Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

2024 - 2025

Laude San Pedro International College

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1.0 Policy Statement and Principals

*Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. 'Children' includes everyone under the age of 18. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child. (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024)*

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavor to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected, valued and can learn; this is underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, are able to raise concerns and believe they are being listened to, and that appropriate action will be taken to keep them safe.

This policy is reviewed annually, as a minimum, unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review; it will be made available publicly on the school website, or on request, and is included in the staff handbook.

This policy is for all staff, parents, supply staff and contractors, and the wider school community. It forms part of the child protection and safeguarding arrangements for our school and is one of a suite of policies and procedures which encompass the safeguarding responsibilities of the school. In particular, this policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Acceptable Use Agreement / mobile phone and camera policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- E-Safety Policy (draft policy pending implementation)
- Anti-Bullying Policy (pending annual review)
- Intimate care Policy (pending review) and record template
- Physical Intervention Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Whistle blowing Policy
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy / Registration systems and safe arrival of students
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.

Our **core safeguarding principles and the aims of this policy** are:
- Ensuring the school's responsibility and commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance.
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any signs of concern or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support and duty of care.

- Provide staff with a framework to promote safeguarding and the wellbeing of children and young people, and ensure that all staff understand and meet their statutory responsibilities
- Ensuring good practice across the school
- Providing all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities.

The school operates within the Spanish Legal framework, but uses best practice and guidance from the UK to develop its policies and procedures. Reference to UK laws etc is intended to help staff understand the context or expectations in relation to given issues.

The definition of Safeguarding is to recognise and act to protect any child who may be at risk either physically or emotionally and it is the responsibility of all staff within Laude to report any concerns they may have to the designated Safeguarding leaders.

2.0 Key Roles and Responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff,
- is appropriately trained, with regular updates,
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community,
- has a working knowledge of safeguarding procedures,
- makes staff aware of safeguarding training courses and the latest policies on safeguarding,
- ensures detailed written records of all concerns kept separate from, the pupil's general file,
- refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate,
- ensures that when a pupil leaves the school, their child protection file is passed to the new school (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained,
- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences,
- coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans,
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies
- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are reviewed and updated annually, including all associated policies
- liaises with the school Principal to inform them of concerns and ongoing enquiries

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs):

The DDSLs are trained to the same level as the DSL and, in the absence of the DSL, carry out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the

deputy will assume all of the functions above.

All staff

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn and should:

- **read and sign** that they have read the named suite of safeguarding policies, including Part 1 of KCSIE as a minimum.
- ensure they are **familiar with the systems** within the school which support safeguarding
- **attend** all annual training and updates.
- be aware of the **indicators of abuse and neglect** so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.
- should maintain a belief that "it could happen here" and if staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they must act on them immediately.
- be able to **reassure victims** that they are taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be made to feel they are creating a problem by reporting abuse or be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- be aware of and understand their role within the school's system of early help by flagging the child through the iSams **Wellbeing Manager**; a system intended to support early identification and support to avoid escalation of worries and needs to become a Safeguarding concern.

Any child may benefit from early help, but all staff should be particularly alert to the potential early help for children who:

- has disabilities, special educational needs or long term physical health issues
- has mild or emerging mental health difficulties
- is being bullied or is bullying others
- is at risk of exploitation or radicalisation
- shows signs of being drawn into antisocial or criminal activity, including gang involvement
- faces challenges at home, such as difficult relationships, domestic abuse, parental alcohol or drug misuse, parental or sibling mental or physical health problems
- is a young carer
- is a young parent
- is misusing alcohol or drugs themselves

3.0 Safer Recruitment

Our school complies with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2024) by carrying out the required checks and verifying the applicant's identity, qualifications and work history.

- At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended

safer recruitment training.
- The school obtains written confirmation from supply agencies or third party organisations that agency staff or other individuals who may work in the school have been appropriately checked.
- Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained.
- The school will maintain a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

Volunteers

Volunteers are not normally allowed to work inside Spanish schools, however, where there is an exception they will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school, their contact with pupils and the supervision provided to them. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised.

Contractors

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests child protection checks with barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised during the school day.

Site Security

Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations and are given a leaflet of information outlining these..

During school events where large numbers of families are invited to attend, stickers are given to identify that they are allowed on site.

Extended School and Off-Site Arrangements

All extended and off site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site on behalf of our school we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities,we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

Staff/Pupil Online Relationships

The school has a staff/student email system which is safely monitored and enables students and parents to contact staff at any time, should they need to do so. No staff should undertake communications via social media. Any social media messaging service, for example WhatsApp communications, must never be set up between individual pupils and staff. All electronic communication must be by Laude email.

4.0 Induction and Training

It is important that all staff receive training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to know what to do if they have a concern.

New staff will receive training during their induction, which includes the school's child protection policy and staff behaviour policy, reporting and recording arrangements, and details for the DSL.

All staff, including the DSL and School Principal (unless the Principal is the DSL) will receive training that is regularly updated annually as a minimum. Where need is identified, staff will also receive safeguarding and child protection updates via email, e-bulletins, website access and staff meetings throughout the year.

5.0 Recognising concerns - signs and indicators of abuse

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse to ensure that our pupils are protected from harm. This includes

- understanding what **types of behaviour** constitute abuse
- children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of the home, and online.
- exercise **professional curiosity** and know what to look for is vital for the **early identification of abuse and neglect** so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.
- being aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding issues are **rarely standalone events** and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.
- being aware that **technology** is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases, abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline.
- knowing that **children can also abuse other children online**; this can take the form of abusive, harassing and misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent pornograpy to those who do not want to receive such content.

In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL or DDSLs.

Indicators of abuse and neglect

- **abuse and neglect** are forms of maltreatment
- somebody may abuse or neglect a child by **inflicting harm**, for example by hitting them, or by **failing to act to prevent harm**, for example by leaving a small child home alone.

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- harm can include ill treatment that is **not physical** as well as the impact of **witnessing ill treatment** of others.
- abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.
- abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.
- children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2023) refers to four categories of abuse. These are set out at Appendix One on pages 23 - 24 of this policy, along with indicators of abuse.

6.0 Specific safeguarding issues

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence, radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk. Other safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of include:

Child-on-child abuse

All staff should be aware that:

- **children can abuse other children**, and that it can happen both **inside** and **outside** of school and **online**. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.
- even if there are no reports in school, it does not mean it is not happening; it may be the case that it is just not being reported
- if staff have any **early indicators** regarding suspected child-on-child abuse, they play a role in preventing and responding, and this should be raised through the **iSams Wellbeing Manager** where the school's **anti-bullying procedure**s are implemented where necessary.
- there will be occasions when a pupil's behaviour warrants a response under **child protection** rather than anti-bullying and therefore the concern is immediately shared through **My Concern.**
- the importance of **challenging inappropriate behaviours** between children, many of which are listed below, that are abusive in nature is vital
- **avoid downplaying** certain behaviours, for example, dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, and unsafe environment for children, and in worst case scenarios, a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Child-on-child abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- **Bullying** - including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory

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bullying

- **physical abuse** such as biting, hitting, kicking or hair pulling,
- **sexually harmful behaviour/sexual abuse** such as inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault;
- **sexual harrassment** such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- **sexual violence**,such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- **upskirting**,which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
- **sexting,** including pressuring another person to send a sexual imagery or video content;
- **teenage relationship abuse** - defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, perpetrated against a current or former partner;
- **initiation/hazing** - used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as sports team or school groups by subjecting them to a series of potentially humiliating, embarrassing or abusing trials which promote a bond between them;
- **prejudiced behaviour** - a range of behaviours which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless or excluded and which relates to prejudices around belonging, identity and equality, in particular prejudices linked to disabilities, special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender and sexual identity.

At our school, we take the following steps to minimise or prevent the risk of peer on peer abuse.

- an **open and honest environment** where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them.
- assemblies should be used to provide a moral framework outlining acceptable behaviour and stressing the effects of bullying.
- staff will endeavour always to create surroundings where everyone feels confident and at ease in school.
- qe will ensure that the school is well supervised, especially in areas where children might be vulnerable.
- PSHE lessons should be used to reinforce the whole school approach to be fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate, and will tackle (in age-appropriate stages) issues such as:
    - Healthy and respectful relationships
    - Boundaries and consent
    - Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
    - Body confidence and self-esteem
    - How to recognise an abusive relationship; including coercive and controlling behaviour, grooming, coercion, harrasment, rape, domestic abuse, so called honour-based violence and how to access support
    - What constitutes sexual harrasment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.

The school's PSHE curriculum is currently being reviewed to ensure these opportunities are included and addressed.

It is important that the support required for the pupil who has been harmed is put into place, and will depend on their circumstance and the nature of the abuse. Support could include counselling, mentoring, the support of family and friends and/or support with improving peer relationships or some restorative justice work.

Support may also be required for the pupil that was the perpetrator. We will seek to understand why the pupil acted in this way and consider what support may be required to help the pupil and/or change behaviours. Once those needs have been met, the consequences for the harm caused or intended will be addressed.

Sexting

There is no accepted definition of 'sexting' but most professionals agree that it refers to the sending or posting of sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs of a person under 18 years of age, via mobiles or over the internet. This is referred to as 'youth produced sexual imagery'.

All incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery will be responded to as follows:

- The incident will be referred to the DSL immediately and the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. If appropriate, there will be subsequent interviews with the young people involved.
- Parents will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm.
- At any point in the process, if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately in accordance with this policy.

In some instances, it may be necessary to refer the matter to the police. Once a report is made to the police, the report must be recorded and the police will investigate. This may include seizure of devices and interviews with the young people involved.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual exploitation involves an individual or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of an individual or groups of children or young people, and victims can be boys or girls; this may involve:

- **physical contact**, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex), or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside the clothes.
- may include **non-contact activities**, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually

inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse, including via the internet
- can **occur over time or be a one-off occurrence**, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs and alcohol, and sometimes accommodation. Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to child trafficking. A common feature of sexual exploitation is that the child often doesn't recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and doesn't see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

The school is currently reviewing the PSHE curriculum to ensure that it includes the risks of sexual exploitation.. All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.

Domestic abuse and Honour-Based Violence

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or pattern of incidents. The abuse can be, but is not limited to:

- psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional.
- children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long term impact on their health, wellbeing, development and ability to learn.

'Honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of HBV are abuse.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. The practice can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth.

FGM is

- **carried out on girls of any age**, from young babies to older teenagers and adult women

- many such procedures are **carried out abroad** and staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupils about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period.

Forced and Arranged marriages

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is coerced into it. Coercion may include

- physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.
- may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse.
- forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage
- an arranged marriage, which is common in several cultures, where the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.
- children may be married at a very young age, and well below the age of consent.
- school staff receive training and should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a pupil about being taken abroad and not be allowed to return

Radicalisation and Extremism

Extremism is defined as **vocal or active opposition** to fundamental western values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised:

- adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous
- Islamic extremism is the most widely publicised form and schools should also remain alert to the risk of radicalisation into white supremacy extremism
- staff will receive training to help to identify signs of extremism.
- opportunities will be provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture

Private Fostering Arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16, or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's social services.

When a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement, they will raise this with the DSL and the school should notify the local authority of the circumstances.

Mental Health

All staff should be aware that mental health difficulties can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only **appropriately trained professionals** should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health concern. Teachers, however, are well placed to **observe** children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health difficulty or be at risk of developing one.

The school will **record and monitor** the details of students who say they are experiencing or who display signs of mental health.

If a student discloses a mental health concern or if a member of staff notices any possible mental health issues in a student they must report the concern through My Concern and submit this to the DSL.

The DSL will seek guidance as to the specific nature of the concern. This may include the pupil, parents/family, Student Support Team, Social Services and other outside agencies.

7.0 Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including **prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance** on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur. To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs,
- young carers,
- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs,
- asylum seekers,
- living away from home,
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying,
- living in temporary accommodation,
- live transient lifestyles,
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations,
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality,
- at risk of sexual exploitation,
- do not have English and/or Spanish as a first language,
- at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM),
- at risk of forced marriage,
- at risk of being drawn into extremism.

This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive. Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats for children with communication needs.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children, which can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Staff are trained to manage these additional barriers to ensure this group of children are appropriately safeguarded.

Children Missing From Education

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The DSL will monitor unauthorised absences and take appropriate action   including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated   occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day. Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

Spanish law states that concerns for absenteeism are identified if a Primary child misses 5 days of school in one month, or a Secondary child misses 25 lessons in one month.

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8.0 Online safety and filtering and monitoring.

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The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues named in previous sections of this policy. A whole school approach to online safety is currently being implemented in terms of curriculum content and application within other relevant policies.

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The school's approach to online safety to protect and educate pupils and staff to their use of technology, includes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns as appropriate.

Online safety issues can be categorised into four main areas of risk:

- **Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self.harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, or radicalisation or extremism
- **Contact:** being exposed to harmful online interaction with other users, for example, peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising, and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
- **Conduct:** online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (eg consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images, and online bullying)
- **Commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams. If staff feel that either they or pupils are at risk this should be reported immediately.

In addition to the review of the E-Safety policy and curriculum, the school implements a **filtering and monitoring** system called Smoothwall. Every device used within the school is set up with this which:

- **Assesses and permits** web pages at the point of request. Inappropriate or harmful content is blocked the second it goes live. Students are protected at all times.
- **Notifies of incidents** across 7 category rule sets, enabling prompt attention. Enables reporting on search behaviours by individual or groups to support incident investigations and education.
- **Provides filtering** across public Wi-Fi and guest mobile devices securely on the network and across all platforms. Meaning students' own devices are fully filtered too.
- **Detects harmful or malicious content** that is hidden, including behind Secure Socket Layer (SSL) and secure anonymous proxies.

9.0 Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures

Safeguarding describes how we keep all children safe all of the time, whilst Child Protection describes what we do for children affected or who are likely to be at risk of significant harm.

Wellbeing safeguarding concerns and early intervention

When a staff member has an early wellbeing concern about, or receives a wellbeing concern about a child, this should be flagged through the **Wellbeing Manager** for early intervention and pastoral support. This is led predominantly by the Key Stage Leaders and Pastoral Team. Actions are created within the Wellbeing Manager to ensure a chronology is kept of everything done in the early stages to support the child and prevent escalation.

Situations flagged within the Wellbeing Manager may include but are not limited to:

- Early **attendance/punctuality** concerns

- Suspected **bullying** or social conflict
- Suspected **wellbeing concerns** socially or emotionally
- Low-level **poor relationships** with peers
- Regular **non-participation** in PE
- Ongoing **health concerns** without further information
- Behaviour
- Early concerns about home/family life

If a child is at risk, this should immediately go through My Concern.

The Assistant Head of Safety and Wellbeing monitors all Wellbeing concerns to ensure appropriate and timely actions are taken.

Child Protection

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk. The pupil's **behaviour** may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal **confusion or distress**, or **physical signs** may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the pupil the opportunity to talk and ask if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Staff should report a concern **immediately** through the platform My Concern to record these concerns and inform the DSL. If the pupil does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below in "Taking action".

Taking action

Any child, in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here". Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- Report your concern as soon as possible through **My Concern** to the DSL, definitely by the end of the day.
- Do not start your own investigation or discuss with the family
- Share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family.
- Seek support for yourself if you are distressed.
- In an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, if necessary call 112.

If a Pupil Discloses to You

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will, at the appropriate time, let the pupil know that in order to help them they must pass the information on to the DSL**. The point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement. During their conversations with the pupil staff will:

- allow them to speak freely,
- remain calm and not overreact,
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me',
- Do not criticise the perpetrator
- not be afraid of silences,
- **under no circumstances** ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings, or what does the pupil's parent think about it, Use the word **TED** to frame questions - **T**ell me, **E**xplain to me, **D**escribe…
- at an appropriate time, tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on and explain to whom and why,
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort,
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about this when it started' may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong,
- tell the pupil what will happen next,
- complete the **"Report a Concern"** form through the platform My Concern, which notifies the DSL immediately. DO NOT go home or wait until the end of the day to complete the report - You could be sending a child home to a dangerous situation,
- seek immediate support if they feel distressed.

A concern raised through My Concern sends an immediate alert to the DSL who will assess the concern, taking into account any other safeguarding information known about the child/young person. This will determine whether it suggests that the threshold of significant harm, or risk of significant harm, has been reached or may be a child in need. If the DSL is under whether the threshold has been met, it will be taken straight to the school Principal.

Where the DSL believes that a child or young person may be at imminent and significant risk of harm, the ISP Safeguarding team will be immediately informed and urgent actions agreed.

Where a safeguarding concern does not meet the threshold of imminent significant harm, the DSL should record how this decision has been reached within the chronology of the My Concern case, and should consider whether additional needs of the child have been identified that might be met by early Pastoral Help.

School staff might be required to contribute to multi-agency plans to provide additional support to children. The school is committed to providing as much relevant up-to-date information about the child as possible, including submitting reports for child protection cases.
Where reasonably possible, the school is committed to obtaining more than one emergency contact number for each pupil.

All staff must ensure they are aware of the procedures to follow when a child goes missing from education as stated within the attendance and punctuality

policy.

Notifying Parents

Where a wellbeing early help concern has been shared through the Wellbeing Manager, the school will normally seek to discuss the concern with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and in liaison with the Key Stage Leaders.

Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil, and depending upon the nature of the Child Protection concern logged through My Concern, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents are contacted.

10.0 Information sharing, record keeping and confidentiality

Information sharing is vital in safeguarding children by identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including in relation to their educational outcomes. As a school, we have the power to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

As part of meeting a child's needs, we understand:

- It is critical to recognise the importance of information sharing between professionals and local agencies,
- We will contribute to **multi-agency working** in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- that the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm.
- Whilst the Data Protection Act places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, and to keep the information they hold safe and secure, it is **not a barrier** to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm.
- Human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private family life, would **not prevent sharing** where there are real safeguarding concerns.
- Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the DSL.
- that child protection issues warrant a **high level of confidentiality,** not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.
- concerns should **only be discussed with the DSL,** headteacher/principal depending on who is the subject of the concern. That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

However, *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)* emphasises that **any** member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with GDPR regulations, although Safeguarding takes precedence over GDPR. Information sharing is guided by the following principles. The information is:

- necessary and proportionate,
- relevant,
- adequate,
- accurate,
- timely,
- secure.

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.

- Records of concern are **stored within a secure platform** called My Concern and any **electronic information will be password protected** and only made available to relevant individuals.
- Safeguarding concerns are **stored separately** from a child's main file of information and cannot be accessed unless part of the concern case.
- consent from the pupil and/or parents is **normally requested** by the DSL to share sensitive information within the school or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may **share information** *without* **consent**, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.
- Child protection records are normally **exempt from the disclosure provisions** of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them.
- If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see child protection records, they will **refer the request to the Principal**.
- The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

Referral to Children's Social Care

The DSL will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

11.0 Managing allegations against members of staff

All staff are expected to follow the school's code of conduct. Good practice includes:

- treating all pupils with **respect,**
- setting a good example by **conducting ourselves appropriately**,
- **involving pupils** in decisions that affect them,
- encouraging **positive, respectful and safe** behaviour among pupils,
- being a **good listener**,
- being **alert to changes** in pupils' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation,
- recognising that **challenging behaviour may be an indicator** of abuse,
- reading and understanding the school's **child protection policy**, staff behaviour policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues,
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse,
- **referring all concerns** about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary directly to police or children's social care.

Abuse of Position of Trust

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behavior towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach.

An allegation that may meet the harm threshold is any information which indicates that a member of staff/volunteer may have:

- Behaved in a way that has **harmed a child**, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he/she may **pose a risk of harm** to children
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may **not be suitable** to work with children

This applies to any child the member of staff, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor has contact with in their personal, professional or community life. It also applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place out of school.

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold will be dealt with in accordance with the school's policy - see Staff Code of Conduct.

Staff understand that it is not acceptable to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity/incident/communication between a member of the school staff and a student (under 18 or indeed, for reasons of clarity, students over 18 in Year 13 or Bach 2 in our care) will be treated as a serious disciplinary incident and may be a criminal offence.

12.0 Whistle blowing

The school recognises that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should feel able to raise concerns about **poor or unsafe practice and potential failures** in the school's safeguarding

regime, and know that such concerns will be **taken seriously** by the Senior Leadership Team. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school's whistleblowing code enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the **school Principal** using the paper self report system Complaints about the headteacher/principal should be reported to the nominated ISP child protection person who is Miguel Angel Garran Barea.

Contact details: email: mgarran@ispschools.com

Allegations Against Staff

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, our set procedures must be followed. The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2024)* and in the school's Whistleblowing policy and procedures.

Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the school, or historical allegations will be reported to the police.

Self reporting

If a staff member finds themselves in an **uncomfortable situation**, or has done something which is clearly **against the safeguarding protocols** and procedures of the school, they should **self-report** using the paper form linked here, and give this directly to the school Principal.

13.0 Use of school premises for non-school activities

The school will ensure that where school facilities are hired or rented out to organisations or individuals, appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

The school will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures in place, including inspecting those as needed.

These arrangements will apply regardless of whether or not the children who attend any of these services or activities are children on the school roll.

Where a lease or hire agreement is entered into, the school will ensure that safeguarding requirements are included as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; this will make clear that any failure to comply would lead to termination of the agreement.

14.0 Useful contacts and links

ANAR helpline - child and teenage support phoneline/chat
https://www.anar.org/en/que-hacemos/telefono-chat-anar/

Suicide helpline - call 024

Junta de Andalucia - information and phone numbers related to the maltreatment and abuse of children
https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/temas/familias-igualdad/infancia/maltrato.html

Violencia de Género - gender and/or domestic violence to any person
https://violenciagenero.igualdad.gob.es/informacion-3/recursos/telefono016/

Instituto Andaluz de la Mujer - help for women and legal advice
https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/institutodelamujer/index.php/inicio

Policy Tracker

Date Created	Author	Revision due date
29 September 2018	A Hughes	September 2019
Review Date	Reviewer	
21 August 2019	A Hughes	August 2020
23 August 2020	A Hughes	August 2021
16 August 2021	A Hughes	August 2022
September 2022	A Atkinson	August 2023
August 2023	N.de Comarmond	August 2024
September 2024	N.de Comarmond	August 2025

Four categories of abuse

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:
- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Indicators of abuse

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been adequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons, it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead.

It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused, neglected or exploited may:

● have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
● show signs of pain or discomfort
● keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
● be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
● look unkempt and uncared for
● change their eating habits
● have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
● appear fearful
● be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
● self-harm
● frequently miss school, arrive late or leave the school for part of the day
● show signs of not wanting to go home
● display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
● challenge authority
● become disinterested in their school work
● be constantly tired or preoccupied
● be wary of physical contact
● be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
● display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age
● acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends'.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed.