness among all staff, volunteers, and contractors about their safeguarding duties and how to respond to concerns.
- Implement safer recruitment practices in line with the Danish Ministry of Education's *Professional Concern* guidance.
- Offer tailored support to children in need of protection or additional help to achieve positive outcomes.
- Promote a speak-up culture where students and staff feel confident sharing concerns early.

All safeguarding concerns are treated with the utmost confidentiality and shared strictly on a need-to-know basis.

Legal Framework and Guidance

ISIB adheres to all relevant Danish safeguarding laws and follows international good practice. Staff play a key role in identifying concerns through daily contact with students and must report any signs of abuse, neglect, or distress.

Key legislation that ISIB follows include the following:

Duty of Notification (Under the Danish Consolidation Act on Social Services §§152–155)

§152 – Confidentiality

Professionals must keep personal information confidential, unless a child's safety is at risk — in such cases, the duty to report overrides confidentiality.

§153 – Duty to Notify (Professionals)

Teachers and other public-sector staff must notify the municipality if they believe a child:

- ✓ Needs special support
- ✓ Will need support immediately after birth
- ✓ Is not attending school
- ✓ May be suffering abuse or neglect

§154 – Duty to Notify (General Public)

All citizens are legally required to report if they suspect a child is being abused, neglected, or living in unsafe conditions.

§155 – Municipal Duty to Act

Once notified, the municipality must respond without delay, investigate the concern, and take action to protect the child if necessary.

The SSD Model (§49a)

This model allows schools, health professionals and childcare providers to share confidential information when it is necessary for early intervention. Private schools such as ISIB are also included in this collaborative safeguarding model.

Professional Secrecy

Professionals are bound by confidentiality under Danish law, but this does not override the duty to notify concerns when a child's welfare is at risk. Legal references include:

- ✓ Section 27 of the Danish Access to Public Administration Files Act
- ✓ Sections 152–152f of the Danish Criminal Code

Key Categories of Abuse

All staff must understand the main types of abuse, which often overlap:

Emotional Abuse

Persistent emotional maltreatment, which may damage a child's self-esteem, confidence, or development. It includes belittling, bullying, intimidation, isolating, ignoring, or manipulating a child.

Signs to look out for:

- ✓ Low self-worth or excessive self-criticism
- ✓ Sudden changes in behaviour (e.g. anxiety, withdrawal, aggression)
- ✓ Delayed emotional or social development
- ✓ Excessive need for approval or affection
- ✓ Overreaction to mistakes or fear of punishment

Sexual Abuse

Any sexual activity forced upon or involving a child, whether through physical contact or exposure to inappropriate sexual material. It includes exploitation via online platforms, grooming, or manipulation.

Signs to look out for:

- ✓ Knowledge or use of sexual language/behaviour inappropriate for age
- ✓ Fear of a specific person or reluctance to be left alone with someone
- ✓ Difficulty walking or sitting, or unexplained bleeding
- ✓ Sexualised drawings or writing
- ✓ Regression (e.g. bedwetting, clinginess)
- ✓ Sudden avoidance of certain settings or activities

Physical Abuse

Intentional physical harm to a child including hitting, slapping, shaking, burning, biting, suffocating, or poisoning. It may also include fabricated or induced illness (where symptoms are faked or created by a caregiver).

Signs to look out for:

- ✓ Unexplained bruises, burns, or bite marks
- ✓ Frequent injuries with inconsistent explanations
- ✓ Fear of physical contact or flinching responses
- ✓ Wearing long sleeves to cover injuries, even in warm weather
- ✓ Reluctance to go home or appear distressed around caregivers

Neglect

Failure to meet a child's basic needs—physical, emotional, medical, or educational. Neglect can be chronic or episodic and is often the most difficult form of abuse to identify.

Signs to look out for:

- ✓ Poor hygiene or consistently dirty clothing
- ✓ Frequent hunger or stealing food
- ✓ Tiredness or listlessness
- ✓ Missed medical appointments or untreated illnesses
- ✓ Poor school attendance or frequent lateness
- ✓ Developmental delays

Peer-on-Peer Abuse

Children can also be harmed by other children. Peer-on-peer abuse can take many forms, including physical violence, sexual harassment, initiation-type rituals, coercive control, or harmful content sharing within group chats. Staff must not normalise these behaviours as 'just part of growing up'.

Signs to look out for:

- ✓ Bullying (including online)
- ✓ Sexual harassment or assault
- ✓ Harmful sexual behaviour
- ✓ Coercion or exploitation
- ✓ Initiation / Hazing – type violence or rituals

Peer-on-peer abuse must be addressed as a safeguarding matter, not merely as misbehaviour.

Reference Table: Types of Abuse and Key Signs

Type of Abuse	Definition	Key Signs to Look Out For
Physical Abuse	<p>Causing deliberate physical harm, including hitting, shaking, burning, or poisoning.</p> <p>May also include fabricated or induced illness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Unexplained injuries or inconsistent explanations ✓ Bruises, burns, bite marks ✓ Flinching or fear of contact ✓ Reluctance to change clothes or go home
Emotional Abuse	<p>Persistent emotional maltreatment that harms a child's self-esteem or development.</p> <p>Includes rejection, humiliation, intimidation, or isolation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Low self-worth or withdrawal ✓ Anxious or fearful behaviour ✓ Delayed emotional development ✓ Overreactions or extreme compliance
Sexual Abuse	<p>Forcing or involving a child in sexual activity or exposing them to sexual content.</p> <p>Includes grooming and online exploitation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sexual knowledge inappropriate for age ✓ Avoidance of specific individuals ✓ Fear of being alone or touched ✓ Physical symptoms or sexualised behaviour
Neglect	<p>Ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs (food, shelter, supervision, healthcare, or emotional care).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consistently poor hygiene or appearance ✓ Frequent hunger or tiredness ✓ Missed medical appointments ✓ Poor attendance or developmental delays

Specific Safeguarding Concerns

All staff should be alert to areas of risk that may affect some students more than others:

Online abuse and grooming

Using digital technology to manipulate, exploit or harm children, often through coercion or deceptive relationships.

Sexual exploitation or trafficking

Involves coercing or manipulating children into sexual acts, often for money, status or influence, and may include movement across or within borders.

Mental health issues and self-harm

Emotional distress that may lead to anxiety, depression or behaviours such as self-injury, which can be both a safeguarding concern and a symptom of abuse.

Radicalisation and extremism

Encouraging or influencing children to adopt extreme ideologies or engage in harmful activities, including terrorism.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

The partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons, recognised internationally as a form of abuse.

Domestic violence

Exposure to or experience of physical, emotional or psychological abuse within the home, which can deeply affect a child's wellbeing.

Substance misuse

The use of drugs, alcohol or other substances by children or family members that puts the child at risk of harm or neglect.

Children missing from education

Persistent or unexplained absence from school, which may indicate neglect, exploitation or other safeguarding concerns.

Further guidance is available in the Ministry of Education's *Professional Concern* document.

Child Protection Procedures

At ISIB, all staff share a responsibility to identify and respond to signs of harm, neglect, or vulnerability. Early intervention is vital. We aim to support students through swift action, strong pastoral care, and multi-agency collaboration.

When to Take Action

- ✓ If a child is at risk of significant harm, immediate protective action must be taken.
- ✓ If a child needs early help or additional support, staff should raise concerns promptly to prevent issues from escalating.

Concerns may arise from a single serious incident or a pattern of smaller indicators. Staff do not need proof—just reasonable suspicion is enough to report.

Recognising and Responding to Concerns

Indicators of Possible Abuse

Signs can be physical, emotional, or behavioural. Staff should report if a child:

- ✓ Appears fearful, withdrawn, or anxious
- ✓ Avoids changing clothes or physical contact
- ✓ Has unexplained injuries or frequent absences
- ✓ Shows aggression, risk-taking, or distress
- ✓ Demonstrates age-inappropriate sexual knowledge

No concern is too small to report. Individual signs may not prove abuse but can form part of a bigger picture.

If You Are Concerned

If a staff member has any concern — no matter how small — they should follow the outlined steps.



If a Child Discloses Abuse

- ✓ Remain calm and listen without interruption
- ✓ Avoid leading questions or making promises of secrecy
- ✓ Reassure the child they have done the right thing
- ✓ Explain what will happen next
- ✓ Report immediately to the DSL and record the conversation

If a Colleague Shares a Concern with You

- ✓ Listen and take their concern seriously
- ✓ Encourage them to report it to the DSL immediately
- ✓ Offer to accompany them if they feel unsure
- ✓ Do not discuss the matter with others
- ✓ Maintain confidentiality and support a culture of speaking up

If a Parent Raises a Safeguarding Concern

- ✓ Thank them for bringing it to your attention
- ✓ Listen carefully and record what they say
- ✓ Avoid giving reassurances or agreeing to outcomes
- ✓ Explain you will refer the concern to the DSL
- ✓ Pass the concern on the same day and follow up to confirm it's been actioned

If You Witness an Incident

- ✓ Ensure the immediate safety of the child or others involved
- ✓ Intervene calmly and appropriately if necessary
- ✓ Report what you witnessed to the DSL straight away
- ✓ Record exactly what you saw and heard — not assumptions
- ✓ Be prepared to follow up or contribute to a multi-agency discussion if asked

If an Allegation is Made About a Member of Staff

- ✓ Do not share the allegation with others, including the accused
- ✓ Immediately report it to the Head of School or Chair of Governors if the Head is involved
- ✓ Do not investigate or confront the individual yourself
- ✓ Cooperate with any external investigation or procedures
- ✓ Always maintain complete confidentiality

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Safeguarding information must be handled with care:

- ✓ Share concerns only on a need-to-know basis
- ✓ Store records securely on the school's Learner Management System
- ✓ Follow GDPR principles: keep information accurate, relevant and protected
- ✓ Do not store safeguarding files on personal devices

Where necessary, information may be shared with the kommune or other agencies, in line with Danish law and the SSD model.

Children Who May Be Particularly Vulnerable

Certain children may face greater risk due to their circumstances. These include children who are:

- ✓ Disabled or have special educational needs
- ✓ Experiencing domestic abuse, neglect or parental substance misuse
- ✓ Living in temporary accommodation, foster care or unstable housing
- ✓ Facing social exclusion, discrimination, or cultural isolation
- ✓ Struggling with mental health, experiencing trauma, or bereavement
- ✓ New to the country, recently arrived refugees or with limited English proficiency
- ✓ Caring for family members or acting as young carers
- ✓ Identifying as LGBTQ+ and lacking a supportive home or peer environment

Staff must be alert to the specific needs of these groups and ensure early support is offered. No child should be overlooked due to assumptions based on background or ability.

Missing Children and Attendance Concerns

Regular attendance is a key indicator of wellbeing. Unexplained absences can signal a safeguarding concern, including abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

Staff should:

- ✓ Follow up promptly on any unexplained or repeated absences
- ✓ Record concerns on the school system
- ✓ Report patterns or serious concerns to the DSL

Persistent absence may require involvement from external agencies, including the kommune or police. Students who go missing repeatedly must receive additional attention and support.

All staff members must read and be aware of the Attendance Policy. ISIB will follow clear attendance procedures and communicate with families to promote consistent engagement. Any concern that a child may be at risk will be treated seriously and referred appropriately.

Use of Reasonable Force

On exceptionally, special occasions staff may need to use reasonable force to prevent a child from harming themselves or others, damaging property or causing extremely serious disruption. Current Danish legislation takes into account situations where force must be considered necessary to avert or counteract a dangerous situation. At ISIB, the use of reasonable force is considered only when absolutely necessary and always in line with legal, ethical and child-centred principles.

Definition

Reasonable Force is seldomly used in schools to control and/or restrain pupils. Control can mean either passive physical contact such as standing between students or blocking their path, or active physical contact such as leading a student out of a room using their arm. Restraint means to hold someone physically back or bring them under control. Typically, it is used in more extreme circumstances; for example, where two students are fighting and refuse to stop without physical intervention.

Staff should use no more force than is needed in the circumstances. It should be proportionate to the consequences it is intended to prevent. It may involve physical intervention to:

- ✓ Prevent injury to the child or others
- ✓ Avert a serious breach of school discipline
- ✓ Remove a student from a situation when they refuse to follow an instruction to leave

Guiding Principles

- ✓ Force should be used as a last resort and only when other de-escalation strategies have failed or when a child is putting themselves or others into a dangerous situation
- ✓ Any use of force must be proportionate, lawful and in the best interest of the child
- ✓ Physical intervention must never be used as a form of punishment or to enforce compliance
- ✓ All incidents involving the use of force must be recorded with precise description on the school's Learner Management System, within 24 hours of the incident, by the person who used reasonable force
- ✓ As an independent school, there is no obligation to report the use of reasonable force to any authority.
- ✓ Parents or carers must be informed of any incident involving physical intervention
- ✓ DSL/DDSL will respond to the use of force on the school's Learner Management System. In case of staff injury and potential insurance claims, the DSL must add a copy to the staff member's personnel file.

Good Practice

All staff are expected to:

- ✓ De-escalate situations wherever possible
- ✓ Use clear verbal instructions and warnings
- ✓ Prioritise the emotional and physical safety of all involved

ISIB promotes a culture of positive behaviour, empathy and relational approaches.

Searching Bags and Belongings

At ISIB, staff do not have the legal authority to search students' bags or personal belongings without their consent. Respecting a child's privacy and rights is fundamental to our safeguarding culture.

General Principles

- ✓ Staff must not search a student's possessions without their explicit consent or the consent of a parent.
- ✓ Any request to inspect belongings must be handled respectfully and sensitively.
- ✓ Where consent is not given and there remains a significant safeguarding concern (e.g. suspicion of drugs, weapons, stolen property, or harmful items), the Head of School or DDSL may decide to contact the police.

In Case of Concern

- ✓ Explain the reason for your concern to the student.
- ✓ Ask clearly and calmly if they will allow you to look in their bag or belongings.
- ✓ If consent is refused and the concern remains, do not proceed with a search.
- ✓ Instead, report immediately to the DSL or Head of School, who will determine next steps.
- ✓ If there is a threat to safety, external authorities (such as the police) may be contacted.

All actions and decisions should be recorded, including whether consent was sought, granted, or refused.

Helping Children to Keep Themselves Safe

ISIB empowers children to develop their confidence, resilience, and awareness of personal safety. Through the curriculum and daily interactions, we aim to ensure students are informed, prepared, and supported to navigate risks safely.

We do this by:

- ✓ Embedding personal safety, consent and digital citizenship in the PSHE and ICT curricula.
- ✓ Promoting respectful behaviour, healthy relationships and empathy in all aspects of school life.
- ✓ Encouraging students to identify trusted adults they can speak to when worried.
- ✓ Reinforcing online safety awareness, including how to report inappropriate content or contact.

We focus on teaching students how to act responsibly and seek help when needed—without creating fear. The school environment is underpinned by a culture of care, support and listening.