



Bangkok Patana School

The British International School in Thailand

Established 1957

Bangkok Patana: Student Safeguarding Policy and Guidance

This policy is renewed annually.

This policy is for Senior Leaders, Board members, Patana employees, external providers, Patana parents and agreed accreditation organisations.

'Schools have a duty of care to protect children and prevent them from harm, and to act with a sense of urgency if a child is at risk of harm.' **International Task Force on Child Protection** June 2015

Whole School Aims

All members of the school community share a collective responsibility to ensure that students are protected, safe and secure. We have a shared duty of care to safeguard students from neglect, exploitation, physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

We are proactive in ensuring that students at risk of abuse receive support and protection, and that all actions are taken in the best interests of the child.

All adults working, visiting or volunteering in our school are expected to contribute to a culture of safeguarding and to abide by the relevant Safeguarding Code of Conduct.

Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and disseminated by the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) in order to safeguard all students

By consistently championing the importance of safeguarding, every student will:

- feel protected, safe and secure whilst in school
- learn how to keep themselves and others safe
- be listened to and believed if they are at risk of harm
- leave Patana with a clear understanding of their right to be protected, safe and secure

Safeguarding Codes of Conduct

All staff are informed of their professional boundaries with regard to student safeguarding.

All Patana staff re-sign the [Staff Safeguarding Code of Conduct](#) at the start of each contract.

External providers, parents, visitors, volunteers, and contractors must read, sign and agree to abide by the relevant Safeguarding Code of Conduct for their specific role within school.

Students are taught how to keep themselves and others safe with reference to age-appropriate Student Codes of Conduct as part of the tutorial and PSHE programmes.

Definitions of terms

Staff	All those employed by the school, full or part time, in a paid capacity
Child	All Patana Students, including those over 18 years of age
Parent/carer	Encompasses birth parents, adoptive parents, stepparents or other adults in a parenting role e.g. appointed guardians or temporary guardians.
Student Safeguarding	The school's duty of care to ensure that our students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care. • Are protected from a broad range of potential harms and abuses. • Are taught to keep themselves safe. • Learn in a safe environment and secure school site. • Are in the care of adults who have been safely recruited and vetted.
Child Protection	The part of safeguarding which refers to any activity undertaken to protect children who are suffering from, or at risk of, significant harm.
Abuse	Any form of maltreatment of a child. Someone may abuse a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Cf. [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#) defines abuse as:

“A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.”

Cf. [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(July 2018 Page 6\)](#) defines safeguarding as:

“Protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children’s health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.”

UN Convention on the Rights on the Child

Thailand has signed and acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. All members of the school community are expected to abide by the principals of the [UNCRC](#) of which Thailand is a signatory. All children have these rights, regardless of age, circumstances, gender, ability, culture, race, language, sexual identity or religion.

- Article 19: You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind.
- Article 34: You have the right to be free from sexual abuse.
- Article 36: You have the right to protection from any kind of exploitation.
- Article 37: No one is allowed to punish you in a cruel or harmful way.
- Article 39: You have the right to help if you’ve been hurt, neglected or badly treated.

Thailand and UK Law and Statutory Guidance

In accordance with Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (UK) Bangkok Patana School has put into place arrangements that prioritise safeguarding and promote student welfare.

Where possible, this policy aims to align with key UK statutory guidance documents:

- [Working together to safeguard children HM Gov 2018](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#)

Thailand Child Protection Act, B.E. 2546 (2003)

Thai law stipulates that 'schools shall set up systems and activities to provide guidance, counselling and training for pupils, students and guardians with a view to promoting appropriate behaviour, social responsibility and safety for the pupils and students.'

It is considered the moral duty of the school to report suspected child to a competent official or the police. (CPA Section 29)

Child abuse is considered a criminal offence (CPA Section 25 and 26).

It is considered child abuse to:

- Abandon a child without appropriate welfare protection
- Wilfully or neglectfully withhold things that are necessary for the health of a child and so lead to physical or mental harm
- Treat a child in any manner which obstructs their growth or development, or in any manner which constitutes illegal care
- Commit or omit acts which result in torturing a child's physical or mental state.
- Intentionally or negligently do acts likely to cause physical or mental harm.
- Force, threaten, use, induce or allow a child to behave inappropriately.

Physical (corporal punishment) in Thai school settings

Corporal punishment is unlawful in schools (Ministry of Education Regulations on Student Punishment 2005).

At Bangkok Patana School, we believe that physical (corporal) punishment has a negative impact on long-term development and overall wellbeing, whether at school or in the home. Our teachers use a range of age-appropriate sanctions, strategies and consequences, none of which include physical punishments. We support families to use proportionate and non-physical forms of discipline.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is a form of child abuse and a violation of the rights of the child with long lasting and harmful consequences. It comprises all and any procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. The majority of cases are thought to occur between 5-8 years old, and this should be considered the age of highest risk. All members of staff need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of FGM or having suffered FGM.

Radicalisation

Defined as causing someone to become an advocate of radical political or social reform by supporting terrorism and violent extremism. Children and young people may be exposed to messages about terrorism through a family member or friend, a religious group, social media or the internet. This creates risk of a child or young person being drawn into criminal activity and exposure to significant harm. Any concerns that a student is at risk due to radicalisation must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Digital safeguarding, data protection and confidentiality

The school aims to comply with the Thai Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA) to ensure that everyone understands how personal data is collected, stored, who has access to it, how it is used, how long it should be kept and when it should be deleted/modified or archived.

Parents/guardians are asked to use good judgement before taking and sharing images of students. Parents/guardians are asked to follow the direction of school employees regarding when and where it is appropriate or inappropriate to take photographs, videos, or other forms of digital media.

Parents may reshare any content that already has been uploaded on official school channels. The school does not accept liability for parents who refuse to abide by this requirement.

Parents/guardians may not provide images, video or audio taken at the school to the press or other media organisations.

Thailand Child Protection Act 2003 Section 27 stipulates that no person shall disseminate through the mass media, or any informative media, information related to a child or guardian with an intention to cause damage to mental, reputation, prestige, or any interest of a child.

The [Safeguarding Code of Conduct for Parents](#) stipulates that parents do not breach confidentiality by sharing information about another family or student, except with Patana staff who have a direct professional role in relation to the student. This includes making comments about another family or student via social media or messaging platforms.

Categories of abuse and possible indicators

Physical abuse	
<p>May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.</p> <p>Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.</p>	<p>The child may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• unexplained or frequent/repeat injuries• unexplained bruises including bruising on buttocks, lower back, upper arms, thighs• bruisers in small clusters/bilateral bruises• cuts, burns/scalds, teeth marks, ligature marks, fractures – this list is not exhaustive
Sexual abuse	
<p>Forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.</p> <p>Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.</p> <p>It may include non-contact activities, such as children in looking at or in the production of sexual images or watching sexual activities.</p>	<p>The child may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• behave or play sexually, use sexual language or have knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have• experience sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas

<p>It may include encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse, including online.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a sexually transmitted infection
<p>Neglect</p>	
<p>The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the impairment of the child’s health or development.</p> <p>Neglect may involve a parent/carer failing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide adequate food, clothing and shelter. • protect a child from physical and emotional harm; ensure adequate supervision. • ensure access to appropriate medical care/treatment. <p>It may also include neglect of a child’s basic emotional needs, abandonment or their exclusion from home.</p>	<p>The child may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • left hungry, dirty and/or without adequate clothing • living in dirty, unsafe or dangerous conditions, i.e. around drugs, alcohol or violence • left unsupervised • failing to receive basic health care when ill or injured
<p>Emotional abuse</p>	
<p>The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child’s emotional development.</p> <p>It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.</p> <p>It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say.</p> <p>It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed: interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability; overprotection; limitation of exploration and learning; preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.</p> <p>It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another; serious bullying/cyberbullying; causing children to feel frightened or in danger: exploitation or corruption of children.</p>	<p>The parent/caregiver may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • withdraw their attention from their child • blame problems on their child • humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons • cause their child to be excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong
<p>Child sexual exploitation</p>	
<p>A form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status.</p> <p>It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults but doesn’t always involve physical contact and can happen online.</p> <p>In some cases, children are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status.</p>	<p>The child may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appear with unexplained gifts • have older boy/girl friends • suffer from a sexually transmitted infection • become pregnant • suffer from changes in emotional well-being • misuse drugs and alcohol

Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person exploiting them.

A significant number of victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

- go missing
- come home late
- regularly miss school