



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

IMPRESSION

EDUCULT – Denken und Handeln in Kultur und Bildung

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1 EDUCULT – DENKEN UND HANDELN IN KULTUR UND BILDUNG

1.1 Mission statement

EDUCULT is an independent, non-profit institute that brings together knowledge and experience to actively shape social change. In dialogue with actors from politics, administration, science, civil society, education and culture, projects and ideas are developed that critically address socio-political challenges and open-up new perspectives for action. Interdisciplinary research, evaluation and consulting strengthen evidence-based decision-making, promote education and participation, and create spaces for exchange, reflection and renewal. EDUCULT works to make the future conceivable and shapeable together – with the goal of an open, just and vibrant society.

1.2 Structure of the association

1.2.1 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF EDUCULT

EDUCULT, founded in 2003, is a non-profit association under Austrian law, working on an interdisciplinary basis and active in the fields of research, culture, education and society. The structure of the association promotes transparency, participation and professional and methodological quality and further development. EDUCULT's services include mediation and knowledge transfer, consulting and conceptual design, evaluation and process support, as well as studies and basic research. The ongoing acquisition of contracts and funding is essential for the development of the association's operations and to cover personnel, material and infrastructure costs.

1.2.2 ASSOCIATION BOARD

Volunteer board members support the management team in an advisory capacity and ensure that EDUCULT's work complies with its statutory purposes. Board members represent various social sectors that are relevant to the development of EDUCULT.

1.2.3 CO-DIRECTORSHIP

Since 2024, operational management has been in the hands of two directors, who are jointly responsible for the association's content, strategic and economic development. This co-directorship promotes cooperative working, flat hierarchies and a broad perspective in management.

1.2.4 TEAM

The team consists of around ten employees with expertise in cultural studies, political science, social sciences, educational research/pedagogy, project management, financial management/accounting, and communication/public relations. Freelancers are brought in on a project-by-project basis. Employees work on research projects, educational programmes, and socio-political projects in flexible project and team structures. Regular exchange, internal training and cross-team collaboration are central elements of the working method.

1.2.5 COOPERATIONS AND NETWORKS

EDUCULT works on a project basis with public institutions and administrations, NGOs, universities, cultural and educational institutions, and European and international partner organisations. Networking, knowledge transfer and participatory formats are an integral part of our identity.

1.2.6 RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD PROTECTION

Child protection officer Susanne Stenzel and her deputies Anke Schad-Spindler and Aron Weigl are responsible for the protection and welfare of children and young people.

2 AIM AND PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

EDUCULT's child protection policy aims to protect children and young people in all areas of the organisation's activities from danger, violence, neglect and abuse in the best possible way. As an organisation at the interface of education, art, culture and research, EDUCULT has a special responsibility to create safe, respectful and supportive spaces for young people.

The purpose of this policy is to create a binding framework of guidance and action for all employees, trainers, interns, board members and cooperation partners. This ensures that child protection is actively considered and implemented at every stage – from planning to implementation to follow-up of projects. In doing so, EDUCULT is guided by the legal requirements in Austria and the standards of good scientific practice.

The central objectives of the policy are:

- **Prevention:** Identify risks to child welfare at an early stage and minimise them through structural, organisational and interpersonal measures.
- **Information and awareness raising:** Raise awareness among all those involved about child protection, respect for boundaries and non-discriminatory behaviour.
- **Mandatory standards:** Establish clear rules of conduct, communication guidelines and documentation requirements.
- **Reliable communication channels:** Ensure that children, young people, legal guardians, educational professionals, employees and other parties involved know who they can turn to in confidence if they have any concerns or suspicions.
- **Commitment to action:** Establish responsibility for consistent, appropriate and legally correct action in cases of suspicion.
- **Protection against discrimination:** Children and young people should be treated with respect and given equal opportunities regardless of their origin, gender, religion, disability or social status.
- **Child protection in research:** Minors are protected by transparent, age-appropriate collection methods and careful data protection measures.

3 SCOPE OF THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR EDUCULT

EDUCULT's child protection policy applies to all activities and contexts in which children and young people come into contact with the organisation – whether in the context of research projects, cultural events or participatory formats. The aim is to systematically embed the protection of children and young people in all work processes and make it binding for all those involved.

3.1 Scope in terms of personnel

The policy is aimed at all persons who work on behalf of or within the framework of EDUCULT and who come into contact with children in the course of their work, in particular:

- Employees of EDUCULT
- Board members
- Freelance employees
- Trainers and external experts
- External researchers who interview children and young people or involve them in studies
- Interns
- Cooperation partners
- External persons who participate in events and come into contact with minors
- Accompanying persons and legal guardians during events.

All of the above groups are obliged to comply with the standards set out in the child protection policy and to actively contribute to the protection of children and young people.

3.2 Spatial scope

The policy applies to all physical and digital spaces where activities with children and young people take place, in particular:

- Educational and childcare facilities, e.g. school buildings, kindergartens
- External locations within the scope of cooperation agreements (e.g. theatres, museums)
- EDUCULT office premises
- Other event venues
- Public locations for outdoor events
- Digital media, e.g. video conferences, chat rooms, social media

3.3 Time frame

The period of validity covers:

- The entire duration of projects, workshops, research activities and events
- Preparation and follow-up phases involving contact with children or young people
- Time outside the programme duration if there is an organisational connection (e.g. communication via email or messenger)
- After the end of the project, if data is used, e.g. in research or press articles.

3.4 Material scope

The child protection policy refers to the following content and measures:

- Prevention and intervention in cases of violence, abuse, neglect and discrimination
- Raising awareness of respect for boundaries, power relations and responsible behaviour
- Standards of conduct in physical and digital interactions with minors
- Data protection and data security in surveys, image material and personal information
- Participation of children and young people and their options for filing complaints
- Instructions for action in suspected cases, including reporting channels and documentation requirements.

4 DEFINITION AND FORMS OF VIOLENCE

4.1 Definition of violence

Violence refers to any action, omission or structure that impairs, harms or endangers the physical, mental or social well-being of children and young people. Violence can be active (through direct action) or passive (through neglect). It also includes actions that hinder the development of children and young people, violate their dignity or deprive them of their sense of security and self-worth. EDUCULT is uncompromising in its commitment to a non-violent, respectful and safe environment for all participants.

4.2 Forms of violence

Violence manifests itself in many different forms, which are not always easy to recognise. Austrian law (including Section 137 of the Austrian Civil Code) guarantees children and young people the right to a violence-free upbringing.

4.2.1 PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

Definition: Physical violence includes all actions that cause pain to children and young people, injure them or impair their physical integrity.

Examples: Hitting, pushing, kicking or shaking; rough handling or pulling; confinement, tying up or forcible restraint; physical 'disciplinary methods' such as slapping or pinching.

Relevance for EDUCULT: Even if physical activities are not the focus, physical contact may occur in the context of participatory formats (e.g. role-playing, movement elements). This is always:

- Announced in advance
- Voluntary
- Clearly defined
- Can be refused at any time

4.2.2 PSYCHOLOGICAL (MENTAL) VIOLENCE

Definition: Psychological violence damages the emotional and mental integrity of children and young people. It can take the form of words, actions or omissions that cause fear, shame or feelings of inferiority.

Examples: Verbal abuse, insults or disparagement; ridiculing or embarrassing someone in front of the group; threats, blackmail or intimidation; ignoring or emotional coldness; excessive pressure or constant criticism.

Relevance for EDUCULT: In artistic, educational or research-related group processes, unreflective comments or unequal power relations can have a negative impact. EDUCULT therefore pays attention to:

- Raising awareness among employees about respectful communication and power relations in group dynamics.
- Creating participatory settings in which children and young people can speak without fear of judgement and are also allowed to remain silent.
- Clearly rejecting embarrassing comments, ironic feedback or public pressure to perform.
- Reflecting on and adapting research methods so that questions can be answered in an age-appropriate, non-intrusive and voluntary manner.

4.2.3 SEXUAL ABUSE

Definition: Sexualised violence encompasses any sexual act on, with or in front of children and young people. It can be physical, verbal or digital.

Examples: Inappropriate touching of intimate body parts; sexual comments, ambiguous jokes or innuendos; displaying or distributing pornographic material; grooming (deliberate initiation of sexual contact, especially online); forcing intimate gestures or touching.

Relevance for EDUCULT: Working closely with children and young people – for example, in interviews, workshops or support processes – requires a clear approach:

- No physical contact beyond what is necessary.
- No sexualised language – not even ‘humorous’ language.
- Roles, methods or creative approaches must not encourage boundary violations.
- Children and young people must be allowed to decide for themselves what level of physical contact is acceptable to them.

4.2.4 NEGLIGENCE

Definition: Neglect is the repeated failure to provide necessary care, supervision or support, thereby endangering the welfare of a child.

Examples: No adequate supervision during high-risk activities. Failure to attend to health needs (hunger, thirst, pain). Ignoring weather conditions (no sun protection, no breaks in hot weather). Leaving children unsupervised despite dangerous situations.

Relevance for EDUCULT: Even in the case of project-related, temporary cooperation, the following must be ensured:

- Clear responsibilities for supervision and care.
- Child-friendly scheduling with sufficient breaks.

- Quiet rooms and safe spaces – even in research settings.
- Necessary first aid materials are available on site.

4.2.5 DIGITAL VIOLENCE AND CYBERBULLYING

Definition: Digital violence occurs via electronic media and causes emotional, social and psychological harm to children.

Examples: Insults via WhatsApp or social media. Unauthorised distribution of photos/videos. Exclusion from group chats. Digital blackmail or threats (e.g. 'If you don't do that, I'll post the picture!').

Relevance for EDUCULT: The following points are taken into account in projects with digital elements:

- No private digital communication with participants. Information about data protection, image rights and digital privacy.
- Sensitive handling of audio, image and video material.
- The following guidelines apply to the use of audio, image and video material.

4.2.6 STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

Definition: Structural violence arises from institutional conditions that disadvantage, exclude or hinder the development of children and young people.

Examples: Lack of opportunities to complain. Favouritism towards certain children or young people at the expense of others. Discriminatory rules or procedures (e.g. only 'strong children' are allowed to participate). Language barriers that are not taken into account.

Relevance for EDUCULT: In inclusive art, education and research processes, structural violence is actively counteracted by:

- barrier-free access (spatial, linguistic, cultural),
- transparent responsibilities and moderation,
- child-friendly participation and feedback structures.

5 LEGAL BASIS

5.1 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Austria's accession: Austria ratified the Convention in 1992, thereby committing itself under international law to implementing the rights of children and young people.

Key points:

- **Article 19:** Protecting children from violence, abuse, neglect and abandonment.
- **Article 34:** Protecting children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.
- **Article 12:** The right of children to express their views in matters affecting them and to have those views given due importance.

5.2 Federal Constitutional Law on the Rights of Children (BVG Kinderrechte)

This law enshrines important children's rights in the Federal Constitution. In particular, it clarifies that the **welfare of the child** must be given priority consideration in all decisions affecting children.

Key points:

- **Right to protection from violence** (physical, emotional, sexual violence).
- **Right to care and non-violent upbringing.**
- **Right to participate** in all matters affecting them.
- **Priority of the child's best interests** in legislation and administration.

5.3 Federal Child and Youth Welfare Act 2013 (B-KJHG 2013)

§ 37 B-KJHG (Obligation to report): If there is reasonable suspicion that a child's welfare is at risk in a professional context, a written report must be made immediately to the child and youth welfare services – this applies to institutions as well as freelancers who care for or teach children and young people.

5.4 Penal Code (StGB)

Various provisions in the Austrian Penal Code (StGB) are relevant to the protection of children and young people, including **§ 92 StGB** (physical or psychological violence), **§ 105 StGB** (coercion), **§ 107c StGB** (cyberbullying), **§ 205a StGB** (violation of sexual autonomy) **§ 207a StGB** (pornographic depictions of minors), **§ 208 StGB** (sexual abuse of young people).

5.5 General Civil Code (ABGB)

The ABGB regulates, among other things, general principles between parents and children (§ 137ff ABGB); liability issues regarding the duty of supervision in § 1308ff ABGB are also relevant.

5.6 Youth protection laws of the federal states

The Vienna Youth Protection Act (WJSchG) applies to Vienna. Among other things, this regulates age limits for staying in public places, regulations on alcohol consumption and tobacco products, accompanying regulations, and bans on certain locations.

5.7 General data protection regulation (GDPR)

As a regulation applicable throughout Europe, the GDPR governs the handling of personal data. In addition to this, the provisions of the Austrian Data Protection Act (DSG) apply. At EDUCULT, various data relating to children and young people is collected as part of the registration, supervision and follow-up of activities.

- **Key points:** Age of consent, duty to provide information, data minimisation, deletion
- **Special protection for children:** According to Recital 38 GDPR, children are entitled to increased protection of their personal data.

5.8 Child and Youth Employment Act (KJBG)

The KJBG regulates the employment of children and young people, particularly with regard to working hours, break regulations and working conditions. This is relevant when EDUCULT employs interns. Here, it is ensured that the minimum age is observed and that no work that is harmful to health or unreasonable is assigned to young people.

5.9 Equal Treatment Act (GIBG)

Protects children and young people (like everyone else) from discrimination based on, for example, gender, ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. For EDUCULT, this means a discrimination-sensitive approach and a respectful and inclusive attitude when dealing with all participants.

6 PREVENTIVE MEASURES

6.1 Selection and qualification of employees

6.1.1 SELECTION

A well-trained, carefully selected team is one of the most important preventive measures. Therefore, the following application procedure is in place:

Job advertisements

The management team consults with the entire team to decide whether to hire a new employee. If so, a public job advertisement is prepared. In the case of a temporary project position, it is also possible to invite specific individuals to apply.

Communication about child protection

In the job advertisement, in communications with potential candidates and in selection interviews, it is clearly stated that EDUCULT has a child protection policy and that all employees must comply with it. Before starting work, the code of conduct must be read, understood and signed.

Evidence of good conduct in accordance with criminal record extract

All new employees must present a current criminal record extract for child and youth welfare before signing their contract. This must show that no relevant criminal offences have been committed.

6.1.2 QUALIFICATION

In the context of EDUCULT activities involving direct on-site contact with children and young people, at least one participating employee must provide evidence that they have completed a first aid course within the last four years. If another/external person is present on site as a first responder, this requirement can be waived.

EDUCULT is committed to the continuous training of its team in the field of child protection. This includes:

- **Annual training courses** on child protection issues for all employees.
- **Specialised training** for specific requirements, where necessary – for example, in dealing with children with disabilities or in interculturally sensitive projects.

6.2 Organisational culture and teamwork

The organisational culture at EDUCULT is based on transparency, open communication and mutual respect:

- **Mistake and feedback culture:** Challenges and uncertainties in dealing with children and young people can be discussed.
- **Regular reflection sessions:** Team meetings include regular reflections on current child protection cases.
- **Regular values work:** Shared values are developed, communicated and reviewed within the team.
- **Clear reporting channels:** Every employee is familiar with the internal reporting channels for suspected cases.
- **Involvement of external expertise:** If necessary, EDUCULT consults specialist agencies for advice.

6.3 Behavioural prevention

The following principles, which are bindingly regulated by the code of conduct, apply to the specific interaction with children and young people:

- **Duty of supervision and visibility:** The four-eye principle applies; individual contacts must be arranged in such a way that they are visible at all times. This also applies to digital spaces.
- **Dealing with closeness and distance:** Physical contact – if at all – only takes place after announcement, with consent and in a professional setting.
- **Language and communication:** Appreciative, age-appropriate and discrimination-sensitive language is standard. Humiliating or ironic comments are not permitted.
- **Digital communication:** contact is only made via official channels. No one-to-one chats with participating children and young people.
- **Data protection and image rights:** photo, audio or video recordings are only used with documented consent. Children and young people are informed about their rights and can change their mind at any time.

All employees and freelancers are required to familiarise themselves with the contents of the Code of Conduct, sign it and implement it consistently in practice. In case of uncertainty, the Child Protection Officer must be consulted immediately. The Code of Conduct is reviewed regularly and adapted as necessary to ensure the best possible protection of children and young people at all times.

6.4 Participation and complaints procedures for children and young people

EDUCULT considers participation to be a key tool for prevention:

- **Ensuring voluntary participation:** Participation in activities is based on the principle of voluntary participation. EDUCULT actively communicates to teachers that participation should not be linked to school performance.
- **Encouraging the expression of opinions:** Participants are encouraged to openly express their needs, wishes and concerns. Their contributions are taken seriously and, where possible, integrated into the design of the programme.
- **Feedback channels:** Workshop leaders take a pre-printed sheet with them listing the feedback channels. Feedback can be provided in writing by email to feedback@educult.at or anonymously via a form. In addition, reflection rounds are offered at the end of workshops, which also allow for verbal feedback. Communication is tailored to the respective target group.
- **Neutral contact person:** The child protection officer is responsible for processing emails and survey data. This person has no other contact with children and young people within EDUCULT, does not run workshops, etc.
- **Trust and responsibility:** EDUCULT employees are sensitised to giving children and young people a voice and taking their concerns seriously. It is made clear that constructive feedback is always welcome.
- **Internal communication:** Feedback received is pre-screened by the child protection officer and discussed with the two deputies. If they are unable to attend, two people in total are sufficient. The next step is to involve the employees concerned. The feedback is communicated transparently and, if necessary, a joint solution is sought.

6.5 Preventive measures for cooperation partners

EDUCULT actively involves external partners in child protection:

- **Child protection clause in agreements:** All cooperation partners who may come into contact with children and young people confirm their commitment to the principles of the policy by means of an additional clause in the written cooperation agreements.
- **Review prior to cooperation:** Check whether a separate child protection policy is in place.
- **Transparent clarification of roles:** Responsibilities, supervisory duties and reporting channels are clearly communicated before the start of the project.
- **Awareness-raising discussions:** If necessary, partners are introduced to the most important protection principles.

6.6 Data protection, image use and responsible publicity

EDUCULT takes the protection of personal data very seriously, especially when working with children and young people. All processes relevant to data protection, from obtaining consent to data storage and the use of photo and video material, are carried out in accordance with the provisions of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and in accordance with our own internal data protection guidelines.

The following principles apply to the use of image and audio material and to public relations:

- **Consent requirement:** Image, audio or video recordings of children and young people will only be made and published with the written consent of their legal guardians and – in an age-appropriate manner – also of the children and young people themselves.
- **Voluntary participation and transparency:** Participation in photo or video recordings is always voluntary. Children and young people are informed about their rights and can object at any time without giving reasons or revoke consent that has already been given.
- **Data minimisation and protection of sensitive data:** Only data that is necessary for the implementation and documentation of a project is collected and processed. Personal data is stored in anonymised or pseudonymised form.
- **Alternatives to facial recognition:** Where possible, EDUCULT uses symbolic or anonymised representations (e.g. hands, silhouettes, shots from behind) or artistically designed image excerpts to protect the identity of children and young people.
- **Contextual responsibility:** Publicly shared image material is carefully selected to avoid stereotypical, degrading or unintentionally intimate representations. The material used in publications is respectful and context-sensitive.

6.7 Evaluation und continuous improvement

EDUCULT's child protection policy is a dynamic tool. It is regularly reviewed and adapted to new legal requirements, practical experience and social developments. Continuous improvement is achieved through:

- **Ongoing documentation:** Suspicious cases, complaints and feedback are systematically recorded, evaluated and incorporated into further development.
- **Regular team reflections:** Internal meetings and project reviews are used to jointly analyse whether protective measures were effective – and where improvements are needed.
- **Annual review:** Once a year, the child protection officer conducts a structured evaluation of the policy in consultation with the management. Results and suggestions for adjustments are documented.

- **Incident-related revision:** In the event of serious incidents, new legal requirements or feedback from children, young people, legal guardians or cooperation partners, the policy is updated **immediately**.
- **Transparent communication:** All employees and relevant cooperation partners are informed about changes and their rationale. Training courses are adapted if necessary.

7 CODE OF CONDUCT

The EDUCULT Code of Conduct serves as a binding framework for all persons who come into contact with children and young people on behalf of or in the context of the association. The aim is to create a safe, appreciative and supportive environment characterised by respect, responsibility and mindfulness. The protection of children is the top priority. All employees, freelancers, interns, board members and cooperation partners are obliged to respect the rights of children and young people and to focus on their well-being at all times.

All employees, freelancers, interns and board members of EDUCULT commit to:

- Treating children and young people with **respect, patience and appreciation**.
- Refrain from any form of **discrimination, violence, exclusion and abuse of power**, and actively intervene when observing such behaviour (as far as possible).
- To act responsibly as a **role model** and be aware of their impact on participants.
- Use **age-appropriate, inclusive and appreciative communication**. This includes:
 - Using simple, easy to understand language.
 - Avoiding terms that exclude or stigmatise.
 - Respecting children and young people's preferred form of being addressed (e.g. gender-neutral forms of address for non-binary children).
- Respect the **privacy and intimacy** of children and young people. Physical contact is only permitted if it is necessary for an activity, is **announced in advance** and the child has **given their consent**.
- Empowering children and young people in their **autonomy** by involving them in decisions in an age-appropriate manner.
- **Do not pressure children and young people to participate in activities they do not want to do (principle of free will)**.
- Pay attention to **inclusive access** when **planning activities** (e.g. accessibility, consideration of cultural particularities).
- Immediately **document** any concerns or incidents and forward them to the child protection officer – even if there is no criminal relevance.
- Include the **complaint options** for children and young people in the planning process.
- Participate in **further training and education**: All employees participate in **annual training courses** on child protection.

7.1 Respect for personal boundaries

Boundaries are individual and must always be respected – both physically and emotionally.

☑ The following are permitted:

- Necessary physical contact during activities, but only after explaining this to the child and obtaining their consent.
- Greetings (e.g. handshakes, high fives) if the child wants this.
- Encouraging words and constructive feedback.
- Support when needed, but always after asking first.

⊘ The following are not permitted:

- Physical or emotional abuse (e.g. pressuring, pushing, restraining, belittling).
- Suggestive remarks or comments about appearance or clothing.
- Personal relationships or private meetings with children and young people outside the professional context.
- Hugs or caresses (e.g. when comforting), unless the child initiates this and it is considered appropriate.

7.2 Four-eyes principle („Two-Adults-Rule“)

- Where possible, **two adults** should always be present.
- If this is not feasible, **visual access** (e.g. open doors, glass doors) must be ensured.
- Confidential conversations take place in **open, visible rooms** to avoid misunderstandings and potential risk situations.

7.3 Digital communication and use of social media

- Communication takes place exclusively via **the association's official channels**. Exceptions must be defined in project-specific rules.
- **No one-to-one chats** with participants via messenger services or social networks.
- Photos and videos may **only** be taken **with the written consent** of the legal guardians (up to the age of 14) – but children and young people may always refuse to give their consent. Photos and videos may only be used in accordance with the current rules of EDUCULT.
- Employees **do not follow** children and young people **on social platforms** and do not accept friend requests.
- Confidential data is treated in accordance with **data protection regulations** and is not shared via unsecure channels.

7.4 Anti-discrimination and inclusion

- **No discrimination** based on, for example, origin, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation or social status.
- **Inclusive access** is taken into account right from the planning stage (barrier-sensitive design, cultural sensitivity, consideration of individual needs).
- **Linguistic guidelines:**
 - Children and young people are respected in their identity and addressed by their chosen names/pronouns.
 - **Gender-neutral and respectful language** is used.
 - Terms or jokes that could be stigmatising are to be avoided.

7.5 Mandatory commitment

This code of conduct is more than just a document – it is a **declaration of commitment** to the children and young people who come into contact with EDUCULT. Every employee shares responsibility for creating a safe, supportive and appreciative environment. Together, we create a place where all children and young people feel protected, taken seriously and welcome. To ensure compliance, all persons working with children and young people must:

- **Read and sign** the code of conduct before starting work.
- Participate in an **introduction to child protection**.
- Recognise the **obligation to act immediately** in the event of violations and to report them as described in the case management system of EDUCULT's child protection policy.

8 CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

An effective case management system is crucial for responding quickly, responsibly and legally correctly to suspected cases of child welfare risks, abuse and minor internal misconduct. EDUCULT ensures that affected children and young people receive the best possible protection and support through clear reporting channels, clearly defined responsibilities and transparent communication processes.

8.1 System for reporting, displaying and tracking suspected cases

EDUCULT's case management system is divided into several stages and takes into account legal requirements, in particular the **reporting obligation under § 37 of the Federal Child and Youth Welfare Act (B-KJHG)** and proven procedural standards.

8.1.1 NOTIFICATION

- Suspicious cases or observations can be reported verbally, in writing or digitally by employees, children, young people, legal guardians and cooperation partners.
- The report should primarily be made to the **child protection officer (Susanne Stenzel)**. If the **child protection officer is unavailable**, one of her deputies (Anke Schad-Spindler and Aron Weigl) should be contacted.

8.1.2 DISTINCTION BETWEEN SERIOUS INCIDENTS AND MINOR VIOLATIONS

Not every incident constitutes a threat to the welfare of a child. Therefore, a distinction is made between serious cases (e.g. violence, abuse, neglect) and minor, internal misconduct (e.g. unintentional boundary violations or careless statements).

Minor internal misconduct:

- Examples: unintentionally crossing personal space boundaries, inappropriate comments without malicious intent.
- Measures:
 - **Clarifying discussion:** Directly addressing and reflecting on the incident with the person concerned.
 - **Internal consultation:** Support from the child protection officer in dealing with the incident.
 - **Further training:** Participation in relevant training courses.
 - **Documentation:** Recording the incident to prevent it from happening again and to optimise preventive measures.

Serious incidents (suspected child welfare concerns):

- Require the complete procedure as described in the steps below.

8.1.3 PROCESS FROM THE FIRST SUSPICION TO THE DECISION

1. Perception of suspicion:

- Observe conspicuous behaviour, statements made by children and young people, or information provided by third parties.
- Do not conduct your own investigations, but document and report the incident.

2. Initial consultation and assessment of the situation:

- Take the child seriously, listen attentively, do not ask leading questions.
- Do not leave the child alone with the alleged perpetrator.
- Do not make any promises regarding confidentiality.

3. Documentation:

- Use of a standardised form
- Required information:
 - Date, time, location
 - People involved
 - What the child said (as accurately as possible, without interpretation)
 - Your own observations (behavioural changes, physical signs)
 - Initial protective measures (see 8.2).

4. Risk assessment and decision-making:

- Joint assessment of the situation with the child protection officer.
- In case of uncertainty, consultation with external specialist agencies (child and youth welfare services).

5. Reporting obligation under § 37 B-KJHG:

- If there is reasonable suspicion that a child's welfare is at risk, there is an immediate obligation to report this to child and youth welfare services.
- The report must be made in writing and include all relevant information.
- In cases of acute danger: Contact the police immediately.

Confidentiality and data protection

- **Confidentiality:** Information is only shared with authorised persons.

- **Data protection:** Data processing is carried out in accordance with the GDPR; documents are stored securely and deleted after the statutory retention periods have expired.

8.2 Child protection system for affected children and young people

EDUCULT ensures that affected children and young people receive the best possible support.

Possible protective measures or courses of action:

- Separation of the child from the alleged perpetrator.
- Provision of a safe space.
- Provision of a trusted accompanying person.
- Referral to specialist services.

Participation and information:

- Where possible, children are involved in decision-making processes in an age-appropriate manner.
- Measures are explained in a comprehensible manner.
- The wishes and boundaries of the child are respected.

9 EVALUATION AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

The continuous evaluation and further development of the child protection policy is crucial to ensuring the long-term protection of children and young people at EDUCULT. The aim is to understand child protection not as a one-off catalogue of measures, but as an integral part of the organisational culture.

9.1 Documentation of all reports

Complete documentation of incidents and reports is essential to ensure transparency, traceability and legal certainty.

- **Recording:** All reports, observations and suspected cases are recorded in a standardised form.
- **Contents of the documentation:**
 - Date, time and location of the incident
 - Persons involved
 - Description of the incident and the child's words (as accurately as possible)
 - Immediate measures taken and protective precautions
 - Decisions made and steps taken
- **Data protection:** The documentation is carried out in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Only authorised persons (child protection officers and, if applicable, management) have access.
- **Retention periods:** Data is stored in accordance with EDUCULT data protection regulations:
 - scientific data for up to ten years,
 - personal data for a maximum of six months after the end of the project, unless there is a legal obligation or express consent.

9.2 Monitoring the implementation of the child protection policy

To ensure the effectiveness of the child protection policy, continuous monitoring is carried out.

- **Responsibility:** Monitoring is the responsibility of the child protection officers in cooperation with the board.
- **Measures:**
 - **Regular team meetings:** reflection on incidents and discussion of opportunities for improvement.
 - **Review of reporting channels:** Ensuring that all employees are familiar with the reporting channels and procedures.
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- **Feedback from children and young people:** gathering feedback on how the protection policy is perceived in everyday life.
- **Evaluation of training courses:** reviewing whether the training courses provided are practical and effective.
- **Reporting obligation:** an annual report summarises the results of the monitoring and is presented internally. It serves as a basis for any adjustments to the policy.

9.3 Evaluation and regular updating of the child protection policy

The child protection policy is a dynamic document that is adapted to new findings, legal changes and practical experience.

- **Evaluation frequency:** A comprehensive review of the entire policy is carried out at least every two years.
- **Ad hoc evaluations** are carried out when:
 - New legal requirements come into force,
 - Serious incidents make a revision necessary,
 - Feedback from employees, participants, or external specialist agencies indicates significant opportunities for improvement.
- **Communication:** Once the policy has been revised, all employees and relevant cooperation partners will be informed promptly and, if necessary, trained.

10 APPENDIX

10.1 Contact points

10.1.1 ACUTE ASSISTANCE AND EMERGENCIES

Police emergency number

- Telephone: 133 or 112

Emergency hotline for victims

- Telephone: 0800 112 112

„Rat auf Draht“ Child and youth support helpline

- Telephone consultancy: Emergency number 147
- Online counselling: www.rataufdraht.at/online-beratung
- Chat counselling: www.rataufdraht.at/chat-beratung

10.1.2 CHILD PROTECTION & VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Violence protection centres in Austria

- www.gewaltschutzzentrum.at

die möwe

- Email: ksz-wien@die-moewe.at
- Tel.: 01/532 15 15
- Online counselling: www.die-moewe.at/de/onlineberatung

Family counselling centres

- www.familienberatung.gv.at/beratungsstellen/

Federal Association of Austrian Child Protection Centres

- www.oe-kinderschutzzentren.at

Information on domestic violence

- www.gewalt-ist-nie-ok.at

Gewaltinfo.at

- www.gewaltinfo.at

Zara

- www.zara.or.at/de

10.1.3 MENTAL STRESS & CRISIS SUPPORT

Family counselling centres (throughout Austria)

- www.familienberatung.gv.at/beratungsstellen

Telephone counselling

- Telefon: 142

10.1.4 LAW & CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Children and Youth Ombuds office in Austria

- www.kija.at

General information on children's rights

- www.kinderrechte.gv.at
- www.kinderhabenrechte.at

10.1.5 INTERNET, MEDIA & DIGITAL VIOLENCE

Saferinternet

- www.saferinternet.at

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