



Child Protection and Safety Policy

1. Introduction

The School's core child protection policies are:

- It is the School's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare and safety of every student admitted in the School
- The School believes that, the children who feel safe make more progress in all areas of growth
- Promoters, Directors, Advisors and Selected staff members have prepared this document.
- Policies will be reviewed annually, unless an incident or a new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an earlier date of review.

2. Principles

- The school will ensure that the welfare of children is given paramount consideration when developing and delivering school activities.
- All children, regardless of their 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 suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm in accordance with this guidance
- All pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support from the Management Team of the school.

3. Aims

- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their statutory responsibilities to promote and safeguard the well-being of all children
- To ensure consistent good practices across the school
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding children

4. Roles and Responsibilities of Child Protection Unit

The main goal of the Child Protection unit is to protect children from abuse at school. The School is responsible for keeping them safe from harm and abuse. The Child Protection Unit has been created for the children to have a safe learning environment, to identify pupils who are suffering or at risk of harm and to take suitable action by establishing Child Protection Unit. The Child Protection Unit will initiate necessary intervention only after a referral has been made by the Child/a member of the SIS Faculty/ Parent/Guardian/any other individual concerned about the welfare of the child.

The Child Protection Unit (CPU) consists of **Child Protection Officer (CPO)**. The School nominates two senior members of staff as **Child Protection Officer (CPO)** to safeguard the interests of children, listens to their concern and provides them with necessary protection. CPU consists of one male and one female staff.

The school ensures that the Child Protection Officer (CPO):

1. is appropriately trained
2. acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
3. has an understanding of the Anti-Bullying Protocol
4. keeps written records of all concerns when noted and reported by staff or when disclosed by a child, ensuring that such records are stored securely and reported onward in accordance with this policy guidance, but kept separately from the child's general file
5. refers cases of suspected neglect and/or abuse to Director and if required to appropriate law agency, in accordance with this guidance and local procedure
6. attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences in accordance with local procedure and guidance
7. Coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans
8. develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies
9. ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood this policy
10. ensures that the child protection policy is updated annually
11. liaises with the Director as and when required
12. makes this policy available to parents.
13. analyses the risk assessment submitted by HODs of different activities, sports within or off campus.

Term of the Officer holding the Office

Recommended term for the individual officer to hold the office is for the period of two years and to be reviewed by the Principal.

He/She shall not be relieved from their office at the same time or period. The School take necessary action in advance to train and keep a person ready to take over the office in case any one of the officers is relieved from the responsibility due to different reasons and situations.

Senior Leadership Team

1. Recognising abuse / Bullying
2. Analysing Indicators of abuse and its impact in coordination with Child Protection Unit (CPU)
3. Taking action as per School guidelines in case if the child is at risk / if a child discloses abuse
4. Notifying parents
5. Maintain Confidentiality and information-sharing

5. Good Practice Guidelines

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards children, the school community agrees to the following standards of good practice;

- 5.1 treating all children with respect
- 5.2 setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- 5.3 involving children in decision-making which affects them
- 5.4 encouraging positive and safe behaviour among children
- 5.5 being a good listener
- 5.6 being alert to changes in child's behaviour

- 5.7 recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- 5.8 reading and understanding all of the school's safeguarding and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, physical contact, e-safety plans and information-sharing
- 5.9 asking the child's permission before doing anything for them which is of a physical nature, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid
- 5.10 maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between children and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- 5.11 being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some children lead to an increased risk of neglect and or abuse.
- 5.12 Conducting life skill training program

6. Children who may be particularly vulnerable

To ensure that all of our children receive equal protection, the School gives special consideration and attention to children who:

- 6.1 have special educational needs
- 6.2 come from a known domestic abuse situation
- 6.3 are affected by known parental substance misuse
- 6.4 are vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- 6.5 do not have English as a first language

Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information, resources and support services in community languages and accessible formats. Where needed, a translator can be arranged if parents / children are uncomfortable with the Anti-bullying document and its language.

7. Support for the children involved in a Child Protection Issues

Child neglect and abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. The School will support the children and their families and staff by:

- 7.1 taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- 7.2 nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact. Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a child, a separate link person will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest.
- 7.3 responding sympathetically to any request from a child or member of staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- 7.4 maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- 7.5 storing records securely
- 7.6 offering details of help lines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- 7.7 following the procedures laid down in our whistle blowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- 7.8 cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

8. Complaints Procedure in respect of poor practice behaviour

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a child or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a child that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a child, using sarcasm or humiliation as a form of control, bullying or belittling a child or discriminating against them in some way.

Complaints are managed by Child Protection Unit, keeping the respective CILs and the Principal informed.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

Any student bullying or belittling a child or discriminating against them in some way, appropriate measures to be taken as per Anti Bullying Protocol.

Routing of feedback / complaint about a specific case of physical bullying, in case if there is an injury of a severe nature, the following actions will be taken.

- 8.1 **Immediate action:** This must be immediately brought to the attention of the School counsellor, Principal, CPO and necessary action to be taken and the bully is warned or given serious punishment as per the protocol.
- 8.2 **Confidentiality:** The person who gives feedback or the affected person and their issues to be kept confidential. The information will be shared with right people in consultation with the, CILs, Principal and the CPO.
- 8.3 **Medical Attention:** In case of emergency, irrespective of visible or non- visible injury, it is mandatory that the affected person is transported to School infirmary and at the same time telephonically or any other means, the RMO should be updated. The RMO is the authorised person to communicate with the parents about the medical condition of the affected person.
- 8.4 **Transparency:** The School maintains a record of facts and figures with respect to the incident / accident. The RMO collects history of the case and files it accordingly. At the same time, the Life Skill Counsellor records the statement given by the witness (es), bully / bullies, victim (s) and shares it with the RMO as well as Headmaster. The RMO decides on further medical intervention and referral system. The School to appoint external consultants from various medical back ground such as referral Hospitals or clinics both for mental and physical ailments. For mental ailments, the School counsellor takes the call.
- 8.5 **Mandatory Reporting:** Any life-threatening incident (all-inclusive) which occurs on the campus demands **preliminary information** to the local police station. Ref: Anti- Bullying Protocol; sub heading 11, xix.
- 8.6 **Time frame for action:** Irrespective of seriousness or degree of physical or mental incident demands immediate investigation by the staff or personnel appointed by the Headmaster for that purpose. The necessary follow up or enquiry will be done by the need-based committees or the Senior Management Team (SMT).

9. Concerns about a Colleague

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a child are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. All concerns of poor practice or concerns about a child's welfare brought about by the behaviour of colleagues or any teacher staff who has witnessed such behaviour should be reported to the Principal directly or through the CIL and CPU.

10. Staff who are the subject of an Allegation

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events can and do happen. A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, the School must accept that some adults do pose a serious risk to children's welfare and safety and we must act on every allegation made. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.

Allegations against staff can be reported to the Principal by any staff member. However, for the administrative purpose and smooth processing, the staff members are advised to follow staff - line relationship before taking the matter on their own directly to the office of Principal.

11. Staff Training

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern. New staff will receive training during their induction. All new staff to get orientation from the CPU in the first ten days of induction time.

12. Taking Action

Key points to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call Mentors, Teachers, and the Principal.
- report your concern to the CPO
- if the CPO or Assistant is not around, ensure the information is shared with the most senior person in the school that day and ensure action is taken to report the concern to children's social care
- do not start your own investigation

- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

13. If any Staff Members suspect a child is at risk of harm

There will be occasions when the staff suspects that a child may be at serious risk, but staff does not have 'real' evidence. The child's behaviour may have changed; their artwork could be bizarre or you may have noticed other physical but inconclusive signs. In these circumstances, the staff should try to give the child the opportunity to talk. The signs noticed may be due to a variety of factors and it is fine to ask the child if they are alright or if you can help in any way.

14. If a Child discloses information to the Staff

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being neglected and or abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual, their abuser may have threatened with consequences if they disclose, they may have lost all trust in adults, or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault.

If a child talks to you about any risks to their safety or well-being you will need to let them know that you must pass the information on – you are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which you do this is a matter for professional judgement. If you jump in immediately the child may think that you do not want to listen, if you leave it till the very end of the conversation, the child may feel that you have misled them into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

15. During your conversation with the Child:

- Allow them to speak freely.
- Remain calm and do not over react – the child may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting you.
- 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 be afraid of silences – remember how hard this must be for the child.
- Under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the child’s mother think about all this.
- At an appropriate time tell the child that in order to help them you must pass the information on.
- Do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused.
- Avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ may be your way of being supportive but the child may interpret it that they have done something wrong.
- Tell the child what will happen next. The child may agree to go with you to see the designated person. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.
- Report verbally to the designated person.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible on the record of concern form and hand it to the designated person.
- Seek support if you feel distressed.

16. Notifying Parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a child with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the CPO will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure after consulting the Principal/Director.

17. Referral to Children’s Social Care

The CPU will make a referral to necessary professionals, if it is believed that a child is suffering, or inflicting a self-significant harm or is at risk of suffering significant harm. In special situations, the referrals will be made by RMO or Life-skill counsellor or in consultation with them; whichever may be appropriate for that situation. The child (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.

18. Children with sexually harmful behaviour

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the School's Anti-Bullying procedures where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a child's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures. In particular, research suggests that up to 30 per cent of child sexual abuse is committed by someone under the age of 18.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the school will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator.

- 18.1 **Immediate action:** The School counsellor should be kept informed of the sexual abuse. It is the responsibility of the School counsellor to listen to the abuser and the victim and refer to the RMO in case of any injury due to sexual abuse. The School takes responsibility of keeping the parents informed about the abuse. It is the duty of the Life Skill Counsellor to report to the Principal depending on the nature and seriousness of the case. If the student discloses that sexual abuse took place outside the School campus or in the home environment, to have fair

intervention, the School counsellor should involve two more responsible staff members such as the Principal or CPU. It is important to note that, in case, if parents / guardian or any other family members are involved in sexual abuse / involvement in, the School to decide and take necessary action to protect the child.

- 18.2 For confidentiality refer rule No. 19

- 18.3 **Medical Attention:** In case of abuse, the child must be sent to the infirmary. The RMO will conduct necessary physical evaluation of the child and report to the Headmaster and the parents. If needed further referral can be done for advanced medical intervention.

- 18.4. **Mandatory Intimation to Police:** Ref 8.5, 10 & 20.

19. Confidentiality and Sharing Information

All staff, will understand, that child protection issues, warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the child and staff involved, but also to ensure that being released into the public domain does not compromise any evidence whatsoever.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated person, CPO, and the 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.

20. Reporting directly to Child Protection Agencies

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with, Law agency if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, the Principal or any other person authorised by the Director.

- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the child's safety.
- Physical intervention and the use of unreasonable force by outsiders
- Missing children
- Infiltration and terror attack
- Animal invasion
- Natural disaster
- Accidents due to military/ air force exercises
- Physical bullying of serious nature

21. Recruitment of New Staff

The School to ensure that the selection policy of the School is followed and the **back-ground check** has been done and cleared for recruitment.

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and identification of their own safeguarding and child protection training needs. **There will be a mandatory psychometric assessment**

of new recruits will be done by qualified clinical psychologist. The confirmation of the staff is subject to positive Psychological evaluation report. The School appointed Psychologist will be conducting the test. All staff will have to sign to confirm that they have received a copy of the Child Protection Policy and Anti- Bullying Policy along with other policies and records given to them

22. Rules on Photography, Videography and Images

The School discourages people from taking photographs or videos of children without the consent of the School or the child in the School premises. Most of the times, people take photograph or videos innocently or unknowingly. Sign boards mentioning 'no photographic zone' to be erected in sensitive places like swimming pool, sports complex, MSB, Boarding Houses. It is very unfortunate that, some people abuse children through these by taking or using images.

To protect the students from any kind abuse:

- One should seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, in our website or in newspapers or publications)
- One should seek parental consent
- One should use only the child's first name with an image
- One should ensure that children are appropriately dressed
- The School encourage children to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

23. Off - Campus Arrangements

The School make sure that it follows strict child safeguarding and protection strategies. In any case, other organisations provide services or activities within the campus or off campus, the Lead Resource Person (LRP) gets clearance from the Child Protection Unit to re - establish whether all child safeguarding and protection procedures are in place or not. All off-campus activities to be audited by the CPU and the LRP to get clearance by submitting the Child Protection clearance check list. Ref: Annexure V

24. Child protection Initiatives and Strategies

The School recognises that there are four types of possible abuse the student can face such as, physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. The School will take appropriate action against the staff members found and proved guilty of any of the above-mentioned types of abuse.

Security check at the main gate:

- 24.01. Each visitor shall have a photo identity as entry gate pass and authorised approval to enter the premises .
- 24.02. Every vehicle registration need to be recorded in the entry pass (type of vehicle, number or materials transported)
- 24.03. Students going on out door trip to be administered out pass system. The photograph of Children going out should be taken and kept in the security gate for easy location and identification.
- 24.04. SSC should ensure that Children and staff are safe from all risk.
- 24.05. Publishing necessary safety methods and update School community.
- 24.06. Organising School safety meetings on regular basis.
- 24.07. Provision of CCTV in every part of the school except places of privacy.

25. Vandalism of the School Property: Resulting in adverse effect of the pupils, parents and the staff will be dealt legally.

26. Duties and responsibilities of School Captain and House Captain along with prefects.

- 26.01. Maintains good personal conduct and behaviour in the School as well as in the House
- 26.02. Maintains full control and good discipline in all School related activities and in the House with the help of house captains and prefects
- 26.03. Ensures proper discipline in every aspect of School life