

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

SMIC School

2021-2022



SMIC School seeks to be a safe place for all our students. Our goal is to build and maintain a proactive environment that protects children.



SMIC School
Pudong New Area
Shanghai, China

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction | 3 |
| Definition of Abuse & Neglect | 3 |
| Mandated Reporters & Procedures for Reporting | 6 |
| Screening Staff and Volunteers | 7 |
| Child Protection Training | 8 |
| Child Protection Team & Child Protection Case Management Team | 8 |
| Code of Conduct that Guides Interactions between Adult/Children & Children/Children | 9 |
| Guidelines for Multi-Day Field Trip | 10 |
| Follow-up Care & Services | 10 |
| Long-term Impact of Unmitigated Abuse | 10 |
| Student Protection Reporting Form | 12 |
| Child Protection Policy Actions Flowchart | 13 |
| SMIC School Employee/Volunteer Agreement about Child Protection Policy | 14 |

Child Protection Policy

Introduction

Child abuse and neglect are concerns throughout the world and are violations of a child's human rights that create obstacles to their academic, physical, emotional development. Educators have the opportunity to observe and interact with children over time and are in a unique position to identify children who are in need of help and protection from abuse and neglect. SMIC School seeks to be a safe place for all our students. Our goal is to build and maintain a proactive environment that protects children through 2 means: 1) child abuse prevention and 2) by helping assure its earliest possible detection, creating a plan of intervention, and reporting it to the proper authorities.

SMIC School has adopted the following comprehensive child protection program, which it will communicate annually to all staff, parents/guardians, and new employee/volunteer applicants. Our strategy is to ensure that all SMIC School personnel (paid and volunteer both academic and non-academic positions), students, and parents/guardians understand the issues of child abuse and neglect. This includes knowing the following:

- signs and symptoms of child abuse;
- national, and local reporting procedures; and
- responsibilities of mandated reporters, including how, when, and to whom to make a report.

Ultimately, if child abuse is suspected, observed, or disclosed to any member of the SMIC School community, that person will have the knowledge, information, and resources necessary to ensure that the child is safe, that the situation is communicated promptly and effectively, and that the suspicion or incident is reported to the appropriate authorities.

The child protection program defines various forms of child abuse and outlines the school's requirements for:

- mandated reporters and procedures for reporting,
- screening and selecting staff, faculty, and volunteers,
- maintaining a child protection team,
- training and educating about child sexual abuse prevention for staff and students,
- a code of conduct that guides interactions between adults and children,
- follow-up care and service plans for families in need.

Definitions of Abuse & Neglect

The World Health Organization (http://www.who.int/topics/child_abuse/en/) provides the following definition:

Child maltreatment, sometimes referred to as child abuse and neglect, includes all forms of physical and emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, and exploitation that results in actual or potential harm to the child's health, development or dignity. Within this broad definition, five subtypes can be distinguished

- *physical abuse*
- *sexual abuse*
- *neglect and negligent treatment*
- *emotional abuse*
- *exploitation*

A person may abuse a child by inflicting harm (intentionally or through intended/unintended negligence), or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional (e.g. school) or community setting usually by individuals known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger. Studies show that most child abuse is perpetrated by someone the child knows, respects, or trusts [Association of

International Schools in Africa (AISA), 2014]. Often children may experience multiple forms of abuse simultaneously, further complicating the problem.

The following information is excerpted from the AISA Child Protection Handbook (2014)

To increase the AISA community's awareness, this handbook focuses on four main categories of abuse and provides basic information about the physical and behavioral signs associated with each type.

Physical Abuse. Physical abuse may involve hitting, punching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, biting, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing intentional physical harm to a child. (These signs of abuse could potentially lead one to harm oneself - including cutting and suicide ideation).

Signs of physical abuse could include the following:

- Bruises, burns, sprains, dislocations, bites, cuts
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Injuries that have not received medical attention
- Bodily injuries in places that are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted
- Showing wariness or distrust of adults
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Being aggressive towards others
- Being very passive and compliant
- Chronic running away

Emotional Abuse. Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child so as to cause severe and adverse effects on a child's emotional development. It may involve: conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved; that they are inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person; age/developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children; causing children frequently to feel frightened; or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may also occur alone. Signs of emotional abuse could include the following:

- Physical, mental and emotional development is delayed
- Highly anxious
- Showing delayed speech or sudden speech disorder
- Fear of new situations
- Low self-esteem
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Chronic running away
- Compulsive stealing
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Attention-seeking behavior
- Persistent tiredness
- Lying

Sexual Abuse. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (i.e., intercourse) or non-penetrative acts. Sexual abuse includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production or viewing of pornographic material or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Signs of sexual abuse could include the following:

- Pain or irritation to the genital area
- Vaginal or penile discharge
- Difficulty with urination
- Infection, bleeding
- Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)
- Fear of people or places
- Aggression
- Regressive behaviors, bed-wetting or stranger anxiety
- Excessive masturbation
- Sexually provocative
- Stomach pains or discomfort walking or sitting
- Being unusually quiet and withdrawn or unusually aggressive
- Suffering from what seems to be physical ailments that can't be medically explained
- Showing fear or distrust of a particular adult
- Mentioning receiving special attention from an adult or a new "secret" friendship with an adult or young person
- Refusal to continue with school or usual social activities
- Age inappropriate sexualized behavior or language

Neglect. Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or physiological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. Some indicators of neglect could include the following:

- Medical needs unattended
- Lack of supervision
- Consistent hunger
- Inappropriate dress
- Poor hygiene
- Inadequate nutrition
- Fatigue or listlessness
- Self-destructive behaviors
- Extreme loneliness
- Extreme need for affection
- Failure to grow
- Frequently tardy to or non-attendance at school
- Low self-esteem
- Poor social relationships
- Compulsive stealing
- Drug or alcohol abuse

Mandated Reporters and Procedures for Reporting

In conjunction with Chinese laws, SMIC School maintains that all school employees are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect. If any employee of SMIC School has reasonable cause to suspect that a student is being mistreated in any way, he/she is to report the suspicion to the Child

Protection Officer, the school Principal, or the Chancellor immediately. Knowingly failing to report these suspicions may result in the termination of the employment contract and/or legal accountability. Reporting and follow-up of all suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect will proceed in accordance with the guidelines in this policy.

In the case of a staff member reported as an alleged offender, SMIC School will conduct a full investigation following a carefully designed course of due process, keeping the safety of the child at the highest priority.

Cases of suspected child abuse or neglect may be reported by the school to the local authorities, the alleged perpetrators' employer, to the respective family's consulate in Shanghai/China (if the abuse comes from within the home), the appropriate child protection agency in the home country, or to other agencies/organizations as deemed necessary to protect the child.

The following is the child protection protocol at SMIC School:

- All employees are mandated reporters of child abuse or neglect to the school's Child Protection Officer (as designated from the School's counseling office) or a school Principal, or the School's Chancellor at their first suspicions of abuse, neglect or harassment
- If the Child Protection Officer is notified first, he/she immediately informs the Principal or Chancellor.
- Once an allegation of child abuse or neglect is alleged to school authorities (as outlined above), the school is obligated to begin an official investigation into the allegations with 24 business hours of receiving the information.
- The Child Protection Officer (or the Principal's or Chancellor's otherwise designated lead representative) is responsible for the following:
 - Leading the investigation into the allegations of abuse or neglect
 - Ensuring that the parents/guardians are notified immediately, unless doing so would put the child involved at further risk of harm
 - Calling meetings of the Child Protection Team (see below) once an allegation of child neglect or abuse is made. This meeting should take place no later than three working days following when the initial allegation was made
 - Keeping the official records of the investigation, including assuring their confidentiality and safekeeping
 - Helping families through providing follow-up services when designated by the Child Protection Team
- The School's Child Protection Officer (or the Principal's or Chancellor's otherwise designated representative) leads an investigation into the allegations of abuse or neglect. This investigation is conducted first by confidentially speaking to the pertinent parties and obtaining written statements about the alleged incident(s). These people may include the following: the student, the student's teacher(s), the parents/guardians, etc., as long as questioning any single one of these parties individually will not place the student at greater risk of potential further risk or harm.
- If applicable and in the best interest of the child, parents/guardians will be notified and invited to a meeting to discuss the concerns determined by the school
- The investigation about alleged child abuse or neglect is strictly confidential. All information and records discovered in relation to the investigation belong to the school and are to be for confidential school use only. Only upon the request of the proper legal authority will these records be provided to an outside source. Other non-school source requests for these school records will be decided upon by the school's Chancellor or Headmaster.
- All findings are systematically recorded by the Child Protection Officer or administrator and placed in the child's confidential cumulative file for documentation of the suspected incident

- If suspicion is deemed warranted and/or the child seems to be at risk of further abuse, the Child Protection Officer with the cooperation of the Child Protection Case Management Team will compile an official report that will be legally translated into Chinese.
- The school's report will be officially filed with the local branch of the Bureau of Women's, Children and Youth Affairs and they will determine next steps according to Chinese law. The person making the initial allegation may be called upon to speak with the authorities about the nature of their allegation. The school or its administrators are not responsible for speaking in place of the person making the initial allegation.
- If the alleged perpetrator is the parent/guardian/family member, and if the parent/guardian/family member does not act in the best interest of protecting their child, the school maintains the right to contact the parent's/guardian's employer, the family's embassy(s)/consulate(s) and/or legal authorities, mandate professional counseling and/or revoke enrollment of their student(s) at SMIC School.
- If the suspected perpetrator is a school employee and their continued employment is determined to put children at further risk, the school maintains the right to do the following: contact legal authorities, contact the employee's embassy/consulate, mandate professional counseling, place employee on school-mandated short-term leave with pay, long-term suspension with pay, and/or termination of the employment contract at SMIC School.
- When an allegation of abuse or neglect, as allegedly perpetrated by an employee/volunteer is made, it is expected that the cause that has led to the allegation is immediately ceased.
- Follow-up services will be provided by the school's Child Protection Officer as needed
- Parents/guardians/students who refuse to accept the Child Protection Team's restorative plan (which may include counseling and external referrals to other service providers) may be subjected to the consequence imposed upon them as a result of action deemed necessary by the school.

Screening Staff, and Volunteers

At SMIC School, we are committed to making sure that our staff (academic and non-academic) and outside service providers (food vendor, guards, bus vendor, etc.) have been properly and rigorously screened before working with children. Before SMIC School employment can be offered, new school employees must undergo a background check process. Employees must have a criminal background check from their own home country as well as China (if they have lived in China previous to applying for a position with SMIC School. At any point during service to the SMIC School, a criminal history and background check may be required of employees/volunteers. School discovery of falsification or material omissions from the information provided by an applicant/employee/volunteer may result in immediate disqualification from or termination of employment or volunteer service from the school. A criminal record itself does not automatically disqualify applicants/employees from holding a position with the school; rather the severity of the criminal record and relevance to the position, especially in regard to working with students will be considered in a case-by-case basis of members of the School's core hiring team of administrators.

SMIC School is committed to ensuring that all outside contracted workers have provided documentation of background checks and screenings. SMIC School requires the following screening and criminal background checks from all SMIC School employees/volunteers, and external contractors, vendors, and service providers:

- Written application/statement of suitability from the applicant
- Personal interview
- Credential check
- Reference checks
- Criminal history and background check

Child Protection Training

All staff members are required to complete training on child protection as part of the orientation process during which there will also be a review of this handbook. All new staff members are required to take this training; with follow up training required for staff members for every third year of employment. Training sessions are made available in both English and Chinese.

Child Protection Team & Child Protection Case Management Team

The Child Protection Team at SMIC School consists of:

- Child Protection Officer
- Assigned Grade Level Counselor
- Health Care Worker
- Principal from each division
- Student Affairs Directors
- Homeroom Teacher (or other designated teacher)
- For specific allegations of child abuse or neglect, the Child Protection Team will form a Child Protection Case Management Team which should only include the child's division's Principal, Student Affairs Director, homeroom teacher, assigned counselor, and the Child Protection Officer (who chairs these meetings)

The Child Protection Team is responsible for the following:

- ensuring that child protection guidelines are being implemented school-wide, which includes an annual review/formal self-check of the entire Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- creating a plan to address the following situations:
 - procedures about how to progress when investigating allegations of abuse and neglect
 - once an allegation has concluded creating a follow-up plan about school expectations for the school, family, student, and affected staff
- helping monitor and review the effectiveness of specific plans of action regarding individual cases
- ensuring/guiding professional development and training for all staff/volunteers and parents/guardians is carried out annually as designated by the Child Protection Policy
- sending out updated email/website communication annually to parents/guardians about the SMIC School Child Protection Policy
- serving as a resource group in working with cases requiring child protection (i.e., assist in investigating suspected cases of abuse and/or neglect, providing follow-up disclosures to the Child Protection Team or appropriate legal authorities).

The Counseling Department, in partnership with the Child Protection Team oversees the development of the curriculum for school-wide child protection content. This curriculum defines abuse and neglect, provides prevention and reporting strategies, and instills in students an overall understanding that no child deserves to be abused or neglected. The guiding philosophy of purposeful instruction in child protection helps create a school environment in which students feel safe and protected, and whereby students are encouraged and empowered to report abuse, or neglect to a trusted adult, knowing they will receive immediate and comprehensive support. The curriculum is division specific and is taught at the appropriate age level and developmental level of the students.

When a Child Protection Case Management Team is called to meet/act, there are three possible findings from their investigation into allegations of abuse or neglect of a student.

| <u>School's Actions as Result of Findings from the Child Protection Case Management Team</u> | | |
|---|--|---|
| <u>Category A</u> Cases will be handled by school counselors: | <u>Category B</u> Cases referred to outside service providers/resources | <u>Category C</u> Cases reported for investigation to outside resources: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student relationships with peers • Parenting skills related to disciplining children at home • Student-parent relationships • Mental health issues such as depression, low self-esteem, grieving | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health issues such as depression, psychosis, dissociation, suicide ideation | Finding indicating severe and ongoing physical, emotional and sexual abuse or neglect |

Code of Conduct that Guides Interactions between Adults and Children and between Children and Children and Between Adults and Adults

SMIC School requires that all staff, volunteers, and anyone working with children at SMIC demonstrate responsibility in maintaining appropriate boundaries and professionalism at all times. All school personnel are required to read and sign the Code of Conduct. All vendor, contractor, and service-provider employees are expected to sign the same Code of Conduct, which is provided in both Chinese and English. The following guidelines govern adult interactions with students while carrying out official SMIC functions:

- The employee/volunteer will avoid situations in which he/she is alone with a child. This includes not transporting students alone in his/her private vehicle. When it is necessary to speak privately with a child, find a space out of earshot, but within sight of others.
- All rooms which are used for teaching, student meetings, or counseling of students will have unobstructed clear glass panels in the doors or walls, and if not, then the door must be left open.
- The privacy of children in situations such as toileting, showering, and changing clothes should be respected. When it is necessary to supervise children in these situations, at least two adults should be present and intrude only to the extent that the immediate health and safety needs of the children require. Likewise, employees/volunteers must preserve their own personal privacy when toileting also through using employee designated bathrooms or using a private secure stall only.
- Students and staff/volunteers will avoid touching students' private areas that are normally covered by swimming suits; breasts, buttocks, and genitals/groin.
- When hugging is appropriate, hug from the side over the shoulders, not from the front.
- When interacting with children, employees/volunteers are not to make sexual jokes, comments of a sexual nature, kiss students (either on the lips, face, or elsewhere on the body), use sensual massage, stroke children on any part of their bodies, or use sexual gestures.
- When serving as a chaperone on overnight activities, employees/volunteers will not share sleeping quarters with children other than their own personal child(ren). In cases where there are extenuating circumstances, such as a medical emergency of a student, if it is necessary for an employee to stay in the same room with a student, the school's Principal or Chancellor must be notified in advance in order to request permission. A staff member is never to share a bed with a student under any circumstance.
- Conversations in our school community from and with a staff member/volunteer/student/parent guardian that reveal or speculate about sexual aspects of another staff member/volunteer/student/parent/guardian or self are never permissible.

- SMIC School employees/volunteers may not engage in romantic/dating relationships (casual, short-term, or long-term) with any current SMIC School students.
- Corporal punishment is never an acceptable disciplinary consequence at SMIC School and is against Chinese law to use.
- If it becomes necessary to physically restrain a student for their own or others' safety, a written record will be made of the incident and the Division principal will be notified the same day.
- It is the adult employee's/adult volunteer's responsibility to set and respect boundaries.
- When a child attempts to involve an adult in inappropriate behavior as outlined above, the employee/volunteer must immediately reject the overture outright and report that situation to his/her direct supervisor.

Guidelines for Multi-Day Field Trip

Child protection is of key important on all field trips. ES and MHS multi-day field trips must have a staff sponsor/adult chaperone to student ratio of no less than 1:10. All multi-day trips will have at least 2 staff sponsors/adult chaperones accompanying students. All chaperones are expected to constantly count to ensure all students are present. Students should never be left unattended. If both male and female students are on a multi-day field trip, there should be both a male and female adult staff sponsors/adult chaperones accompanying the students. Multi-day field trips requesting more sponsors/chaperones to attend must receive approval from the Principal prior to the field trip. For overnight field trips, staff members/adult chaperones are never permitted to sleep in the same room as a student. If a staff member/adult chaperone must enter a student's room, they must be accompanied by another adult. Students are expected to remain with the field trip group the entire excursion. If a student must leave the group due to health or discipline-related reasons, they must be accompanied by an adult, either his/her parent/guardian or a staff member. All expenses incurred in a student leaving the group under such circumstances will be borne by the family. Student trips will begin and end for all students at school.

Follow-up Care and Services

Beyond the school's legal obligation to report suspected child abuse or neglect. Schools have a moral and ethical obligation to assist our families with follow-up care and services that will enable them to move forward in a healthy manner. Therefore, SMIC School offers the following post-traumatic intervention strategies and works closely with families to develop an appropriate plan of action. Because each experience of abuse, or neglect is unique, so are the intervention strategies applied to each situation. Below you will find the types of support the school will provide to our students and families in need:

- Preliminary counseling and guidance in a confidential and supportive environment
- Referrals to licensed counselors, therapists, or mental health professionals for continued individual or family therapy outside the school setting
 - While the school may recommend licensed counselors, therapists, or mental health professionals, it is the family's responsibility to pay for such services
- Regularly scheduled check-ins with the student/parents-guardians with the Child Protection Officer to monitor the intervention plan progress, to share feedback on progress, and to revise strategies as needed
- Supportive resources such as websites, articles, books, support blogs, etc.
- Follow-up services are designated for the defined period of time, but may be extended as deemed necessary by the Child Protection Team
- SMIC School staff/volunteers who have been involved in providing professional care and services to children who have been allegedly abused or neglected may need extra support. The Counseling Department or a designated alternative will help these staff/volunteers by allowing them an opportunity to confidentially and privately discuss their anxieties and personal reflections about the situation.

Long-term Impact of Unmitigated Child Abuse

The impact of child abuse can persist for a lifetime after the abuse has been committed. Some victims of abuse are resilient and thus manage to function and survive. Much research has established the relationship between long-term child abuse and lifetime health and well-being, especially if the children do not get appropriate support to help them cope with the trauma. The most important point to consider is that children often are exposed to multiple forms of abuse and suffer a myriad of symptoms. Furthermore, all forms of abuse have the potential of a long-term impact on the victims and can affect the victim's ability to function as a human being. Abuse challenges the self-value, self-esteem, and sense of worth of its victims, rendering them hopeless, helpless, and unable to live a complete life.

Long-term impact of child abuse

- Poor educational achievement
- Inability to complete responsibilities
- Inability to live according to plan/ability
- Inability to care for self
- Inability to coexist, cooperate or work with others
- Lack of self-confidence, prone to addiction
- Inability to express love / or accept love
- Inability to lead family, constant health problem
- Prone to mental health problems
- Low self-esteem, depression, and anxiety
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Attachment difficulties
- Eating disorders
- Poor peer relations, self-injurious behavior (e.g., suicide attempts)



SMIC Student Protection Reporting Form

(Submit to the Child Protection Officer, a counselor, or principal as soon as possible after knowledge or suspicion of abuse.)

Reporter(s)

Name(s): _____

Position at SMIC: _____

Date and time reporter(s) became aware of the situation: _____

Alleged Victim/Student

Name: _____ Grade: _____

☐ Male ☐ Female Birthdate (mm/dd/yyyy): _____

Alleged Victim/Student Family Information

Name and Telephone number for parent(s)/guardian(s)

Name: _____ Tel.: _____

Information Giving Rise to Reasonable Suspicion or Concern

(Include date, time, and location of alleged incident, any physical evidence such as letters/taped phone conversations and/or direct quotes from victim.)

Information concerning individuals who might have abused or neglected the child or who might be involved in the situation.

Alleged Perpetrators: _____

Relationship to victim: _____

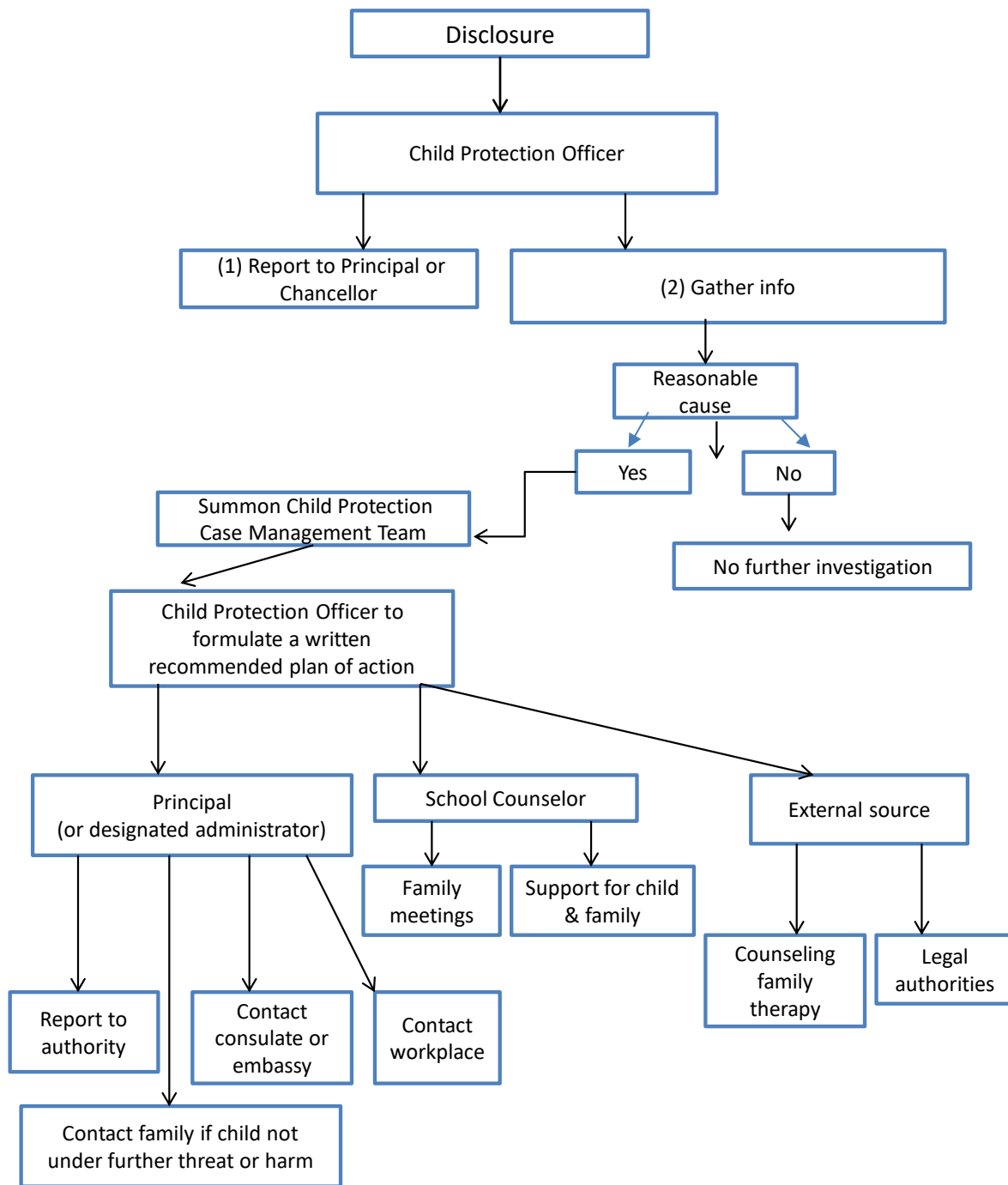
Witnesses: _____

Other pertinent information: _____

Signature of Reporter(s): _____

Date of Report (mm/dd/yyyy): ____/____/____

Child Protection Policy Actions Flowchart



SMIC School Employee/Volunteer Agreement about Child Protection Policy

Working with SMIC School students is a privilege. As such, I agree to follow the guidelines in the SMIC School Staff Handbook, the Child Protection Policy and the Code of Conduct associated with that specific policy as a condition of my providing services to the children and youth participating in the SMIC School programs.

I will:

- Treat everyone with respect, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Never be alone with children and/or youth at school activities, except in the conditions outlined in the school's Child Protection Policy without another adult being notified.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth.
- Maintain appropriate physical boundaries at all times and touch children – when necessary – only in ways that are appropriate, public, and non-sexual.
- Comply with the mandatory reporting regulations of ICS and with the ICS policy to report suspected child abuse.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.

I will not:

- Inflict any physical or emotional abuse such as striking, spanking, shaking, slapping, humiliating, ridiculing, threatening, or degrading children and/or youth.
- Touch or speak to a child and/or youth in a sexual, or other inappropriate manner as outlined in the Child Protection Policy or in the Staff Handbook.
- Smoke or use tobacco products with children, or possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while working with children and/or youth.
- Give a child who is not my own a ride home alone.
- Accept gifts from or give gifts to children or youth without the knowledge of their parents/guardians.
- Engage in personal communication with children via text messaging, email, WeChat, or other social media or except for activities strictly involving school business.
- Engage in one-on-one conversation in private with student.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth at any time.

I understand that as a person working with and/or providing services to children and youth under the auspices of SMIC School, I am subject to a criminal history/background check. My signature confirms that I have read the Employee Code of Ethics, the Child Protection Policy, and the Code of Conduct that accompanies it. I agree to follow these standards, and I understand that any action inconsistent with the Code of Conduct and Child Protection Handbook or failure to take action mandated therein may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from my position at SMIC School.

Name (Print):

Signature/Date:

Received in Office: