



Mar Qardakh School

Child Protection Policy

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Table of content

MQS Vision and Mission	4
Policy Statement	4
Duties and responsibilities of Head of School	7
Duties and responsibilities of School Personnel	8
Duties and responsibilities of Students.....	8
Establishment of Child Protection Committee	9
Preventive measures to address Child abuse, Exploitation, Violence, Discrimination and Bullying and Other Acts of Abuse	10
Procedures in Handling Bullying Incidents in School	11
Implementation of Non-punitive Measures on Bullying	12
Confidentiality.....	12
Criminal and Civil liability	13
Rules and Procedures in Handling Child Abuse, Exploitation, Violence, Neglect, Discrimination Cases.....	13
Complaint against school personnel or official	18
Effectivity.....	18
Definition of terms.....	12
Appendix A: Report of cases of abuse, violence, exploitation, discrimination, bullying or peer abuse and other related offenses	25
Appendix B: MQS intake sheet	26
Appendix C: Child protection officers.....	28
Appendix D: Child Protection Procedure	29
Appendix E: Harassment and Bullying Policy.....	30
Appendix F: Codes of Conduct	33

This policy was written but has not yet been implemented

Mar Qardakh School Mission Statement

Our mission is to empower students for life in the 21st century by providing them with a holistic, international education encompassing academic, social, spiritual and personal development.

OBJECTIVE

To promote a zero-tolerance policy for any act of child abuse, exploitation, violence, discrimination, bullying, and other forms of abuse

II: Policy Statement

Mar Qardakh School (MQS) is fully committed to promoting the rights of children notably their right to be protected from harm, abuse and exploitation. MQS has a duty of care to implement effective policies and procedures for safeguarding the welfare of children and young people.

In order to achieve this, we will ensure the following:

- A. That as an educational institution**, we will actively endeavor to fulfill our role of providing quality academic training - keeping in mind that each child is a unique individual. We believe that part of protecting the child is to provide venues for the discovery of his God-given talents and abilities so that he develops his full potential by prescribing a curricular track that will prepare him for his future station in life.
- B. That as a Catholic school**, our commitment is drawn from and inherent in the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel. "The person of each individual human being, in his or her material and spiritual needs, is at the heart of Christ's teaching: that is why the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic school" (Congregation for Catholic Education 1997, n. 9).
- C. That as an employer**, we will ensure that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised. This policy aims to prepare them as effective agents of discipline as well as protect them from unfair and false accusations by students and parents.
- D. That as partners of parents and guardians**, we will exercise parental authority and responsibility over the pupils, students and learners while under our supervision, instruction and custody in all authorized activities whether inside or outside the school

premises. We believe that this authority is given by the parents through the Parents' Commitment and Understanding and Parents' Letter of Agreement (Appendix F) signed upon registration.

- E. That as “second” parents of the pupils, students and learners, we will provide a balance of nourishment and discipline.**

III: Duties and Responsibilities of Head of School

The Head of School shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

- A.** Ensure the institution of effective child protection policies and procedures, and monitor compliance thereof;
- B.** Ensure that the school adopts a child protection policy;
- C.** Ensure that all students, school personnel, parents, guardians or custodians, and visitors and guests are made aware of the School's child protection policy.
- D.** Organize and convene the Child Protection Committee for the school;
- E.** Conduct the capacity building activities for the members of the Child Protection Committee and Guidance Counselors/Teachers;
- F.** Conduct disciplinary proceedings in cases of offenses committed by pupils, students or learners;
- G.** Ensure that the participatory and other rights of children are respected and upheld in all matters and procedures affecting their welfare;
- H.** Maintain a record of all proceedings related to bullying or peer abuse and submit the report after each school year to the School's Chairman of the Board and a copy of the intake form (Appendixes "A" & "B", respectively);
- I.** Conduct the appropriate training and capability-building activities on child protection measures and protocols;
- J.** Ensure that the school adopts a student Code of Conduct to be followed by every pupil, student or learner while on school grounds, or when traveling to and from school, or during a school-sponsored activity, and during lunch period, whether on or off campus;
- K.** Adopt such conflict resolution mechanisms that respect the rights of indigenous peoples, provided that they conform to this Department Order and they uphold the rights of the child;
- L.** Coordinate with the appropriate offices and other agency or instrumentality for appropriate assistance and intervention, as may be required in the performance of its functions;
- M.** Coordinate with the Department of Social Welfare a

- N.** and Development or, the appropriate government agencies or non-governmental organizations on a Child Protection Hotline for reporting abuse, violence, exploitation, discrimination, bullying and other similar acts and for counseling;
- O.** Ensure that all incidents of abuse, violence, exploitation, discrimination, bullying and other similar acts are addressed in accordance with the provisions of this Department Order.

IV: Duties and Responsibilities of School Personnel

The following responsibilities of school administrators, teachers, academic and non-academic and other personnel:

- A.** Exercise special parental authority and responsibility over the child while under their supervision, instruction and custody. Authority and responsibility shall apply to all authorized activities whether inside or outside the premises of the school, entity or institution.
- B.** Keep them in their company and support, educate and instruct them by right precept and good example;
- C.** Give them love and affection, advice and counsel, companionship and understanding;
- D.** Enhance, protect, preserve and maintain their physical and mental health at all times;
- E.** Furnish them with good and wholesome educational materials, supervise their activities, recreation and association with others, protect them from bad company and prevent them from acquiring habits detrimental to their health, studies and morals;
- F.** Represent them in all matters affecting their interests;
- G.** Inculcate the value of respect and obedience;
- H.** Practice positive and non-violent discipline, as may be required under the circumstances; provided, that in no case shall corporal punishment be inflicted upon them;
- I.** Perform such other duties as are imposed by law upon them, as substitute parents or guardians; and
- J.** School personnel shall also strictly comply with the school's child protection policy.

V: Duties and Responsibilities of Students

Pupils, students and learners shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

- A.** Comply with the school's regulations, as long as they are in harmony with their best interests. Pupils, students and learners shall refrain from:

1. Engaging in discrimination, or leading a group of pupils or students to discriminate another, with reference to one's physical appearance, weaknesses and status of any sort;
2. Doing any act that is inappropriate or sexually provocative;
3. Participating in behavior of other students that is illegal, unsafe or abusive;
4. Marking or damaging school property, including books, in any way;
5. Engaging in fights or any aggressive behavior;
6. Introducing into the school premises or otherwise possessing prohibited articles, such as deadly weapons, drugs, alcohol, toxic and noxious substances, cigarettes and pornographic material; and
7. Performing other similar acts that cause damage or injury to another.

An allegation that any of these acts has been committed shall not be used to curtail the child's basic rights, or interpreted to defeat the objectives of this Policy.

- B.** Conduct themselves in accordance with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities, with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other persons;
- C.** Respect another person's rights regardless of opinion, status, gender, ethnicity, religion, as well as everyone's moral and physical integrity; and
- D.** Observe the Code of Conduct for pupils, students and learners.

VI: Establishment of Child Protection Committee

Mar Qardakh School shall establish a **Child Protection Committee (CPC)**.

A. The **CPC** shall be composed of the following:

1. **Head of School** - Chairperson
2. **Guidance Counselor/ Teacher** - Vice Chairperson
3. **Representative of the Teachers** as designated by the faculty members
4. **Representative of the Parents** as designated by the Parents -Teachers Association
5. **Representative of students** as designated by the Student Council

B. The **CPC** shall perform the following functions:

1. **Establish a school child protection policy with a code of conduct** (see Appendix F) and a plan to ensure child protection and safety, which shall be reviewed every three (3) years.

2. **Initiate information dissemination programs and organize activities** for the protection of children from abuse, exploitation, violence, discrimination and bullying or peer abuse;
3. **Develop and implement a school-based referral and monitoring system.** The template for the referral system is attached as Appendix A;
4. **Establish a procedural/system** for identifying students who may be suffering from significant harm based on any physical, emotional or behavioral signs; The procedure will involve the following roles:

First Responder - The First Responder is the adult, member of the school who has observed abuse or neglect, or to whom the concern of neglect or abuse is first reported.

Child Protection Officer (CPO) - The Child Protection Officer is a designated person by the Head of School in each section of the school to whom concerns of child abuse, neglect, abuse or other allegation are officially reported, following the procedures on Section XII of this policy. The CPO will take an active role in investigating cases of abuse or neglect in order to determine if the child is at immediate or potential risk. A list of current MQS CPOs is found in Appendix C.

5. **Identify, refer and, if appropriate, report to the appropriate authorities,** cases involving child abuse, exploitation, violence, discrimination and bullying;
6. **Give assistance to parents or guardians,** whenever necessary in securing expert guidance counseling from the appropriate offices or institutions;
7. **Monitor the implementation of positive measures and effective procedures** in providing the necessary support for the child and for those who care for the child; and
8. **Ensure that the children's right to be heard are respected and upheld** in all matters and procedures affecting their welfare.

VII: Preventive measures to address Child abuse, Exploitation, Violence, Discrimination and Bullying and Other Acts of Abuse

A. Capacity Building of School Officials, Personnel, Parents and Students

MQS shall build the capacities of school personnel, pupils, students and learners, parents and guardians to understand and deal with child abuse, exploitation, violence and discrimination cases, bullying and peer violence by conducting sessions, trainings and seminars on positive peer relationships and enhancement of social and emotional competence.

MQS shall use training modules which include positive and non-violent discipline in classroom management, anger and stress management and gender sensitivity. MQS shall likewise employ means which enhance the skills and pedagogy in integrating and teaching children's rights in the classroom.

The programs that are intended to promote Positive and Non-Violent Discipline include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Integration of education sessions on corporal punishment and positive discipline in the initiatives of the Parent-Teachers Associations (PTAs);
2. Education programs / Capacity-building programs for school administrators, teachers and non-academic personnel focused on children's rights, child development and positive and nonviolent approaches in teaching and classroom management, to enable them to incorporate positive discipline messages in parent-teacher conferences and family counseling, and Integrate messages on children's rights and corporal punishment in classroom discussions;
3. Encouraging and supporting the formation and initiatives of support groups among teaching and non-teaching staff, and parents and caregivers;
4. Implementing specific parenting orientation sessions with parents and caregivers and other activities;
5. Implementing school activities or events that raise awareness on children's rights, corporal punishment and positive discipline, fostering the active involvement of and providing venues for bringing together parents, families and children;
6. Encouraging and supporting student-led initiatives to raise awareness on children's rights, corporal punishment and positive discipline; and
7. Setting up Child-friendly / safe environment mechanisms for obtaining children's views and participation in the formulation, monitoring and assessment of school rules and policies related to student discipline. MQS has codes of conduct for employees, parents/guardians, and students that are updated on a regular basis (Appendix F).

B. Recruitment and selection of employees

The MQS administration and Human Resources department shall endeavor to ensure that the school follows appropriate recruitment processes, to support Section II letter D of the policy statement. The school's recruitment of employees includes background checks on hired staff and faculty. In addition, security records are required from all sub-contractors and their staff delivering services to MQS.

C Child safeguarding

Risk assessments for all events and activities involving children are undertaken in compliance with MQS policies and procedures. The school does not tolerate any forms of bullying and ensures a safe and supportive environment through enforcing a robust Harassment and Bullying Policy (Appendix E).

VIII: Procedures in Handling Bullying Incidents in School

A complaint for bullying or peer abuse shall be acted upon by the Head of School following the procedures herein set forth:

- 1.** Upon the filing of a complaint or upon notice by a school personnel or official of any bullying or peer abuse incident, the same shall be immediately reported to the Head of School, who shall inform the parents or guardian of the victim and the victim and the offending child shall be referred to the Child Protection Committee for counseling and other interventions. The penalty of reprimand, if warranted, may be imposed by the Head of School in the presence of the parents or guardians.
- 2.** If bullying is committed for a second or subsequent time, after the offending child has received counseling or other interventions, the penalty of suspension for not more than one (1) week may be imposed by the Head of School, if such is warranted. During the period of suspension, the offending child and the parents or guardians may be required to attend further seminars and counseling. The Head of School shall likewise ensure that the appropriate interventions, counseling and other services, are provided for the victim or victims of bullying.
- 3.** Bullying that resulted in serious physical injuries or death - If the bullying or peer abuse resulted in serious physical injuries or death, whenever appropriate, the case shall be dealt with in accordance with the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Ministry of Education.
- 4.** In all cases where the imposable penalty on the offending child is suspension, exclusion or expulsion, the following minimum requirements of due process shall be complied with:
 - a.** The child and the parents or guardians must be informed of the complaint in writing;
 - b.** The child shall be given the opportunity to answer the complaint in writing, with the assistance of the parents or guardian;
 - c.** The decision of the Head of School must be in writing, stating the facts and the reasons for the decision;
 - d.** The decision of the Head of School may be appealed.

IX: Implementation of Non-punitive Measures on Bullying.

Depending on the gravity of the bullying committed by any pupil, student or learner, the school may impose other non-punitive measures, in lieu of punitive measures, in accordance with the principles of Positive and Non-Violent Discipline as defined in the terms of Sections II of this Policy.

X. Confidentiality

In child abuse, violence, discrimination, exploitation, bullying or peer abuse and other acts of abuse by a pupil, student or learners, the identity or other information that may reasonably

identify the pupil, student or learner, whether victim or offender, shall be withheld from the public to protect his or her privacy. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to protect the child and to preserve his/her rights, as well as the rights of his/her family, with the child's safety being paramount at all times.

The School Personnel and/or the First Responder must never guarantee complete confidentiality to a child, nor should he/she agree with a child to keep a secret, where child safety is at risk. A child protection concern or allegation must be reported in accordance with established procedures outlined below.

The School Officials will be informed of relevant information with respect to individual cases regarding child protection on a "need to know basis" only. Any information shared with a member School Officials in that manner must be held in strict confidence.

The School protects the rights of teachers and no publicity shall be given to any disciplinary action against a teacher during the pendency of his or her case.

XI. Criminal and Civil Liability

Criminal and civil liability arising from child abuse, discrimination, exploitation, and other acts of abuse are separate and distinct, and shall not be a bar to the filing of an administrative case under these guidelines.

XII. Rules and Procedures in Handling Child Abuse, Exploitation, Violence, Neglect, Discrimination Cases

A. Prohibited Acts

The following acts, as defined in Section II of this Policy, are hereby prohibited and shall be penalized in administrative proceedings as Grave or Simple Misconduct depending on the gravity of the act and its consequences, under existing rules and regulations:

1. Child abuse;
2. Discrimination against children;
3. Child Exploitation;
4. Violence Against Children in School;
5. Corporal Punishment;
6. Any analogous or similar acts.

B. Investigation and Reporting.

The conduct of investigation and reporting of cases of child abuse, exploitation, violence, neglect or discrimination, shall be done expeditiously, as herein provided.

C. Responsibilities of Adults within the School

Reporting in line with the policy

1. All adults are required to be aware of and alert to the signs of child abuse.
2. If an adult member of the school identifies that a child may be in an abusive situation or if a child discloses allegations of abuse to an adult, the latter will be considered as the First Responder and he/she will follow the procedures of this policy, record his/her concerns, and report them to the School's Child Protection Officer (CPO) within a maximum of 24 hours, or as soon as practical.
3. The procedures set forth in this policy must be followed regardless of the identity of the potential perpetrator be it a School Official or a third party.
4. First Responders will ensure child and family confidentiality, with child safety being paramount.

D. Child Protection Procedures (see flow chart in Appendix D)

The prime concern at all stages of child protection procedures must be the interest, and safety of the child which must be paramount.

Children Volunteering Information

If a child volunteers' information about abuse to an adult/First Responder, it may be done obliquely, rather than directly, e.g., through play, drawings, changes in behavior etc. Children will talk about their concerns and problems to people they feel they can trust. The role of the adult (First Responder) receiving this information is to listen but not undertake an investigation of the potential abuse, which shall be the role of the CPO. In cases of peer-to-peer disclosure, children need to report the abuse to a trusted IC Community Stakeholder, understanding that their peer's safety comes before confidentiality.

When a child confides in First Responder

First Responder should:

- Remain calm, supportive, reassuring, and show no signs of shock.
- Listen and respond with empathy in a non-judgmental and open way; First Responder can say "That must have been sad/hard for you," or "It's right to tell someone because you need help."
- Avoid directly questioning the child.
- Consider the disclosure seriously.
- Ask if the child has told his/her parents/guardians if the alleged abuse took place outside home, or the other parent if one parent is implicated.

- Check that the child is indicating abuse or neglect.
- Check if the child is hurt or might be in need of medical attention.
- Deal with the allegation in such a way that the child does not have to repeat the information to different people within the school. It is important to know if an incident has happened recently and whom the child is saying has hurt her/him.
- Make careful records of what was said, record the date and time when the child spoke to First Responder, indicate the location and names of the people who were present, as well as what was said, using the child's own language. Sign the notes, keep a copy of them in a safe place, and hand them to the CPO immediately or within a maximum of 24 hours.
- Explain to the child what he/she needs to do (report to the CPO) and the reason for it.

First Responder should not:

- Promise a child complete confidentiality – First Responder should explain that he/she may need to pass information to other professionals (CPO) to help keep the child or other children safe.
- Judge the character of the accused.
- Jump to conclusions.
- Ask leading questions.
- Ask for lots of details about the alleged event(s).
- Speculate or accuse anybody.
- Pre-empt or prejudice an investigation by leading the child with closed questions.
- Take notes during the disclosure (do this when the child is not present).
- Suggest that the child may be to blame in any way for what happened.
- Ask the child to wait until another person can be present to witness the disclosure.
- Responding to disclosure or concerns of abuse or neglect

When following the procedures set forth hereunder, School Officials, First Responder, CPO, CPC, and/or any other persons involved herein, acknowledge the urgency and severity of any case of child abuse or neglect allegation.

Step 1

When a child reports abuse, or there is reasonable cause to believe that abuse is occurring, the First Responder must document the disclosure or concern in writing and seek advice from a school CPO within a maximum of 24 hours or as soon as practical.

Step 2

The school CPO will promptly and within a maximum of 24 hours carry out the preliminary investigation, which includes screening and gathering information regarding the reported incident to determine

1. what has happened and what damages have occurred to the victim of the abuse,
2. whether the abuse is physical, emotional/psychological, sexual or neglect. The CPO shall prepare a detailed and complete written report of the information gathered and findings and proceed to step 3.

Step 3

The School CPO, after informing his/her relevant coordinator, will report the incident to the school's CPC within 24 hours, which in turn will carry out investigations to determine whether the child is at

1. **potential risk**, or
2. **immediate risk**.

If a complaint is not sufficient in form, the concerned CPC shall immediately inform the complainant of the requirements of a formal complaint. Upon the filing of the formal complaint, the same shall be acted upon pursuant to the following paragraphs.

The following procedure will be used by the CPC:

1. CPC shall then issue an order for the conduct of a fact-finding investigation, not later than seventy-two (72) hours from submission. These periods shall be strictly observed, except when justified by circumstances beyond their control; Provided, that, if the person complained of is a non-teaching personnel, the Schools' Administrative Officials shall cause the conduct of a fact-finding investigation within the same period.
2. The conduct of a fact-finding investigation shall be in accordance with the Procedure of the School in Administrative Cases. Pending investigation, upon referral of the School Guidance Counselor/Teacher shall assess the child and provide psychosocial intervention to help the child victim recover from whatever trauma he or she has experienced as a result of the abuse. The offender shall likewise undergo psychosocial intervention, if such is warranted. Interview/interrogate concerned adults as necessary and document information in writing relevant to the case.
3. Consult with the strictly relevant school personnel to review the child's history in the school.
4. Determine the course of follow-up actions to be taken as soon as possible.

a. Potential risk

Most potential risk cases of suspected abuse or neglect involve instances where the child's safety is not at immediate risk and can be handled through supporting children and/ or families to build skills, or through developing plans to reinforce safe

child environments.

Based on acquired information, an action plan will be developed to assist the child and family. Information on the case will be shared on a “need to know” basis with faculty/staff.

Appropriate actions may include:

- i. Discussions between the child and CPO or any of the members of the CPC as the Head of School deems appropriate, in order to gain more information. Depending on the age of the child, these discussions may include drawing pictures and playing with dolls to elicit more information as to what may have occurred.
- ii. Documentation.
- iii. In-class observations of the child by the teacher, CPO, Counselor, learning support teacher or administrator.
- iv. Meetings with the family to present the school’s concerns.
- v. Recommendations of the child and family’s referrals to external professional counseling.
- vi. Meetings between teacher, CPO, members of the CPC, and/or administration.

b. Immediate risk

Immediate risk to the safety and well-being of the abused child can include physical abuse, psychological abuse (including self-harm), neglect, or sexual abuse.

In line with legal requirements, immediate risk cases of abuse are referred, depending on the severity of the abuse, to the Ministry of Education. Support for MQS to navigate these pathways should be sought through external legal advice (the extent to which this can be transferred to the Ministry, needs to be examined).

In all cases, follow up activities will be conducted in a manner that ensures that information is documented in writing, factually, and that strict confidentiality is maintained. All documentation of the investigation will be kept confidential and will be stored in a designated lockable space, under the supervision of the school CPO.

5. If a prima facie case exists based on the Investigation Report and the records, a Formal Charge shall be issued by the School Authority which may be the basis for the issuance of an Order of Preventive Suspension or as an alternative, reassignment of the offending party, as may be warranted. The respondent may be placed under preventive suspension pending investigation, for a period of ninety (90) days, if the injury or abuse committed against a child is so grave, as to render the child unable to attend his or her classes. The respondent may also be preventively suspended to preclude the possibility of influencing or intimidating witnesses. The respondent may file a Motion for Reconsideration with the School Authority by way of an Appeal within fifteen (15) days from receipt thereof.

XIII. Complaint against school personnel or official

A complaint for child abuse, violence, exploitation or discrimination in a private school shall be filed with the School Head/Chief Executive Officer and shall be acted upon pursuant to the school's rules of procedures on administrative cases. The penalty shall be that which is provided by the rules of the School, subject to the requirements of due process. The administrative case shall be without prejudice to any civil or criminal case that may be filed.

XIV. Effectivity

This MQS Child Protection Policy shall take effect immediately upon issuance.

XV: Definition of Terms

- A. Allegation** - allegation is any concern raised that an adult or another child has harmed or abused a child, including physical, psychological, or sexual harm or abuse, exploitation, or neglect; behaved in a way which might place children at risk.
- B. Child** - refers to any person below eighteen (18) years of age or those over but are unable to fully take care of themselves or protect themselves from abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation or discrimination because of a physical or mental disability or condition. For purposes of this Policy, the term also includes pupils or students who may be eighteen (18) years of age or older but are in school,
- C. Children in School** - refers to bona fide pupils, students or learners who are enrolled in the basic education system, whether regular, irregular, transferee or repeater, including those who have been temporarily out of school, who are in the school or learning centers premises or participating in school-sanctioned activities.
- D. Pupil, Student or Learner** - means a child who regularly attends classes in any level of the basic education system, under the supervision and tutelage of a teacher or facilitator.
- E. School Personnel** - means the persons, singly or collectively, working in a public or private school. They are classified as follows:
 - 1. Head of School** refers to the chief executive officer or administrator of a public or private school or learning center.
 - 2. Other School Officials** include other school officers, including teachers, who are occupying supervisory positions or positions of responsibility, and are involved in policy formulation or implementation in a school.
 - 3. Academic Personnel"** includes all school personnel who are formally engaged in

actual teaching service or in research assignments, either on a full-time or a part-time basis, as well as those who possess certain prescribed academic functions directly supportive of teaching, such as registrars if applicable, librarians, guidance counselors, researchers, and other similar persons. They may include school officials who are responsible for academic matters, and other school officials.

4. Other Personnel includes all other non-academic personnel in the school, whatever may be the nature of their appointment and status of employment.

- F. Child Protection**- refers to programs, services, procedures and structures that are intended to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation, discrimination and violence.
- G. Parents** - refers to biological parents, step-parents, adoptive parents and the common-law spouse or partner of the parent.
- H. Guardians or Custodians** - refers to legal guardians, foster parents, and other persons, including relatives or even non-relatives, who have physical custody of the child.
- I. School Visitor or Guest** – refers to any person who visits the school and has any official business with the school, and any person who does not have any official business but is found within the premises of the school. This may include those who are within the school premises for certain reasons, e.g. student teachers, catechists, service providers, suppliers, bidders, parents and guardians of other children.
- J. Child Abuse** - refers to the maltreatment of a child, whether habitual or not, which include any of the following:
1. psychological or physical abuse, neglect, cruelty, sexual abuse and emotional maltreatment;
 2. any act by deeds or words which debases, degrades or demeans the intrinsic worth and dignity of a child as a human being;
 3. unreasonable deprivation of the child's basic needs for survival, such as food and shelter; or
 4. failure to immediately give medical treatment to an injured child resulting in serious impairment of his or her growth and development or in the child's permanent incapacity or death.
- K. Neglect** - is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs. A child may be left hungry, or dirty, without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, medical or health care. A child may be put in danger, or not protected from physical, or emotional harm. A child who is neglected will often suffer from other abuse as well. Neglect is dangerous, and can cause serious, long-term damage, possibly death.

Possible signs and symptoms of neglect may include but are not limited to:

- Constant hunger, begging for food from others, or stealing food
- Poor personal hygiene
- Worryingly underweight
- Dressing unsuitably for weather
- Illness or untreated injury

- Looking worryingly sad, false smiles
- Parents/guardians are uninterested in child's performance or well-being

L. Discrimination against children - refers to an act of exclusion, distinction, restriction or preference which is based on any ground such as age, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, being infected or affected by Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), being pregnant, being a child in conflict with the law, being a child with disability or other status or condition, and which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by all persons, on an equal footing, of all rights and freedoms.

M. Child exploitation - refers to the use of children for someone else's advantage, gratification or profit often resulting in an unjust, cruel and harmful treatment of the child. These activities disrupt the child's normal physical or mental health, education, moral or social emotional development. It covers situations of manipulation, misuse, abuse, victimization, oppression or ill-treatment. There are two (2) main forms of child exploitation that are recognized:

1. **Sexual exploitation** - refers to the abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes. It includes, but it is not limited to forcing a child to participate in prostitution or the production of pornographic materials, as a result of being subjected to a threat, deception, coercion, abduction, force, abuse of authority, debt bondage, fraud or through abuse of a victim's vulnerability.
2. **Economic exploitation** - refers to the use of the child in work or other activities for the benefit of others. Economic exploitation involves a certain gain or profit through the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services. This includes, but is not limited to, illegal child labor.

N. Violence against children committed in school - refers to a single act or a series of acts committed by school administrators, academic and non-academic personnel against a child, which result in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, psychological harm or suffering, or other abuses including threats of such acts, battery, assault, coercion, harassment or arbitrary deprivation of liberty. It includes, but is not limited to, the following acts:

1. **Physical violence** refers to acts that inflict bodily or physical harm. It includes assigning children to perform tasks which are hazardous to their physical well-being.

Possible signs and symptoms of physical abuse may include but are not limited to:

- Bruises, burns, sprains, dislocations, bites, cuts
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Injuries to the body 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/guardians being contacted
- Showing wariness, or distrust of adults
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Being aggressive towards others
- Being very passive and compliant in a worrying manner
- Chronic running away

2. **Sexual abuse / violence** refers to acts that are sexual in nature. It includes, but is not limited to:

- a. rape, sexual harassment, acts of lasciviousness, making demeaning and sexually suggestive remarks, physically attacking the sexual parts of the victim's body;
- b. forcing the child to watch obscene publications and indecent shows or forcing the child to do indecent sexual acts and/or to engage or be involved in, the creation or distribution of such films, indecent publication or material; and
- c. acts causing or attempting to cause the child to engage in any sexual activity by force, threat of force, physical or other harm or threat of physical or other harm or coercion, or through inducements, gifts or favors.

Child sexual abuse includes but is not limited to:

- Touching a child's genitals, or private parts for sexual pleasure
- Making a child touch someone else's genitals, play sexual games, or have sex by using objects or body parts
- Showing pornography to a child
- Deliberately exposing an adult's genitals to a child
- Photographing a child in sexual poses
- Encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts
- Inappropriately watching a child undress, or use the bathroom

Possible signs and symptoms of sexual abuse may include but are not limited to:

- Pain or irritation to the genital area
- Difficulty with urination
- Infection, bleeding
- Fear of people, or places
- Aggression
- Regressive behaviors, bed wetting, or stranger anxiety
- Sexually provocative
- Stomach pains, or discomfort walking, or sitting
- Being unusually quiet and withdrawn, or unusually aggressive
- Suffering from what seem to be physical ailments that can't be

- explained medically
- Showing immense fear of a particular adult
- Mentioning receiving special attention from an adult, or a new “secret” friendship with an adult, or young person
- Reclusion
- Age-inappropriate sexualized behavior or language

3. **Psychological violence** refers to acts or omissions causing or likely to cause mental or emotional suffering of the child, such as but not limited to intimidation, harassment, stalking, damage to property, public ridicule or humiliation, deduction or threat of deduction from grade or merit as a form of punishment, and repeated verbal abuse.

Child emotional/psychological abuse may include but is not limited to:

- Calling inappropriate names, and making negative destructive comparisons to others
- Persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child (threats, humiliation, insulting sarcasm, degrading punishments), so as to cause severe and adverse effects on a child’s emotional development
- Causing children frequently to feel immensely frightened

Possible signs and symptoms of emotional/psychological abuse may include but are not limited to:

- Delay in physical, mental, and emotional development
- Extreme passivity or aggression
- Compulsive stealing
- Drug or substance abuse
- Excessively compliant child in a worrying manner

4. **Other acts of violence** of a physical, sexual or psychological nature that are prejudicial to the best interest of the child.

N. Bullying or Peer Abuse — refers to willful aggressive behavior that is directed, towards a particular victim who may be outnumbered, younger, weak, with disability, less confident, or otherwise vulnerable. More particularly:

1. **Bullying** - is committed when a student commits an act or a series of acts directed towards another student, or a series of single acts directed towards several students in a school setting or a place of learning, which results in physical and mental abuse, harassment, intimidation, or humiliation. Such acts may consist of any one or more of the following;
 - a. Threats to inflict a wrong upon the person, honor or property of the person or on his or her family;
 - b. Stalking or constantly following or pursuing a person in his or her daily

activities, with unwanted and obsessive attention;

- c. Taking of property;
 - d. Public humiliation, or public and malicious imputation of a crime or of a vice or defect, whether real or imaginary, or any act, omission, condition, status, or circumstance tending to cause dishonor, discredit or expose a person to contempt;
 - e. Deliberate destruction or defacement of, or damage to the child's property;
 - f. Physical violence committed upon a student, which may or may not result to harm or injury, with or without the aid of a weapon. Such violence may be in the form of mauling, hitting, punching, kicking, throwing things at the student, pinching, spanking, or other similar acts;
 - g. Demanding or requiring sexual or monetary favors, or exacting money or property, from a pupil or student; and
 - h. Restraining the liberty and freedom of a pupil or student or student.
2. **Cyber-bullying** - is any conduct defined in the preceding paragraph, as resulting in harassment, intimidation, or humiliation, through electronic means or other technology, such as, but not limited to texting, email, instant messaging, chatting, Internet, social networking websites or other platforms or formats.

O. Other acts of abuse by a pupil, student or learner- refers to other serious acts of abuse committed by a pupil, student or learner upon another pupil, student or learner of the same school, not falling under the definition of 'bullying' in the preceding provisions, including but not limited to acts of a physical, sexual or psychological nature.

P. Corporal Punishment - refers to a kind of punishment or penalty imposed for an alleged or actual offense, which is carried out or inflicted, for the purpose of discipline, training or control, by a teacher, school administrator, an adult, or any other child who has been given or has assumed authority or responsibility for punishment or discipline. It includes physical, humiliating or degrading punishment, including, but not limited to the following:

- 1. Blows such as, but not limited to, beating, kicking, hitting, slapping, or lashing, of any part of a child's body, with or without the use of an instrument such as, but not limited to a cane, broom, stick, whip or belt;
- 2. Striking of a child's face or head, such being declared as a "no contact zone";
- 3. Pulling hair, shaking, twisting joints, cutting or piercing skin, dragging, pushing or throwing of a child;
- 4. Forcing a child to perform physically painful or damaging acts such as, but not limited to, holding a weight or weights for an extended period and kneeling on stones, salt, pebbles or other objects;
- 5. Deprivation of a child's physical needs as a form of punishment;

6. Deliberate exposure to fire, ice, water, smoke, sunlight, rain, pepper, alcohol, or forcing the child to swallow substances, dangerous chemicals, and other materials that can cause discomfort or threaten the child's health, safety and sense of security such as, but not limited to bleach or insecticides, excrement or urine;
7. Tying up a child;
8. Confinement, imprisonment or depriving the liberty of a child;
9. Verbal abuse or assaults, including intimidation or threat of bodily harm, swearing or cursing, ridiculing or denigrating the child;
10. Forcing a child to wear a sign, to undress or disrobe, or to put on anything that will make a child look or feel foolish, which belittles or humiliates the child in front of others;
11. Permanent confiscation of personal property of pupils, students or learners, except when such pieces of property pose a danger to the child or to others; and
12. Other analogous acts.

Q. Positive and Non-Violent Discipline of Children - is a way of thinking and a holistic, constructive and proactive approach to teaching that helps children develop appropriate thinking and behavior in the short and long-term and fosters self-discipline. It is based on the fundamental principle that children are full human beings with basic human rights. Positive discipline begins with setting long-term goals or impacts that teacher want to have on their students' adult lives, and using everyday situations and challenges as opportunities to teach life-long skills and values to students.

R. Victim/Survivor - This policy uses the term "victim" or "survivor" to describe the child who has been abused and/or who has allegedly been abused. Not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim, or would want to be described in this way.

This policy was written based on:

International College of Lebanon Child Protection Policy



ANNEX B

MQS INTAKE SHEET

I. INFORMATION:

A. VICTIM:

Name:		
Date of Birth:	Age:	Sex:
Grade / Year and Section:	Adviser/Teacher:	
Parents:		
Mother's name:		Age:
Occupation:		
Address:		
Contact number:		
Father's name:		Age:
Occupation:		
Address:		
Contact number:		

B. COMPLAINANT:

Name:
Relationship to Victim:
Address and Contact Number:

C. RESPONDENT:

1. If the respondent is a School Personnel

Name:		
Date of Birth:	Age:	Sex:
Address and Contact Number:		

2. If the respondent is a student

Name:		
Date of Birth:	Age:	Sex:
Grade / Year and Section:	Adviser/Teacher:	

Parent/Guardian:	
Mother's name:	Age:
Occupation:	
Address:	
Contact number:	
Father's name:	Age:
Occupation:	
Address:	
Contact number:	

II. DETAILS OF THE CASE:

III. ACTION TAKEN:

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS:

Prepared by (printed name):
Signature:
Designation:
Date:

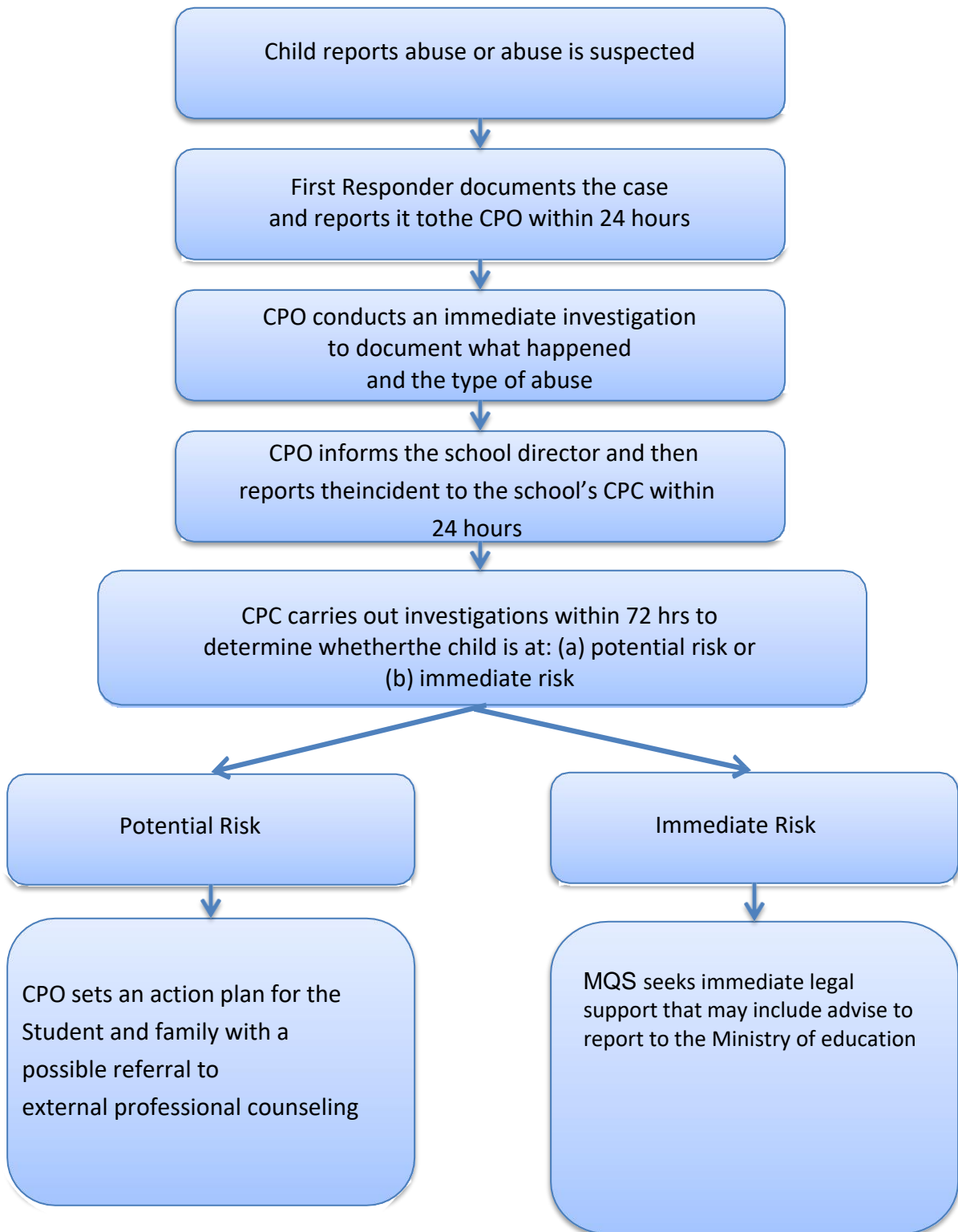
Appendix C

Child Protection Officers

Name of Faculty	School level / program	Contacts
Mr/Ms.		email phone
Mr/Ms.		
Mr/Ms.		
Mr/Ms.		
Mr/Ms.		
Mr/Ms.		
Mr/Ms.		
Mr/Ms.		
Mr/Ms.		

ANNEX D

Flow Chart for Responding to Disclosure or Concerns or Abuse or Neglect



Appendix E

Harassment and Bullying Policy

HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

MQS does not tolerate bullying or harassment and will take strict disciplinary measures to ensure a safe environment for all of its students and school personnel. All members of the school community are committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment that fosters learning based on the core values of integrity, compassion, respect for individual differences, and cooperation.

Bullying and harassment are acts of aggression with the intent to cause embarrassment, pain or discomfort to another. Bullying usually involves an abuse or an imbalance of power. Individuals or groups may be involved.

Bullying and harassment are unwanted negative verbal, psychological, relational, physical or online behavior, planned and organized or unintentional, conducted by an individual or a group, against another person (or persons), causing them embarrassment, pain, fear or discomfort, and is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying usually involves an abuse or an imbalance of power, that is real or perceived.

Bullying and harassment can take many forms, all of which will cause distress and are the most common form of violence experienced by young people. Examples of bullying and harassment include:

- Disrespectful Behavior: Actions that are rude, unpleasant, inappropriate and unprofessional. Behavior that causes hurt feelings and distress and disturbs or offends others.
- Physical: hitting, pushing, tripping, poking, shoving, spitting on others.
- Verbal: teasing, using offensive names and name calling, ridiculing, spreading rumors, malicious gossip, threatening. (Oral and written on electronic sites such as Facebook).
- Relational: Deliberately isolating, rejecting, excluding or ignoring others and undermining their attempts to socialize and form relationships with peers.
- Non-verbal: writing offensive notes or graffiti about others, rude gestures or abuse of the honor of a person through the use of Internet or instant messaging.
- Extortion: threatening to take someone's possessions, food or money.
- Property: stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying property.
- Gendered Bullying: bullying based on gender or the enforcement of gender-role expectations.
- Sectarian Bullying: bullying based on religion or sect.
- Sexual Harassment: Unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other favors, or other verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
- Cyberbullying: Bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mail, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat-rooms and other online technologies.

This includes:

- Sending or posting a humiliating, hurtful or an offensive message, statement, or image on a private or on a public online platform (that can be viewed and/or repeated by others or not) that may cause embarrassment, pain, fear or discomfort to the victim.
- Flaming and trolling: sending or posting hostile messages to “inflame” the victim and start a conflict.
- Happy-slapping: recording and then posting a humiliating picture or video of the victim for others to see.
- Identity theft: stealing the victim’s passwords or taking over their online account and using it to send or post incriminating or humiliating pictures or videos online.
- Photoshopping: altering a digital image of the victim and sending or posting that image, putting the victim in an embarrassing situation.
- Physical threats: sending a threatening message making the victim fear for their safety or well-being.
- Rumor spreading: spreading rumors and gossip through email, text messaging, or social networking sites that may be hurtful to the victim.
- Encouraging, participating, maliciously commenting on any act of cyber-bullying, even if not the initiator of the act.

Any act of bullying or harassment described above will be investigated. Consequences may include but may not be limited to disciplinary probation and/or suspension. Students involved will be counselled to ensure repeat instances do not occur. If this behavior recurs, he/she will be subject to expulsion or withdrawal for the balance of the year and might be denied re-enrollment at IC.

Note: Any student physically harassed and consequently rushed to emergency has to know that Lebanese hospitals policy dictates an automatic report to Lebanese Police. This means an automatic legal investigation will be carried out by Lebanese Authorities in these instances. The school cannot intervene in this process.

Appendix F

Code of Conduct

Employees

MQS Code of Conduct for Employees

MQS strives to promote the highest standards of conduct and integrity. The Code of Conduct describes the professional expectations of School Employees that are consistent with the School's mission statement and ethical values which promote integrity and respect for individual difference, cultural diversity, and secularism. MQS Employees may refer to their direct supervisor or to HR for consultation and assistance.

Observance of Lebanese Laws and IC Policies

School Employees shall observe and comply with Lebanese laws and regulations and shall not do any act which may violate, in any respect, any laws and/or regulations in Lebanon. In addition, School Employees shall abide by the policies of IC.

Professional Expectations

School Employees are expected to follow general rules and guidelines during their employment, and must:

- Comply with the MQS' Child Protection Policy, Harassment and Bullying Policy, and Technology use by Employees Policy.
- Treat everyone with respect, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity and consideration.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, inappropriate competition, or comparison when working with students.
- Maintain appropriate physical boundaries at all times.
- Cooperate fully and report to a school counselor any kind of abuse of students.
- Report to the relevant School Officials and Counselor should a student make inappropriate advances.
- Not have inappropriate physical or emotional interaction with students that can be perceived as abusive.
- Conduct all electronic communication with students and parents through official MQS electronic communication accounts.
- Not be connected or linked to students through personal electronic or personal social media accounts such as WhatsApp, Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, personal email or similar forms of electronic or social media.
- Only use language that is contextually appropriate and culturally sensitive.

- Adhere to MQS policies regarding the nonuse of tobacco or alcohol products on campus or at school sponsored activities where students are present.
- Not access, download or view inappropriate content or videos on school equipment or on MQS premises.
- Not possess or be under the influence of illegal substances at any time.
- Ensure privacy of students' personal information except in appropriate school related circumstances, such as meetings with counselors, concerned parents or School Directors.

Non-Secular or Partisan Political Activities

MQS is a secular non-political institution. As such, while on campus or at School-sponsored events, MQS Employees are required not to engage in any partisan political activity and to avoid endorsing or opposing religious or political parties.

Conflict of Interest

A Conflict of Interest is a situation in which a faculty or staff member has a perceived, potential, or actual personal interest or benefit which may compromise their obligations to the school. Faculty and staff members shall avoid all situations in which their personal interests conflict or could be construed as being in conflict, with those of the school.

Confidentiality of information

Faculty and staff shall treat all information acquired in the course of their employment as strictly confidential. All knowledge, information, and data shall not be disclosed to others or used for their own benefit or to the detriment of MQS, either during or after termination of employment with the school. All literature, reports, records, files, documents and any other property belonging to MQS, and which may be in their use, custody or charge, shall be and remain the property of MQS and shall immediately be returned to MQS upon termination of employment.

Employee Dress Code

It is expected that MQS Employees will dress in a professional manner and in accordance with the school's dress code. Good judgment will prevail when selecting the mode of attire for field trips and other School-related activities.

A few examples of what would be regarded as inappropriate attire for the workplace:

- Immodest necklines, torn jeans, crop tops
- Clothes made of see-through materials
- Shorts, spaghetti straps
- Tight and short dresses and skirts
- Beach slippers and flip flops

Drug-Free Workplace

MQS is committed to maintain a workplace free from the unlawful manufacture, use, dispensing, possession, or distribution of controlled substances. Unlawful manufacture, use, dispensing, possession, or distribution of controlled substances by School employees in the workplace is prohibited under School policy.

Smoke-Free Campus

MQS is a smoke-free workplace where smoking is prohibited. School Employees shall not smoke in either enclosed or outdoor areas on the MQS campus.

Gifts

Faculty and staff shall not accept or solicit any gifts or benefits for themselves that might be interpreted as an attempt to compromise or influence them in carrying out their duties. Gifts of symbolic value from students may be accepted.

Any action inconsistent with the above may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of appointment at the MQS.

Students

Student Honor Code

MQS promotes an environment of honesty, respect, responsibility and trust. It encourages students to take pride in themselves, their talent and ability, their school, their teachers and classmates. The following are conduct and honor expectations for all IC students.

Honesty

- A commitment to truthful words and actions.
- A commitment to academic honesty and integrity

Respect

- A commitment to appreciate others, their views, and values
- A commitment to honorable and respectful behavior.
- Attending all classes on time, contributing positively to discussions, meeting academic deadlines, and performing to the best of one's ability
- Following school and classroom rules and procedures

Responsibility

- Assuming ownership for one's work, words, deeds, and actions
- Exercising personal courage to do the "right" thing by taking action against wrongdoing, regardless of peer pressure
- Accepting accountability for one's choices
- Complying with the student handbook and all related IC Policies

Compassion

- Exhibiting kindness, caring, and a willingness to help others
- Having empathy for the feelings and emotions of others

Parents

Code of Conduct for Parents

MQS recognizes the importance and value of a mutually supportive relationship between the school and parents. The education of a child is best served when the school and parents share a commitment to collaboration, open lines of communication, mutual respect, and when roles, responsibilities, and expectations are clearly defined. The School reserves the prerogative to enroll students and families who fully embrace the mission, vision, policies, and procedures adopted by the School, including our commitment to diversity, respect for individual differences, and secularism. It is a further expectation that parents will address any concerns in a positive and supportive manner, avoiding public actions or criticism detrimental to the School or its employees. The addendum to this code of conduct further clarifies expectations intended to ensure an orderly, respectful, and secure educational environment.

Addendum (Parent Code of Conduct)


The specifics referred to in this addendum to the Parent Code of Conduct, are representative of, but not limited to, conduct expectations for parents:

- comply with MQS' Child Protection Policy
- recognize that the education of each child is the joint responsibility of the parent, student, faculty and school community
- demonstrate that both parents and the school work cooperatively in the best interest of the child
- treat members of the MQS faculty, staff, security personnel and others employed by the School, in a professional and respectful manner
- exhibit a good example for students in their conduct, language and behavior while on campus or at school sponsored activities.
- refrain from negative gossip or unsubstantiated criticism that disparages the reputation of the school or its employees, including on WhatsApp, Facebook, twitter, and other social media sites
- refrain from using social media to fuel discontent or criticism of individual school employees, other parents, students, or school programs or services

- seek to clarify a child's version of events with the school's view in order avoid misunderstanding and to bring about a successful resolution to any dispute
- contact the school directly when you have a question or need clarification of a school matter rather than depending upon the interpretation of parents or other non-official school sources
- ensure that children attend school regularly and arrive to and are picked up on time
- may not threaten or approach any student, staff or faculty member in an abusive or intimidating manner
- accept to comply with any reasonable request from a school employee in the performance of his/her duties

Anyone not respecting the above guidelines may be asked to leave school premises and, in some cases, may be prohibited from access to the school.

Approved by:



Archbishop Bashar Matti Warda

Mar Qardakh School Governor



Hala Warda

Head of School