

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Updated Feb 2026

At Bucharest-Beirut International School (BBIS), we are committed to the safeguarding and protection of all students. As an IB World School, our mission is to ensure a safe, inclusive, respectful, and nurturing environment where all learners can thrive academically, emotionally, and socially. This policy outlines the school's responsibilities, procedures, and expectations regarding safeguarding, child protection, and anti-bullying.

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

All children have the right to be protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence, as outlined in Romanian **Law no. 272/2004** on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of the Child, and aligned with the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**. At BBIS, we recognize our legal and moral duty to safeguard every pupil in our care. Safeguarding refers to protecting students from harm, ensuring their well-being, and creating a safe school environment.

Adults working with children must always act in the best interest of the child, respecting their dignity, privacy, and well-being. Safeguarding is the responsibility of **all staff**, not just designated personnel. BBIS staff are trained to identify signs of abuse and report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL will ensure a Safeguarding File is opened and kept up to date. They will then ensure they promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare,

safeguarding and child protection issues appropriately with teachers and Senior staff. Confidentiality will be maintained, and concerns will be documented and acted upon following local laws and IB expectations.

Types of Abuse and Neglect

Staff must be aware of the following categories:

- **Physical Abuse** – Hitting, shaking, burning, or other intentional physical harm.
- **Emotional Abuse** – Verbal threats, humiliation, isolation, or persistent criticism.
- **Sexual Abuse** – Inappropriate touching, exposure to sexual content, coercion.
- **Neglect** – Failing to provide essential care such as food, shelter, supervision, or education.

Our School Will Support All Students By:

- Creating a safe, respectful environment where children feel heard and valued.
- Training staff regularly on child protection issues.
- Monitoring behavior and wellbeing indicators.
- Providing age-appropriate education on children's rights.
- Offering timely support through professional counseling services.
- Working with families and authorities as needed.
- Ensuring access to the BBIS School Counselor, who may provide individual or family counseling as needed.

Role of the School Counselor:

- Provide confidential emotional support to students.
- Identify and report concerns to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**.
- Act as a liaison between school, family, and child protection services.
- Guide staff on student wellbeing issues.
- Maintain secure, confidential documentation.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing:

- All matters related to child protection are confidential.
- **Staff must never promise to keep secrets** that could compromise safety.

- No information should be disclosed to **third parties** (e.g., drivers) unless **written parental consent** is provided.
- Information is shared only on a **need-to-know basis**, in accordance with Romanian law and GDPR.

Where it has been discovered that a student is in danger or risk of being abused or neglected, the student counsellor will contact the local welfare authorities within 24 hours to assist as appropriate under the direct advisement from the Head of School.

1. DGASCP (Directia Generala de Asistentia Sociala si Protectia Copilului): district 2, Bucharest-
www.social4.ro e-mail: social@social2.ro tel: (021) 252.22.02
2. FONPC (Federatia Organizatiilor Neguvernamentale Pentru Copii) www.fonpc.ro tel: (021) 314 6611.

Whereas a staff member or any person involved with BBIS has been found to be in breach of Child Safeguarding Standards, the school will inform the following as appropriate within one month of the person leaving the school:

1. Local Police
2. DGASPC – district 2, Bucharest www.social4.ro e-mail: social@social2.ro; Tel: (021) 252.22.02

Student Counseling and Emotional Support

At BBIS, we understand that students may experience emotional, social, or psychological challenges that can impact their well-being and academic performance. Students are encouraged to seek support from the school counselor, who provides a confidential and safe space to discuss any concerns they may have.

Counseling can help students:

- Build resilience and emotional intelligence
- Cope with academic and social pressures
- Navigate personal or family-related challenges
- Develop confidence, empathy, and responsibility

To Parents:

We encourage parents to see counseling as a **positive and proactive support mechanism**, especially given the rapidly changing, high-pressure world our children face. Seeking emotional support is not a sign of weakness but a step toward building long-term well-being and inner strength. The counselor plays a key role in supporting students' emotional and psychological needs and works closely with school leadership and parents where appropriate.

Allegations Against Staff

School staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. Whenever possible:

- Meetings or sessions with individual children or parents should occur in **view of other adults**
- One-on-one situations should be conducted in open or observable environments

In the event of an allegation made against a staff member:

- The school will initiate a formal review process following the **Staff Code of Conduct Policy**
- All concerns will be handled **confidentially, fairly**, and in line with both **Romanian legislation** and **IB safeguarding standards**

Anti-bullying and cyber-bullying

The school **does not tolerate** bullying of any kind and immediate action will be taken upon the discovery of any such acts. While it is very difficult to eradicate bullying, school will take all the necessary action to ensure that all children attend school free from fear. Therefore, any kind of intimidating, offensive and threatening attitude will be sanctioned severely.

Physical aggression includes hitting, pushing and spitting.

Verbal abuse includes name calling, teasing, making remarks that are insulting, threatening, disrespecting or demeaning a person's race, disability, appearance.

Emotional (relational) aggression including spreading rumors, isolating from a peer group through catty gossip.

Sexual aggression, including any unwanted sexual advances or actions intended to make the other person uncomfortable, embarrassed, or humiliated, and might include obscenities or gestures, exposure, or physical contact.

Cyberbullying and Bullying Outside of School

Cyberbullying and bullying are unacceptable in all forms, regardless of where or when they occur.

- Cyberbullying includes any use of electronic communication to bully, harass, threaten, or harm another student. This includes but is not limited to: harmful texts, emails, social media posts or comments, and the sharing of inappropriate images or videos.
- When cyberbullying occurs outside of school hours but has an impact within the school environment, the school reserves the right to investigate and act accordingly. This includes when:
 - The student is wearing the school uniform and therefore represents the image of BBIS.
 - Bullying occurs between BBIS students, or targets BBIS students, and affects their well-being or ability to learn.
 - Online behavior escalates into in-person conflict on school grounds.

Sanctions may include:

- Counseling sessions
- Confiscation of digital devices
- Temporary suspension of digital privileges
- Parent meetings

- Depending on the severity of the case, suspension or expulsion

Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to monitor their children's digital presence and act as partners in upholding a respectful online environment. When such incidents are brought into the school setting, the school will act in accordance with its disciplinary procedures.

Any student, staff member, or parent can report safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. All reports will be treated with confidentiality and seriousness. This policy is reviewed annually and revised as needed to align with IB standards, legal frameworks, and best practices.