

XINING  
INTERNATIOANL  
ACADEMY

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# CHILD SAFETY & PERSONAL PROTECTION HANDBOOK

SEPTEMBER 27 2024

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Xining International Academy's policy and  
procedures to safeguard students and staff  
from harassment and abuse.



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# The International Center for Missing and Exploited Children (ICMEC)

Xining International Academy (XIA) follows the best practices and the guidelines outlined by the International Center for Missing and Exploited Children (ICMEC) in terms of Child Safety and Protection. Our child protection policies are based on the international law and standards from the United Nations and World Health Organization.



**International Centre**  
**FOR MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN**

Xining International Academy's prevention strategies, policies, procedures, and response protocols are all designed to ensure that all students are treated with respect and dignity and enjoy a safe environment in which they feel protected.

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# Introduction

Xining International Academy places a high value on providing a safe learning environment for children. The school is committed to protecting the educational, physical, social and emotional aspects of student's lives and to create an environment of mutual respect and individual dignity.

XIA is compliant with China laws and international codes supporting child safety.



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# Child Safety Response Team

The Child Safety Team is a small group of school staff whose role is to oversee the policies and procedures that will result in a safe school environment. They support teachers and students in implementing student protection curriculum and ensure and guide the safety training of all staff that have either direct or indirect contact with students. They also sensitively assess and respond to reports of harassment and abuse.



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# Definitions and Reporting

Reports of student misbehavior should first be directed to the staff member responsible for the student at the time of the behavior. Reports of repeated misconduct or potential bodily harm should be taken to the principal. General concerns related to child safety should be discussed with the staff during staff meetings.

If a parent discloses a child safety concern to a staff member, both the staff member and parent should clearly communicate who will report the concern to the principal.

Student behavior from minor infractions to abuse is divided into three levels:

- **Level 1:**
  - Lying, cheating, misuse of technology, inappropriate language, disrespect, gossiping, mocking/teasing, and disobedience. These behaviors should be reported to the classroom teacher by the staff member responsible for the student at the time of the misbehavior (also to the administrator, if needed). These incidents will be documented for potential follow up. Any incident or behavior that may develop into a pattern should be documented
- **Level 2:**
  - Misbehavior includes fighting/bullying between peers, threatening or bullying behavior directed towards younger/vulnerable students, discrimination, emotional or physical harassment, threatening or violent behavior, possession of weapons, gang activity, possession or use of alcohol, nicotine, tobacco, drugs or pornography, inappropriate behavior by adults or students toward students including unwanted touch, physical and/or emotional harassment. These behaviors should be reported to the principal. The administrator will document these cases for potential follow up.
- **Level 3:**
  - incidents such as sexual harassment and/or molestation between peers, non- consensual sexual activity, abuse (physical, sexual, or emotional), neglect or maltreatment, sexually inappropriate language by an adult to a student, inappropriate sexual conduct by adults to students or between student peers, or inappropriate emotional/physical

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relationship between an adult and student. Any of these behaviors need to be reported to the Child Safety Response Team and the principal. The incident should be documented and the Child Safety Response Team follow the school's policies and protocols.

## **Harrassment**

Harassment is non-accidental, immoral, and/or unethical behavior between peers that results in the dishonor or mistreatment of another person or creates a hostile environment. Harassment may include verbal or written, visual, physical, or sexual behaviors. Prejudice and discrimination are also considered harassment because of the emotional harm they cause. These behaviors are considered serious and will be addressed by a the school administrator . Rpeated harassment may be referred to the Chil Safety and Response Team.

Harassing behavior may include:

- Verbal/written: Mocking, slander, gossip, ostracizing, sexual comments, inappropriate written material whether in print, digital form, or on social media.
- Visual: sexual or obscene material, displaying sexually suggestive objects or picture.
- Physical: Blocking movements, threatening gestures, physical violence, bullying or assault
- Discrimination: negative stereotyping, hostile acts that relate to race, color, religion, national origin, age, or gender, threatening.
- Sexual: deliberate and unwanted sexual gestures or advance, molesting, or other verbal or physical conduct of sexually suggestive or intimidating nature.

Bullying and Verbal Abuse is not allowed. If this occurs, parents will be informed of the student's behavior. Again, XIA is to be a safe place for our students. Persistent abuse of this kind may result in a suspension or expulsion of the student.

## **Definition**

Bullying and Harassment are defined as any electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or conduct toward a student which is:

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- Based on any actual or perceived trait or characteristic of the student, and creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:
    - Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student’s person or property.
    - Has a substantially detrimental effect on the student’s physical or mental health.
    - Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school

## **Anti-Harassment / Anti-Bullying Policy**

### Statement Policy

School employees, volunteers, and students in school, on school property, or at any school function or school-sponsored activity shall not engage in harassing and bullying behavior.

School employees, volunteers, and students shall not engage in reprisal, retaliation, or false accusation against a victim, witness, or an individual who has reliable information about such an act of harassment or bullying.

School employees, volunteers, parents or guardians, and students are expected to act in a timely and responsible manner to prevent, report, and facilitate investigation of suspected harassment and bullying.

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### **Reporting procedures**

If a parent, student, or staff member observes an adult engaged in inappropriate behavior or behavior that violates the Code of Conduct, he or she should inform the principal or Child Safety Response Team within 48 hours. Reports may be given verbally or in writing. Concerns related to potential abuse or harassment involving an adult, or an inappropriate emotional relationship between a student and adult, may be reported directly to the principal or the Child Safety Response Team.

Timely Reporting: Complaints of sexual harassment, retaliation or other violations of this policy should be made preferably within 48 hours of the sexual harassment complaint. Nothing in this policy prevents anyone from submitting a report of sexual harassment, retaliation or non-compliance with this policy of which they have witnessed or have knowledge of at any time.

### **Complaints by Students:**

General- A student, or a parent/guardian on the student's behalf, may make a complaint of sexual harassment or retaliation to the school principal or teacher. The principal or teacher shall investigate the matter and, if the complaint is substantiated, commence appropriate disciplinary action against the offending student.

If a student, parent or guardian making the complaint to the school principal or teacher feels that the intervention rendered by the school principal or teacher is insufficient he or she may appeal the matter within 15 calendar days to the School Board.

- Principal/teacher responses to complaints:
  - Complaint- When an individual seeks resolution of a sexual harassment or retaliation complaint, the principal or teacher will begin an investigation within fifteen calendar days after receiving notice of the complaint

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## Principal/teacher responses to complaints:

- Complaint- When an individual seeks resolution of a sexual harassment or retaliation complaint, the principal or teacher will begin an investigation within fifteen calendar days after receiving notice of the complaint.
- Investigation- After receipt of the complaint, the principal and child safety response team will begin an investigation into the complaint. At the conclusion of the investigation, the principal will prepare and issue a summary report containing a synopsis of the evidence and findings. Both the complainant and respondent will receive notification of the investigation outcome and determination.
- Disciplinary Determination- Appropriate disciplinary action may be taken according to the investigation findings at the discretion of the principal. The disciplinary action will be within the following range:
  - Education and Admonition;
  - Warning; Suspension;
  - Expulsion;
  - or criminal proceedings



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# Definitions & Indicators

## Abuse

Definitions of abuse are complex and can be based on various cultures child-rearing behaviors and expectations. XIA's definition of Child abuse includes: non-accidental physical, emotional, mental or sexual harm, and neglect from those who are responsible for the care of a child.

Abuse usually occurs when there is an element of trust and a power differential based on age, physical size, or position. Cultural, family, and religious beliefs and forms of child discipline may vary, but XIA will communicate with parents when a child reports an injury due to discipline, or when a teacher, staff member, or another student observes such an injury. Potential child abuse will be considered where there is cruelty and repeated harshness similar to bullying. The principal will request a meeting with parents to talk about child discipline and provide counsel which may include referral for family counseling.

### **Possible Indicators of Physical Abuse:**

- Unexplained cuts, bruises, or fractures especially those on soft part of the body.
- Bruises of different ages and colors, Injuries that resemble the shape of the object used
- Injuries inconsistent with the information offered by the child
- Injuries that regularly appear after absence
- Punishment which results in injury
- Aggressive or self-destructive behavior

### **Possible Indicators of Emotional Abuse:**

- Telling children that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only if they meet the needs of another person
- Threatening, intimidating, humiliating, and/or rejecting another person or creating a hostile or negative environment.
- Committing acts that are cruel or inhumane, such as extreme discipline or disregard of a child's pain or mental suffering.

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## Possible Indicators of Sexual Abuse:

- Intentionally touching a child's private parts (breast, genitals, or buttocks) either directly or through clothing other than for hygiene or child care purposes, whether a penetrating or non-penetrating act.
- Non-consensual sexual activity that may include physical or non-physical conduct, sexual coaxing or propositions, indecent exposure, involving children in the production or viewing of pornographic material, all forms of violent and non-violent molestation or assault, and any sexual activity in which the student does not fully comprehend or that violates the laws or social taboos of society.
- Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening, or otherwise encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.



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# Disclosures

## Understanding Disclosures

Adults working with children must recognize that it is often very difficult for Children to disclose abuse. Understanding their fears may help the response. Students often cannot easily talk about an abuse problem because they may:

- Try to forget
- Worry they will lose the love of their parents or friends
- Fear the shame of abuse
- Fear they will get into trouble
- Fear they will be blamed
- Fear of being threatened by the offender

## Responding to Disclosures

General guidelines should be followed when a student reports an alleged incident of harassment or abuse:

- Show acceptance of what the child says, however unlikely it may sound
- Listen without interrupting
- Stay calm and look at the child directly
- Tell the child that you will need to let someone else know (do not promise confidentiality).
- Reassure the child that they are not to blame for the abuse.
- Never push for more information. Let the child know that you are always ready to listen if they want to tell you more.

## Action Steps Following a Disclosure

- Let the child know what you are going to do next
- Make notes during or immediately after the meeting
- Report the disclosure to the principal and the Child Safety Response Team as soon as possible

## Processing Reports

The school reserves the right to fully respond to every complaint, conduct response protocols, and take such steps as it feels are necessary to remedy the situation. The

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school administration will keep in mind the ramifications of cultural backgrounds that may affect the practical working out of each step of the process. Employees, parents, and students are expected to fully cooperate in any complaint or response that might involve child harassment or abuse.

### **Response Process**

Reviews of potential abuse will include a committee of at least two members, with at least one representing the gender of the person who was harmed. Translators will be used when possible if the person who was harmed or the person who allegedly caused harm is not comfortable using English.

The response will include the following as a minimum:

- The initial reporter
- The person(s) who was harmed
- The person(s) who allegedly caused harm
- Known Witnesses

Standard interview formats will be used for each interview.

A final summary of the response with recommendations will be given to the principal, who will respond to the recommendations according to school policy.

### **Confidentiality**

XIA will seek to maintain confidentiality in the review of harassment and abuse reports, so far as maintaining confidentiality is not inconsistent with reviewing the alleged violation, eliminating any harassment or abuse found to have occurred, or preventing future violations. If a staff member, student, or family forces a public disclosure of the case details, the school may be forced to publicly defend its decision.

### **Inaccurate Reports**

It is sometimes difficult to know whether a particular behavior or conduct is harassment or abuse. Students having questions about whether they have observed or experienced harassment or abuse are encouraged to speak with a teacher or principal. If a report of harassment or abuse is mistaken or inaccurate, the person making the report will not be subject to any form of disciplinary action

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unless the report was intended to defame a particular teacher, staff member, or the school. In that case, disciplinary action may be taken appropriate to the situation.

### **Follow Up and Support**

The school will provide appropriate follow up care and support for those involved and affected by misconduct, harassment, and abuse according to the resources available to the school.



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# Staff Screening & Training

## Screening

- The screening process for prospective staff includes the following:
- Completed resume with history of employment
- Submission and checking of at least two references
- Interviews
- Statewide background check
- Authentication of documents
- Signed copy of the Code of Conduct

## Training

XIA staff are trained in the prevention and recognition of harassment and abuse and in the reporting and response process. Staff are responsible to have a working knowledge and understanding of Child Safety Policies and procedures.

XIA is committed to providing a safe environment for children and included in the Code of Conduct are standard practices of child safety including visibility and supervision.

The Child Protection/Sexual Harassment Policy Procedures and Code of Conduct are located on the school website.





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# Student and Parent Education

All parents with students attending XIA will be directed to read and sign that they have read the Parent/Student handbook.

All students will receive age-appropriate instruction concerning personal safety and the school will provide resources that educate students and parents in the prevention, recognition and reporting of harassment and abuse.

## **Adherence to Policy**

XIA will strive to apply the policy and procedures listed in this handbook as consistently and respectfully as possible. However, these policies are not intended to constitute an expressed or implied contract or other legally enforceable promise or right that binds or commits Xia to follow specific procedures in every circumstance.

