

# **Grace International School**

## **VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK & Child Protection Policy**

### **WELCOME**

Parents and other adults in the community are encouraged to volunteer. Investing your time in the lunch room, on the playground, or with a sports team is incredibly helpful and valuable. **The students, parents, teachers, and principals appreciate the time, effort, and the skills that volunteers bring to our school.**

Our volunteer process is designed to help maintain security for our students, to promote an atmosphere of mutual respect within the school community, and to comply with standards set by the Association of Christian Schools International. The following sections are based on principles found in our faculty and staff contracts and handbook.

### **Christian Conduct**

We believe that the most important function of adults at GIS is to serve as Christian role models. Therefore, all volunteers are expected to adhere to Biblical moral standards. Conduct should be above reproach when judged by New Testament standards and should be reasonably inoffensive in the local culture. Adults at GIS are expected to deal positively and respectfully with students.

### **Harassment (Excerpt)**

Grace International School is committed to maintaining an environment in which all individuals treat each other with dignity and respect and which is free from all forms of intimidation, exploitation, and harassment, including sexual harassment... Volunteers who become aware of or receive complaints of conduct of a harassing nature are required to report the matter to an administrator.

### **Child Abuse & Neglect Protection (Excerpt)**

GIS believes that children have the right to protection from harm, abuse, or neglect, within limits of the school's jurisdiction... For the purposes of this policy, all GIS personnel, including volunteers, who work with students are considered mandatory reporters. Any mandatory reporter witnessing an incident, receiving a report, or having knowledge which gives reason to suspect child abuse or neglect, must verbally report it immediately to an administrator (principal, nurse, or counselor).

## **Dress**

Volunteers should remember that their manner of dress and actions will reflect on both our Savior Jesus Christ and Grace International School.

Overly casual, tight fitting, or revealing clothing in the classroom is not appropriate in Thai culture. Shirts (including polo and t-shirts) and blouses should be waist length or longer. If see through, an undershirt is required. For women, skirts should be no shorter than 1” above the knee.

For men, coats and ties are not required at GIS, but long or short sleeved shirts should have buttons and/or collars. Polo shirts are acceptable. Shirts that are designed to be untucked are appropriate; otherwise the shirt should be tucked in. Please maintain a professional appearance at all times, wearing clothing that is appropriate for the activity you are engaged in. In the classroom or office, denim jeans and denim overalls are considered inappropriate. Shorts may be worn only during PE instruction. Otherwise, clothing and jewelry should be within the spirit of the dress code for male students.

For women, necklines should be high enough to be modest at all times. If the outfit is sleeveless\*, armholes should also be modest and have shoulder straps wider than 2 inches. Spaghetti straps are not allowed. Please maintain a professional appearance at all times, wearing clothing that is appropriate for the activity you are engaged in. Denim jeans and denim overalls in the classroom or office are considered inappropriate. Shorts may be worn only during PE instruction. \*Capris (at least mid-calf or longer – not denim) may be worn. Otherwise, clothing and jewelry should be within the spirit of the dress code for female students.

*\*Thai faculty and staff are not allowed to wear sleeveless tops or capris.*

Shoes may be dress, athletic, or sandal type. Rubber or plastic “flip-flops,” are not acceptable footwear. Baseball caps are not to be worn inside buildings.

We would all like the freedom to dress as we want outside school hours, but please remember that Thai society regards educational personnel with much respect. We must be careful that our dress doesn't cause others to stumble.

## **VOLUNTEER PROFESSIONALISM**

Volunteers are considered part of the school's professional team and are therefore expected to demonstrate the following mutually respectful behaviors.

1. Keep all appointments and be prompt. When unavoidable situations arise that may preclude you from meeting your commitment, please call the school office so staff can make other arrangements. Please do not come to work sick.
2. Follow directions and ask questions if more specific instructions are needed. Be willing to adjust to the teacher or supervisor's way of doing things. The principal, athletic director, or appropriate department director has the authority to restrict volunteer activities or disqualify any volunteer.
3. Please do not wander the halls or interrupt your child's classroom. If you wish to speak to your child's teacher please make an appointment.
4. Student discipline is the responsibility of the staff member in charge. Refer any behavioral problems to a teacher or the principal.
5. Do not meet one-on-one with a student except in a highly visible setting. Any violation of this standard may result in immediate dismissal.
6. Use adult restrooms when available rather than student restrooms. Adult restrooms are located in the main and elementary office areas.
7. Confidentiality is critical when working in a school environment. You may not discuss any information about students or staff with anyone except appropriate school personnel. This includes not talking to parents about their child.
8. Please discuss any questions about school policy or procedures or other concerns you have with the principal.
9. All volunteers who transport students to school-sponsored activities must comply with the transportation policies outlined in the parent / student handbook.
10. You are welcome to use the staff workroom or lounge while you are volunteering. Please remember that even casual conversation is to be considered confidential.

## **Grace International School**

### **CHILD SAFETY, PROTECTION, AND INVESTIGATION POLICY**

#### **POLICY**

Grace International School (GIS) Child Abuse & Neglect Protection and Investigation Policy and Procedures.

#### **PURPOSE**

GIS believes that children have the right to protection from harm, abuse, or neglect, within limits of the school's jurisdiction. The purpose of this policy is to enable and guide those in positions of responsibility to take appropriate actions when evidence and or allegations of child abuse or neglect occur.

#### **DEFINITIONS**

The definitions provided below are from the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information, an office within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Their original source is the (U.S.) Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), originally enacted in 1974. These definitions will be used by Grace International School as part of the GIS child abuse and neglect protection and investigation policy and procedures. The definitions are quoted from the Clearinghouse website, [www.calib.com/nccanch/pubs/factsheets/bhildmal.cfm](http://www.calib.com/nccanch/pubs/factsheets/bhildmal.cfm).

***Child abuse and neglect*** is, at a minimum 1) any act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation; or 2) an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm. As per the GIS Harassment Prevention and Investigation Policy any inappropriate behavior occurring adult-to-student and student-to-student is considered child abuse. The definition of these inappropriate behaviors is listed under "Harassment" in the previously mentioned policy.

***Sexual abuse*** is the employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct or simulation of such conduct for the purpose of producing a visual depiction of such conduct; or the rape, and in cases of caretaker or interfamilial relationships, statutory rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children. According to the Clearinghouse, this "includes fondling a child's genitals, intercourse, incest, rape, sodomy, exhibitionism, and commercial exploitation through prostitution or the production of pornographic materials." As per the GIS Harassment Prevention and Investigation Policy any inappropriate behavior occurring adult-to-student and student-to-student is considered sexual abuse. The definition of these inappropriate behaviors is listed under "Sexual Harassment" in the previously mentioned policy.

**Maltreatment** - the Clearinghouse identifies and defines four main types of maltreatment perpetrated against children: *physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse*. According to the Clearinghouse, *physical abuse* “is characterized by the infliction of physical injury as a result of punching, beating, kicking, biting, burning, shaking or otherwise harming a child. The parent or caretaker may not have intended to hurt the child; rather, the injury may have resulted from over discipline or physical punishment.”

**Child neglect** according to the Clearinghouse, “is characterized by failure to provide for the child’s basic needs. Neglect can be physical, educational, or emotional.” Emotional neglect, for example, may include “marked inattention to the child’s needs for affection,...refusal of or failure to provide needed psychological care...(or) spouse abuse in the child’s presence...”

**Emotional abuse** “psychological/verbal abuse/mental injury” includes acts or omissions by the parents or other care givers that have caused or could cause serious behavioral, cognitive, emotional, or mental disorders.” Examples of emotional abuse include “extreme or bizarre forms of punishment,” such as locking a child in a dark closet, as well as “habitual scapegoating, belittling, or rejecting treatment.”

**Child** - for the purposes of this policy, a *child* is a person who is currently or formerly enrolled as a student at Grace International School, or through GIS Extension Services Department.

\*\*Should both the victim and the alleged offender be under the age of 18, it will typically be considered abuse if there are more than three years’ difference (1095 days or more) between the children or there is a difference in responsibility, trust, or power between them. If there is less than three years age difference and there is not a significant difference in responsibility, trust, or power between them, what would normally be defined as abuse will be considered inappropriate behavior, with an action plan put in place to address the behaviors of concern and their effects. Because of these and other variables, child-to-child cases will be judged on a case-by-case basis.

Please click this link to certify you have read, understood, and will comply with these guidelines: <http://goo.gl/forms/cbezsk2Gf1>