

Child Protection Policy

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Preamble

*Enko Maputo is committed to safeguarding all students in its care, as well as all other members of the school community, in accordance with the **Enko Education Child Safeguarding Policy**. We believe that every child has the right to be protected from harm and all sorts of abuse, including physical, sexual and emotional abuse as well as domestic violence and neglect. If a child is harmed, he/she has a right to be cared for and supported.*

1. Policy Statement

Enko Maputo is committed to safeguarding all students in its care, as well as all other members of the school community. We believe that every child has the right to be protected from harm and all sorts of abuse, including physical, sexual and emotional abuse as well as domestic violence and neglect. If a child is harmed, he/she has a right to treatment and support.

All Enko Maputo staff have the responsibility to protect students and be alert to the signs of abuse of any form and inform the Head of School or child safeguarding lead of suspected abuse. Procedures are initiated as directed by school policy and regulations in accordance with local authorities.

2. Role of school and Enko Maputo staff

Every member of Enko Maputo staff has the responsibility to safeguard and promote the physical and social-emotional well-being of all children.

All staff have an equal responsibility to report a child to the Head of School or the child safeguarding lead if there is any suspicion that a child is at risk of harm or may harm others in accordance with the protection procedures of Enko Maputo.

In cases related to child protection, all students and staff will receive support from the child safeguarding lead, who will collaborate with the Head of School and address staff concerns, always prioritising the best interests of the child.

All Enko Maputo staff members have the obligation to be aware of Mozambican law and Global law pertaining to crimes against minors and have the duty to report such crimes.

All school staff have the responsibility of providing a safe environment in which children can learn.

All staff will be trained to understand and implement the Enko Education Child Safeguarding Policy.

3. Support for families and parental information

a) Support for families

Enko Maputo will take every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relationships between families, staff and volunteers in the school.

Confidential records kept on a child will be shared with the child's parents with the provision that the care and safety of the child must always be paramount. Enko Maputo will do all in its power to support and work with the child's family and continue to welcome the child and family while investigations progress.

b) Parental information

Enko Maputo staff and administration are committed to creating and maintaining a culture of transparency and trust and work in partnership with parents and families. We believe that this is in the best interests of children and their families.

Parents and guardians will be given access to our child protection policy and a copy of it will be included in the literature given to those whose children are new to the school. We believe it is important that parents and guardians are aware of our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and that we will, where necessary, share concerns about children with local authorities.

Wherever possible, we will aim to discuss concerns about children with their parents or guardians and inform them if we intend to make a referral to the local authorities. There may be rare instances, however, when we judge that it is not appropriate to speak to a parent or guardian before contacting the respective authorities if the child might be at risk by doing so.

4. Staff Recruitment/Hiring process

Enko Maputo follows a rigorous professional staff recruitment/hiring process for teachers and non-teachers which includes the following:

- a) Obtaining references from the last three schools an applicant worked at and an oral reference check;
- b) Obtaining confirmation from the referees that they have no reason to suspect why the applicant should not have substantial, unsupervised access to children and/or young people;
- c) Obtaining criminal background/police clearance checks no older than 6 months;
- d) Clarification of gaps in CV;
- e) Keeping records of the hiring process in the personnel file
- f) Following the Enko Education recruitment process, which include the points above.

5. Staff Training & responsibilities

Enko Maputo is dedicated to ensuring that all staff members receive thorough training on child protection. All new staff members are required to complete child protection training as soon as possible after employment begins. Additionally, all returning staff members will be required to review and sign the Enko Maputo Child Protection Policy on an annual basis. The child safeguarding lead and Head of School will review and update the Child Protection Policy at least once per year and will notify all staff members of the changes.

Enko Maputo staff training on child safeguarding includes, but is not limited to, the following topics:

- a) Understand the different types of abuses: physical, negligence, sexual, emotional
- b) Professional boundaries, including electronic communication
- c) Warning signs in children

6. Professional Boundaries

The following are some examples of where professional boundaries may be exceeded:

- a) Personal relationships between a member of staff (paid or unpaid) and a student is prohibited. This includes relationships through social networking sites such as Facebook, Tik Tok, Instagram as well as personal communication via email or Whatsapp which does not include pedagogical topics.
- b) Use of abusive language is prohibited.
- c) Use of corporal punishment or chastisement is prohibited.
- d) Passing on personal contact details to students or obtaining personal contact details from students is prohibited.
- e) Any electronic communication other than through official school email is prohibited.
- f) Taking students to a member of staff's home is prohibited.
- g) Selling to or buying items from a student is prohibited.
- h) Accepting money or any type of gift above the monetary value of 600MZN per individual family is prohibited.
- i) Borrowing money from or lending money to a student is prohibited.
- j) Staff members may not initiate any physical contact other than formal greetings or for health and safety purposes or, with the student's consent, contact that is necessary for educational purposes.
- k) Staff members need to be aware of and respect personal spaces of fellow staff members and students.
- l) Students should be aware of and accept physical boundaries.
- m) Staff members, if alone in a room with a student, are required to keep the door ajar to be visible from the outside.

Please refer to the school/s ICT policy for further details regarding electronic relations.

7. Reporting

If a staff member notices signs of potential abuse in a student, witnesses instances of abuse by fellow students or a staff member, or if a student approaches the staff member and confides in him/her about the situation of abuse outside or within the school, the staff member has an obligation to take necessary action.

The child safeguarding lead will monitor and record changes in children's behaviour/appearance such as bruises, sudden aggression or withdrawal in writing and report to the Head of School for investigation. The Head of School and the child safeguarding lead will proceed to investigate without delay. In the case of instances of abuse within school, this will entail interviews with involved students or staff and may lead to potential suspension if applicable. In serious cases, this may lead to expulsion and to reporting to local authorities.

After internal clarification, insofar as the child's safety can be ensured, parents will be contacted by the Head of School to express the school's concerns.

All such suspicions and investigations will be kept strictly confidential, shared only with those who need to know.

8. Keeping records

Whenever notable changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a specific and confidential record will be set up by the school's child safeguarding lead separate from the usual on-going records of progress and development.

The record will include the following information: child's name, address, and age; timed and dated documentation of objective descriptions of the child's behaviour/appearance and the exact words spoken by the child; and the dated name and signature of the recorder.

Such records will be kept in a separate file and will not be accessible to staff in the school other than the school's child safeguarding lead and the HoS.

9. Student training/Education

Enko Maputo is committed to ensuring all students understand how they can stay safe in school, at home, and online. Student training on child protection includes:

- a) How to establish personal boundaries.
- b) How to recognise inappropriate behaviour and take appropriate steps to report the incident or concern.
- c) How to seek help, should a student feel that their personal boundaries have been violated.
- d) Strategies to combat issues such as bullying, online safety, and other types of abuse.

In addition to student training, Enko Maputo brings child protection awareness into the school in a variety of ways, including:

- a) Inviting outside speakers, such as 'Save the Children', to facilitate reflection and discussion about real-life issues.
- b) Organising events linked to international awareness days, such as 'Safer Internet Day'.

10. Trip, excursions and other off-campus activities

This policy applies to any trip, excursions and other off-campus activities. For such activities, risk assessments are carried out by the teacher in charge ahead of the trip and approved by the Head of School.

11. Contact with other organisations

Enko Maputo operates in accordance with Mozambican law and best practices both locally and within the international school community.

Confidential records kept on children about whom the school has well documented concerns will be shared with the appropriate authorities, such as the Office of Attendance to Woman and Child victims of violence (Gabinete de atendimento a mulheres e crianças vitimas de violencia domestica), which is subordinated to the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Action (ministerio de genero, crianca e accao social), if the school feels that adequate explanations for changes in the child's condition have not been provided and the condition cannot be solved within the school.

In most cases, if a report on a child is to be made to the authorities, the child's parents will be informed before the report is made. In rare cases, the school may seek advice from the authorities before informing the parents. The school will keep updated contact information for social workers to ensure ease of communication should an emergency arise. Records will be kept of local children's support agencies or other contacts as appropriate.



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