



# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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## SECTION A

### 1. Aims

The aims of this policy are prevention, protection and support to ensure our students are safe from:

- maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual abuse
- accidental injury and death
- factors that impair their mental and physical health or development
- discrimination and bullying in the School and the community
- becoming victims of crime and or involved in anti-social behaviour and criminal activity.

In doing so we will create a culture of vigilance so that any concerns are identified, helped and managed swiftly so students achieve the best outcomes.

### 2. Legislation and guidance/policies and procedures

This policy draws upon duties conferred by the following legislation and advice, and is applicable to all on and off-site activities undertaken by students whilst they are the responsibility of the School:

- UK Department for Education (DfE) Statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022](#) (or any in-year updates) - KCSiE
- UK DfE Statutory guidance [Working together to Safeguard Children July 2018](#)
- [Brook's Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool](#)
- The Children's Plan, [Building Bright Futures](#) - Summary 2007
- [Child Law in the Sultanate of Oman](#), issued by Royal Decree No. 22/2014
- UK Children Act 1989
- UK Children Act 2004
- UK Children and Families Act 2014
- UK Children's Social Work Act 2017
- UK Children Missing in Education 2015
- UK Data Protection Act 1998
- UK Education Act 2002, 2011
- UK Equality Act 2010
- UK Equality Act 2010: Advice for schools May 2014
- UK Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- UK Freedom of Information Act 2000
- UK [Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who work with Children in Education Settings \(2019\)](#)
- Health and Safety: Advice on legal duties and powers February 2014
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Information sharing 2015
- Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999
- Mandatory Reporting of FGM December 2016
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#) March 2016
- [Multi Agency Practice Guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation](#) – April 2016
- Munro Review of Child Protection 2011
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015

- Protection of Children Act 1978
- Protecting Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Safeguarding disabled children 2009
- Serious crime Act 2005
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- [Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges September 2021](#)
- [UK Council for Internet Safety Sharing nudes and semi-nudes 2021](#)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused Advice for practitioners March 2015](#)
- [When to call the police by the NSPCC](#)

We will ensure all our own staff, other professionals, parents/carers and students work together to know the rules about keeping children safe. They will understand the importance of following procedures and listening to each other, especially when there are concerns about safety.

The School will work hard to reduce the kinds of harm that children can suffer, including abuse, bullying, discrimination and avoidable injuries and death. As part of this process we will seek the views of children and the people who care for them, in order for the School to become a place where all our students are safe and feel valued.

All staff **MUST** be aware of systems within our school which support safeguarding, including the contextual risks in Oman in particular. **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students is everyone's responsibility.** Staff must also have regard to additional policies:

- the behaviour policy
- the child on child abuse policy
- the staff code of conduct
- the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education and
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead, including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies (DSL and DDSL).

The following policies and procedures have also been put in place and will be implemented as part of our commitment to safeguarding students and staff at the School. These will be reviewed by the staff and School Board on an annual basis and considering any new legislation or incidents occurring at the School:

- Medical Needs and Medicines Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Student Restraint (Safe handling)
- Hire of School Premises Policy
- Anti-Bullying
- Drugs and alcohol misuse
- Acceptable use of ICT and E- Safety
- Health & Safety
- Educational Visits
- Recruitment and Selection
- Attendance and Register Protocol
- Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism
- Child on Child Abuse

- Self-harm

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities of the DSL and Staff**

Knowledge Gate International School promotes the fact that safeguarding of students is part of the professional responsibility of every member of staff and every person involved in the School community.

All adults working in the School (including visiting staff, volunteers and students on placement) are required to report instances of actual or suspected safeguarding concerns to a Designated Person with responsibility for safeguarding.

During term time the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or a deputy, will be available (during School hours) for staff in the School to discuss any safeguarding concerns. In normal circumstances, a member of the team will be available in person. Furthermore, the DSL will arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

The School has clear arrangements for listening to children and providing early help. The School also has clear process for children to raise concerns about themselves or their peers. Details of these arrangements are found on the school website, promoted on posters around school and shared with children and staff during assemblies, briefings and training.

#### **The Role of the DSL:**

- Ensure child protection procedures are in place and updated as appropriate in order to refer cases of suspected abuse to the Ministry of Social Development as appropriate
- Ensure all staff are aware of the School policy and procedures
- Be available to provide advice/support to staff and for confidential discussion about concerns
- Be available to provide support to students and parents
- Liaise with the Executive Principal to keep them informed regarding child protection procedures
- Liaise with the Ministry of Social Development, and other relevant staff/groups
- Maintain the single central record of concerns, ensuring records are kept confidentially and accurately
- Be the first point of contact for external agencies that are pursuing Child Protection (CP) investigations
- Co-ordinate arrangements for monitoring of students on roll who have been identified as needing protection/additional vulnerabilities such as students who have special educational needs
- Co-ordinate the School's representation at Child Protection conferences, Network meetings, and the submission of written reports
- Keep a record of children who are the subject of child protection (CP)/child in need (CIN) plans
- Monitor and maintain the up to date list of Looked After Children
- Ensure that any student who currently is the subject of a child protection plan who is absent without explanation for two days, is referred to the Ministry of Social Development

- Record all concerns that may potentially be linked to radicalisation to the Ministry of Education and take appropriate steps in liaison with the Executive Principal
- Record all concerns that may indicate a child is at risk of forced marriage or Female Genital Mutilation and take appropriate steps in liaison with the Executive Principal
- Ensure staff training is provided in relation to the need to protect students from harm which they may be causing to themselves (and which may or may not be a symptom of abuse by a third party). This includes suicidal feelings, self-harm (including harm via the use of alcohol or drugs), inappropriate sexual behaviour, sexting, up-skirting and CME (child missing education)
- Ensure that safeguarding information is readily available e.g. in posters around the School to ensure students and staff know who they can speak to in the event of any concerns
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Royal Oman Police and DBS
- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Royal Oman Police as required

The DSL will be responsible for judging whether any referrals should be reported as a safeguarding issue. Where there is any doubt as to the seriousness of this concern, or disagreement between the DSL and the member of staff reporting the concern, advice will be sought from the Executive Principal, Ministry of Social Development, and the Royal Oman Police. Any staff member can make a referral in exceptional circumstances, such as in emergency or a genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken.

**Referrals should be made to the Ministry of Social Development.**

**An initial call should be made to the Ministry of Social Development on**

**This should then be followed up with a Multi-Agency Referral Written Report.**

The parent/carer will normally need to be contacted to obtain their consent before a referral is made. However if the concern involves, for example, alleged or suspected child sexual abuse, honour based violence, fabricated or induced illness, suspected forced marriage, FGM or the DSL/DDSL has reason to believe that informing the parent at this stage might compromise the safety of the child or a staff member, nothing should be said to the parent/carer ahead of the referral. However, a rationale for the decision to progress without consent should be provided with the referral.

All parents applying for places at this School will be informed of our safeguarding responsibilities and the existence of this policy. In situations where students sustain injury or are otherwise affected by an accident or incident whilst they are the responsibility of the School, parents will be notified of this as soon as possible.

The role of the DSL is also to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The protocol for this is based on the UK Prevent duty under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The DSL should:

- Assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism within the School, including support for extremist ideas with a specific understanding of how to identify an individual child who may be at risk;
- Assess the training needs of staff in light of their assessment of the risk to students at the school being drawn into terrorism;

- Provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- Ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material and liaise with the *Inspired* Regional IT Team so that suitable filtering is in place;
- Help to raise awareness of the importance of online safety within the School to students. The School has separate e-safety policies that include information on filtering and monitoring. The guidance in Annex D of KCSIE 2021 has been used in developing our policies.

### **The Role of Staff:**

Information given in confidence should only be passed to a third party with the agreement of the person disclosing it. School staff cannot, however, offer absolute confidentiality. Where there are safeguarding issues, the staff member should refer the matter to one of the Designated Persons within the School and follow the School's confidentiality procedures. Staff should make clear the level of confidentiality that can be given, before the disclosure is made.

If a student begins to confide any matter involving alleged abuse of any kind to a member of staff, the staff member must follow these guidelines:

- Offer a safe, quiet and confidential space to talk;
- Do not make any promises to the student;
- Stay calm and re-assuring;
- Explain that you cannot promise to keep what they tell you as a secret, in their own interest. You have to inform the DSL;
- Listen to the student rather than directly question them;
- Do not press them for details or ask leading questions;
- Check with the student if they have told anyone else;
- Do not leave the child alone – if you need to refer the matter urgently then arrange for another staff member to sit with the child and the DSL should be alerted immediately via telephone (alert Reception who can find the DSL);
- Inform the Safeguarding team in person, and send a detailed written account within 24 hours as this may be needed as evidence in court (if the matter is urgent then report the issue in person in the first instance, and follow up with a written account) – **never email concerns in the first instance, there must always be a verbal conversation with a member of the Safeguarding Team;**
- Outside of hours staff should contact their Line Manager up to 10pm who will contact the DSL where applicable and the Royal Oman Police for **emergency situations only where a child is in immediate danger** between the hours of 10pm and 6am.
- Reassure the student that they have done the right thing and that their disclosure will be taken seriously.

The key task at this moment is to listen to the student and not interrupt if he or she is freely recalling significant events, and to make a note of all that is said to be passed to the designated member of staff. Staff should also be aware that noted recordings of the discussion may need to be used in any subsequent court proceedings and may be made available to the student's parents/carers at any subsequent conferences.

The welfare of the student is paramount; therefore all situations must be treated with sensitivity. The staff member should not reveal his/her own feelings to the student. Further guidance on Safeguarding conversations with students can be found in the [NSPCC's Let children know you're listening guide](#).



Where there is a safeguarding concern, the School will ensure the student's wishes and feelings are taken into account wherever possible and will work with them (and their families where appropriate) when determining what action to take and what services to provide. This is particularly important in the context of harmful sexual behaviours, such as sexual harassment and violence. The School manages this by one key person working with the student and recording all decisions/conversations on ISAMS to ensure the student is heard and their wishes are followed where feasible. The Sensory Room is designed as a safe haven for children to relax and talk.

Staff should not assume that a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. Staff should challenge any inaction and follow this up with the DSL as appropriate. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing.

#### **4. Staff Training and Induction**

All members of staff who are members of the Safeguarding Team, will complete the designated Level 3 Child Protection Advanced training delivered by Educare in line with the timings outlined in the latest KCSIE.

All staff will receive annual statutory safeguarding training, including online safety, at the start of the academic year or when they start with the School. This training will be led by the DSL. All staff will also be issued with part one of KCSIE (also as and when updated) and they will have to sign that they have read it. Staff will have to complete and pass the mandatory Educare courses in Child Protection and Safeguarding. Staff who do not reach the pass mark will have one-to-one training and re-take the course.

All staff must also read and sign that they have read key policies – this is done at the beginning of each academic year in September.

In addition to this, all teaching and pastoral support staff will receive top up training during briefings once a half term. The Safeguarding CPD programme running throughout the academic year includes a mix of online training and whole staff CPD sessions. The order and topic of delivery is sensitive to any emerging training needs or pressing local issues that need to be addressed.

Any new staff to the School outside of September where there is universal training will have an induction. The induction will specifically include:

- being given a copy of part one of KCSIE which has to be signed as having been read (sent prior to induction)
- given an overview of the leadership and management of safeguarding at the School
- given and taken through the safeguarding policy, with particular regard to contextual safeguarding (sent prior to induction)
- taken through a specific safeguarding training presentation, including online safety
- given any student-specific information for anyone in their classes
- policy sign-off sheet and access to the policies therein (read and signed by end of first two weeks)

## **5. Contextual Safeguarding – the Oman issues**

This is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm outside of their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. In addition to the on-going training of staff and the teaching of students through the Wellbeing Curriculum and PSHE (personal, social and health education) programme, the School will ensure our universal Safeguarding offer addresses the specific contextual issues that our students face. See Appendix 2 for more information.

## **SECTION B**

### **1. Staff Code of Conduct**

All staff (paid and voluntary) are expected to adhere to a code of conduct in respect of their contact with students and their families. All students will be treated with respect and dignity and no punishment, detention, restraint, sanctions or rewards are allowed outside of those detailed in the School's Behaviour and Rewards Policy. Any use of physical restraint/reasonable force must be in line with the Student Restraint (Safe Handling) Policy – a core policy that links with this Safeguarding Policy.

Whilst it would be unrealistic and undesirable to preclude all physical contact between adults and children, staff are expected to exercise caution and avoid placing themselves in a position where their actions might be open to criticism or misinterpretation.

### **Medical Aid and Administration**

Except in cases of emergency, first aid will only be administered by the School Nurse and qualified First Aiders. If it is necessary for the child to remove clothing for first aid treatment, there will, wherever possible, be another adult present. If a child needs help with toileting, nappy changing or washing after soiling themselves, another adult should be present or within earshot. All first aid treatment and non-routine changing, or personal care will be recorded and shared with parents/carers at the earliest opportunity.

Students requiring regular medication or therapies for long-term medical conditions will be made the subject of a Medical Care Plan that has been agreed with the parents/carers and School Nurse.

### **Staff student supervision**

For their own safety and protection, staff should exercise caution in situations where they are alone with students. Other than in formal teaching situations; for example, during musical instrument tuition, the door to the room in which the 1:1 coaching, counselling or meeting is taking place should be left open. Where this is not practicable because of the need for confidentiality, another member of staff will be asked to maintain a presence nearby and a record will be kept of the circumstances of the meeting. All rooms that are used for the teaching and meeting with students will have clear and unobstructed glass panels in the doors, or the door will be open. The only exception is rooms used for counselling to ensure students have privacy. Staff should not let other considerations, such as fear of damaging relationships with adults, get in the way of protecting children from abuse and neglect. If a child is perceived to be in immediate danger, the Royal Oman Police should also be contacted.

School staff should also be alert to the possible risks that might arise from social contact with students outside of the School. Home visits to students or private tuition of students should only take place with the knowledge and approval of the Executive Principal. Visits/telephone calls by students to the homes of staff members should only occur in exceptional circumstances and with the prior knowledge and approval of the Executive Principal. Any unplanned contact of this nature or suspected infatuations or 'crushes' will be reported to the Executive Principal. Staff supervising off-site overnight activities or School journeys will be provided with a School mobile telephone as a

point of contact for parents and carers. For day trips the trip lead will provide a contact number for the school to reach them in case of emergency.

### **Using technology/social networking/mobile phones**

Staff will only use the School's digital technology resources and systems for professional purposes, or for uses deemed 'reasonable' by the Executive Principal and School Board. Staff will only use the approved School email, School Learning Platform or other School approved communication systems with students or parents/carers. Staff will communicate on appropriate School business and will not disclose their personal telephone numbers and email addresses to students or parents/carers. Staff will not use personal cameras (digital or otherwise) or camera phones for taking and transferring images of students or staff without permission and will not store images at home.

Staff are expected to exercise extreme caution in the use of social networking sites, to ensure that personal information is not accessible by students or parents/carers. Parents/carers, students (past or present) must not be accepted as 'friends' and any inadvertent contact must be reported to the Executive Principal, as should any pre-existing relationships with students and their families.

**(Related policies in relation to E-safety and acceptable use of ICT must be read).**

### **Guest (Visiting) Speakers**

Staff must read and follow the guidance in our Prevent Risk Assessment. This is an important policy that links to the Prevent duty as well as ensuring that we offer students a range of balanced albeit culturally appropriate views, for example, in relation to politics.

## **2. Procedures for recording a disclosure/concern**

The DSL is also the first point of contact for disclosures and referrals to the Ministry of Social Development. However, in exceptional circumstances, such as in emergency or a genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken, staff members can speak directly to the Ministry of Social Development. The member of staff who makes this disclosure to the Ministry of Social Development should inform the DSL as soon as is feasibly possible.

If a student begins to confide any matter involving alleged abuse, whether physical, emotional or sexual, to a member of staff, they should follow the following guidelines:

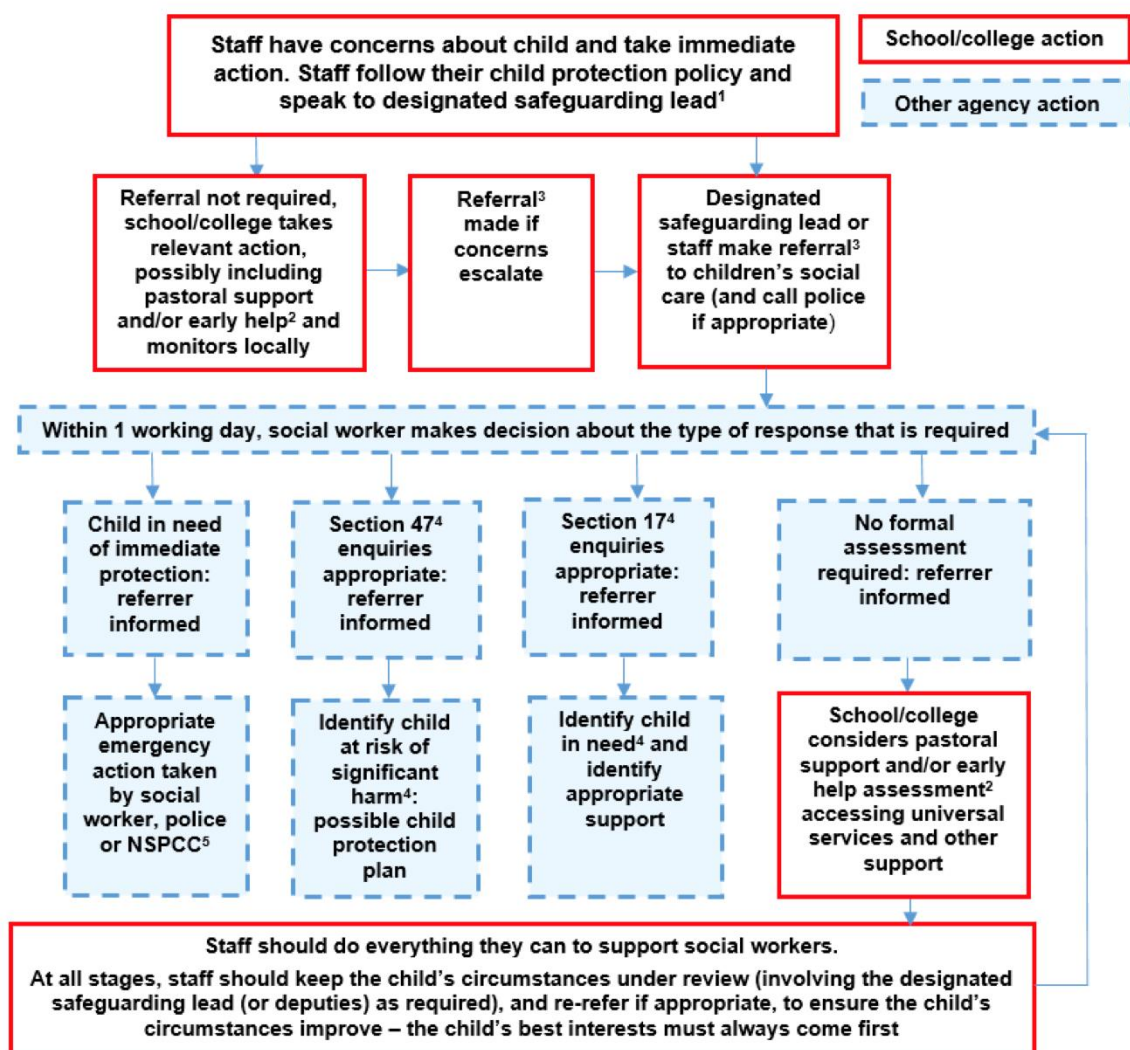
- Stay calm and re-assuring.
- Explain that you cannot promise to keep what they tell you as a secret, in their own interest. You may have to inform the Designated Person.
- Listen to the child rather than directly question them.
- Do not press them for details or ask leading questions.
- Ask the student if they have told anyone else.
- Write a detailed account, in the student's own words, dated, timed and signed.
- Inform the DSL in person immediately if the young person is in danger. Follow up by emailing the disclosure or concern to the DSL within 24 hours and attaching any appropriate paperwork as this may be needed as evidence in court. All emails of this nature should use the title 'CONFIDENTIAL SG'. A follow-up conversation with the DSL is always encouraged.
- Assure the student that they have done the right thing and you know how difficult it is to talk about such experiences.

The key task at this moment is to listen to the student and not interrupt if he or she is freely recalling significant events, and to make a note of all that is said to be passed to the DSL. Staff should also be aware that noted recordings of the discussion may need to be used in any subsequent court proceedings and may be made available to the student's parents.

The welfare of the student is paramount; therefore, all situations must be treated with sensitivity. The teacher should not reveal his/her own feelings to the student. Staff have a professional duty to share confidential information about the protection of children with the Ministry of Social Development via the DSL. Staff should take care not to discuss information given in confidence outside the appropriate professional contexts. The DSL will disclose any information about a student to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

So in summary this flowchart from KCSiE makes it clear what should happen:

### Actions where there are concerns about a child



### 3. Reporting and recording of information and transferring of records

Accurate records are vital. All concerns about, or disclosures regarding, any form of abuse or risk of being abused or concerns for the welfare and safety of a child must be recorded in writing. The record includes:

- the time, date, circumstances and who else was present
- exact details of what the student said, quoting the exact words used.
- any signs of physical injury (without removing additional clothing)
- Any decisions regarding photographic recording of evidence and medical examinations will be left to the experts
- objective accounts, and based on evidence and distinguishing between fact, observation, allegation and opinion

When staff become aware of possible abuse or concerns for the welfare of a child, they must make a full written record as soon as practicably possible. If the staff member has a teaching commitment or the disclosure has come near the end of the day, then the On-Call system via Reception should be used to assist so that the staff member is able to record the necessary information and the DSL can take immediate action. Time must never be wasted in reporting and/or checking.

Continual records will be kept whilst the student's case is active. We expect regular communication from the Ministry of Social Development, and other professionals working with our young people and have procedures in place to follow up if we receive no response. This includes contacting the Ministry of Social Development for manager's details when required and liaising with other services and external support agencies. We expect responses to referrals within one working day if they think a child is in need of protection or within four working days in all other cases. If no information has been received within that time frame, we will take a proactive approach and contact the Ministry of Social Development for an update and will record information on the log. (This does not apply to students at immediate risk, students will remain in the School until dialogue/a way forward has been agreed with the Ministry of Social Development).

Child protection records are not open to students or parents. All child protection records are kept securely by the DSL and separately from educational records. Records are kept electronically on ISAMS and any paper records are kept in a locked cabinet in the DSL's office. Clear and coherent chronologies will be kept. They may only be accessed by the Safeguarding Team and Senior Leaders of the School. If a file is removed from the storage it must be signed for by the person removing and the DSL must be informed. Students' main files will be labelled to indicate there is a separate safeguarding file.

When children transfer from one educational establishment to another, either at normal transfer stage or as the result of a move and records of child protection/welfare concerns exist, these should be sent to the receiving school as soon as possible, preferably within 5 days of confirmation of the student being on roll. This transfer should be arranged separately from the main student file in line with KCSIE (latest guidance). Where relevant, the Ministry of Social Development needs to be made aware of this transfer.

In order to safeguard children effectively, it is important that when a child moves to a new educational establishment, the receiving establishment is immediately made aware of any current child protection concerns, preferably by telephone prior to the transfer of records.

It is important that all child protection records are transferred at each stage of a child's education, up until the age of 18, or in some cases, beyond. The responsibility for transfer of records lies with

the originating setting, as the receiving setting might not otherwise know that child protection concerns exist. The onus is therefore on the originating setting to facilitate the secure transfer of records, not on the receiving setting to make contact and collect the records. Paper or electronic records containing child protection information must be transferred in the most secure method available to the establishment. Whether CP files are passed on by hand, by post or electronically, written evidence of this transfer, appropriately signed and dated, should be retained by both the originating and receiving setting. The School will maintain one safeguarding list of children who are on child protection plans, child in need plans, early help plans and have additional vulnerabilities such as young carers. This list will be reviewed and updated regularly, including at internal team around the child meetings.

#### **4. The role of the School Board.**

##### **The Governor responsible for safeguarding is John O'Connor**

The School Board will ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation and that the policies, procedures and training in the School are effective and comply with the law at all times. The School Board will ensure that the School contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance 'Working together to safeguard children July 2018' and that the School's safeguarding arrangements take into account the laws, procedures and practices in Oman as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures. The School Board has formally adopted this policy and will review its contents annually or sooner if any legislative or regulatory changes are notified to it by the designated governor or the Executive Principal. The School Board has nominated John O'Connor to liaise with the local authorities and/or partner agencies on issues of allegations against the Executive Principal. The CEO will attend any strategy meetings called in respect of such allegations. In relation to allegations against other staff, the Executive Principal will liaise with the local authorities.

As a good practice, the Executive Principal will provide termly reports to the School Board outlining details of any safeguarding issues that have arisen during the term/year, and the outcome of any cases identified. These reports will respect all issues of confidentiality and will not therefore identify any person(s) by name.

An annual report will be submitted to the School Board which will outline the Child Protection and safeguarding work undertaken during the year. Names of students will not be shared. Included in the report will be details of:

- the names of members of staff with designated CP responsibilities
- confirmation that all new staff and volunteers have been recruited safely and that a record of all staff vetting checks is up-to-date and complete
- the training that has been undertaken by the designated staff
- the training that has been undertaken by all other staff and volunteers
- details of any incidents when physical restraint of pupils has been used
- details of information and guidance that has been given to staff
- details of safeguarding and CP issues included in the curriculum
- confirmation that all CP records are stored securely and where appropriate have been transferred to another school
- details of safeguarding and CP information given to parents
- details of the safety of the school site and the access given to visitors

- confirmation that all school lettings have been agreed with consideration given to the safeguarding of students
- total numbers of CP referrals made to the Ministry of Social Development
- details of CP conferences or meetings attended regarding students (names of students are not shared) and numbers of students who are, or have been, subject to a CP Plan.

Also as a good practice, the nominated governor will meet on a regular basis with the DSL to monitor both the volume and progress of cases where concern has been raised, to ensure that the School is meeting its duties in respect of safeguarding. This is in addition to and does not replace the responsibility that rests with the Executive Principal to monitor the work of the DSL.

## **5. Teaching our students about keeping safe – the curriculum**

The School fully acknowledges the important role that the curriculum plays in the prevention of abuse and in the preparation of our students for the responsibilities of a safe and happy adult life and citizenship. Our curriculum is part of our universal Safeguarding offer (see Appendix 3) and is made available to all students at the School. It is expected that all subject leaders will consider the areas that exist in their area of responsibility for addressing personal safety issues. The PSHE and Wellbeing Curriculum will be used to inform students how to keep safe and to know how to ask for help if their safety is being threatened. This will include dedicated PSHE Homeroom time sessions, assemblies, Homeroom activities, Drop-Down Days and visiting speakers. Our PSHE and Wellbeing Curriculum is a holistic programme (see our policy) that addresses as culturally appropriate in the context of the Middle East the new Relationships, Sex and Health education requirements from September 2020. The programme will also respond to emerging needs of the students as identified through student voice, the local context and safeguarding data.

As part of developing a healthy, safer lifestyle, students will be taught, for example, to:

- recognise and manage risks in different situations and then decide how to behave responsibly
- judge what kinds of physical contact are acceptable and unacceptable
- recognise when pressure from others (including people they know) threatens their personal safety and well-being, including knowing when and where to get help
- use assertiveness techniques to resist unhelpful pressure

The long-term plan for learning to stay safe is available on request. It is prepared as part of the PSHE and Wellbeing Curriculum planning process.

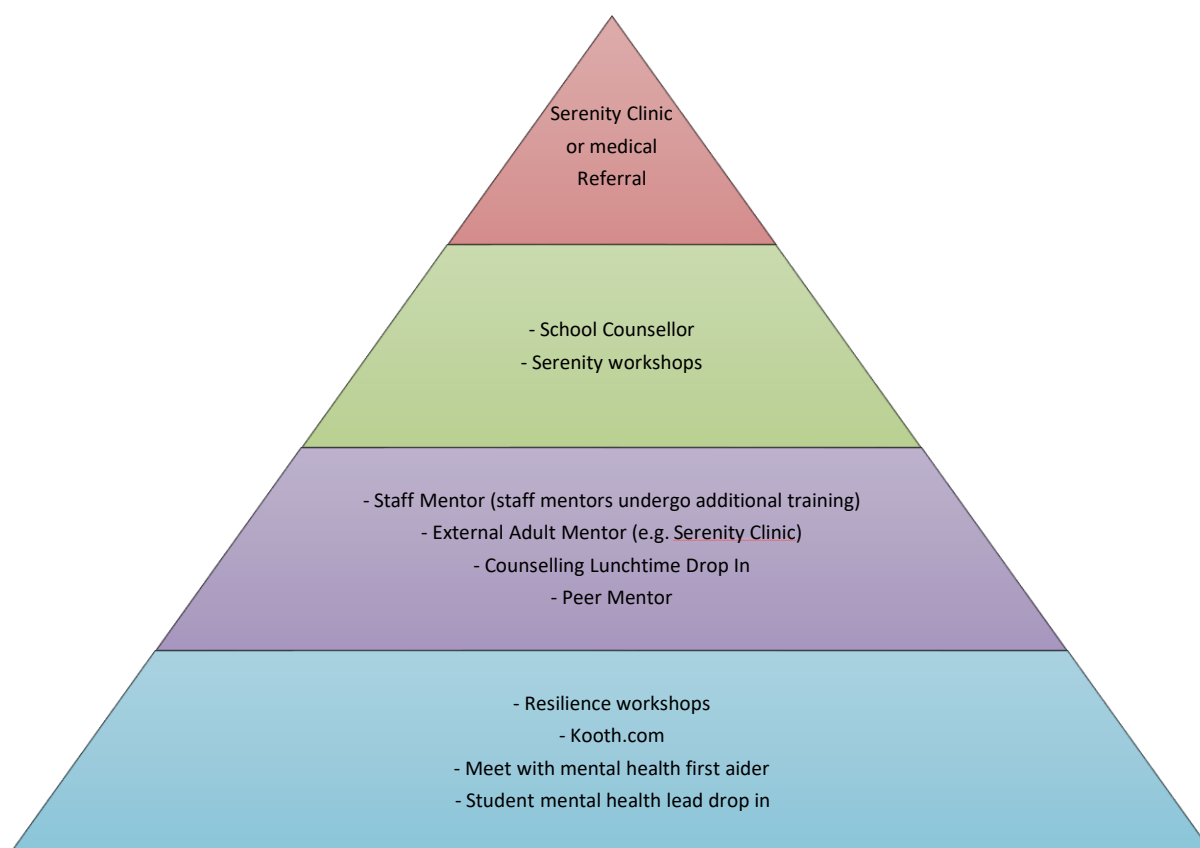
Students also need to be encouraged to express their views and give feedback, so it is important that the identity of the DSL and the wider safeguarding team is well advertised. To ensure that students are clear on this, there will be posters on display around the School and in student planners identifying the safeguarding team and how students can go about raising a concern. The safeguarding team will also meet regularly with the Student Council and other student focus groups to improve the safeguarding provision and curriculum.



## 6. Mental health and wellbeing

The School is fully committed to supporting the overall mental health and well-being of both staff and students. This is both in the form of educating them on how to ensure physical and mental health, as well as ensuring that support is in place should the need arise. **All staff should be aware that mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.** The School is aware of the UK DFE guidance outlined in KCSiE in relation to mental health.

In addition to this, the School works with external agencies to provide support and expert training to help improve the emotional wellbeing of pupils, families, and staff. Below is an outline of the support offered to students at different levels of need:



Staff should remember that only appropriately trained professionals should make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. This is why staff should be observant and report any concerns quickly so that immediate action can be taken and early help can be sourced.

## 7. Early Help

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the early years through to the teenage years. All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help is central to a safe school and is offered to any students with additional safeguarding needs (see Appendix 3 for further information).

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 have identified the following indicators to help staff recognise the potential need for Early Help. The child:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- has a mental health need;
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is a privately fostered child; and
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

If the safeguarding/welfare concern is low level and does not require other agency involvement, the DSL will initiate early intervention with the following aims:

- To engage with the parents/carers as soon as possible (unless the situation is so serious that would put the student at increased risk).
- To invite the parents/carers into school for a meeting to demonstrate professional concerns and discuss a supportive working partnership for the best interests of the student
- At this meeting we will discuss the plan of next action should the situation not improve
- We will record all contacts with the family, dates and times, including phone calls/letters
- We will monitor the student closely – e.g. behaviour/concerns/interaction with peers and parents/academic progress etc. This will demonstrate the frequency of concerns and help to build patterns

If the latter leads to further concerns, the DSL will escalate the concern through the Ministry of Social Development, or any other channel where necessary.

The School will put in place systems such as team around the child meetings to gather the right staff around the table to flag any issues at an early stage. Core pastoral teams of Safeguarding, SEND, Medical, Behaviour and Attendance meet on monthly basis to discuss students in need of additional support. The Pastoral Team meet with their assigned DSL/DDSL on a weekly basis to ensure clear communication regarding individual students and the emerging needs in year groups as a whole.

## SECTION C

## **Additional procedures to safeguard and protect our students**

### **1. Recruitment (to be read alongside the Safer Recruitment Policy)**

We are committed to the process of creating a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, adopt recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. Safer recruitment processes are followed, and all staff recruited to the school will be subject to appropriate identity, qualification and health checks.

References will be verified and appropriate criminal record checks (DBS checks), barred list checks and prohibition checks will be undertaken. The level of DBS check required, and whether a prohibition check is required, will depend on the role and duties of an applicant to work in the school, as outlined in Part 3 of KCSiE.

Relevant members of staff and governors who are involved in recruitment will undertake the safer recruitment training. The School will ensure that at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training in line with staffing regulations.

Staff joining the School will be given a copy of this policy and the KCSiE document as part of their induction. They will also be expected to complete the School's Safeguarding Induction.

#### **Supply Staff**

This School will only use supply staff who can be positively vetted i.e., all pre-employment checks have been completed and an enhanced DBS or relevant Police Clearance certificate which includes barred list information as well as the additional check to ensure that they have not been prohibited from teaching (where relevant).

The vetting information must be provided before any member of staff starts work. Supply staff will also be expected to show photographic ID before they can work in the School.

Also, every supply teacher will be provided with a copy of part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education from the Department for Education. On their first visit to the School, the supply teacher will sign to confirm that they have received and read this document.

The School will report the misconduct of temporary or agency staff to the agency concerned and to the Ministry of Social Development, and the Ministry of Labour.

### **2. Supervision of Visitors/Volunteers/Contractors in the School**











#### **Visitors**

The School has clear procedures for ensuring that any visitors are appropriately supervised. Where necessary, visitors will be supervised by a School employee. Where possible, staff must notify Reception of any visitors via email 24 hours prior to their expected arrival. The email should include who the visitor is, what company they are visiting on behalf of, who they are here to see and whether or not they have a valid Police Check.

On attending the School, visitors will be required to show identification documents. The School will also keep a formal register of visitors. As part of the signing in process, all visitors will be required to read and agree to the School’s Safeguarding agreement, which includes information about the identity of the Safeguarding team. A printed version of this will be provided on lanyards.

The visitor will be issued with a red coloured lanyard that they must wear at all times. The colour of the lanyard determines the level of clearance that the person has to move around the School and interact with students. Staff are made aware of the lanyard colours during training and are encouraged to challenge a visitor if they have a red lanyard and are seen on their own.

See below for further information:

Lanyard Colour	DBS cleared	Supervised contact with students	Unsupervised contact with students	Can move freely around the building	Must be met at Reception by allocated member of staff.
Red Visitor Lanyard					
Blue Staff Lanyard					

### Volunteers

Any parent/carer or other person/organisation engaged by the School to work in a voluntary capacity with students will be subjected to all reasonable vetting procedures and criminal records checks. There is no legal requirement to obtain a DBS certificate for volunteers who are not in regulated activity, and who are supervised regularly and on ongoing day to day basis by a person who is in regulated activity. However, an enhanced DBS check without a barred list check may be requested following a risk assessment. Volunteers will be subject to the same code of conduct as paid employees of the School.

Voluntary sector groups that operate within this School or provide off-site services for our students, or use School facilities, will be expected to adhere to this policy or operate a policy which is compliant with the procedures adopted by the Ministry of Social Development. Premises lettings and loans are subject to acceptance of this requirement.

### Contractors

Building contractors who are engaged by or on behalf of the School to undertake works on site will be made aware of this policy and the reasons for this. Long-term contractors who work regularly in the School during term time will be asked to provide their consent for criminal record checks to be undertaken. These checks will be undertaken when individual risk assessments by the Leadership Team deem this to be appropriate. During major works, when large numbers of workers and sub-contractors may be on site during term time, Health and Safety risk assessments will include the potential for contractors or their employees to have direct access to students in non-teaching sessions. All contractors and sub-contractors will be issued with copies of the School’s Code of Conduct for Staff.

Individuals and organisations that are contracted by the School to work with or provide services to students will be expected to adhere to this policy and their compliance will be monitored by the Executive Principal. Any such contractors will be subject to the appropriate level of DBS check, if any such check is required (for example because the contractor is carrying out teaching or providing some type of care for or supervision of children regularly). Contractors for whom an appropriate DBS check has not been undertaken will be supervised if they will have contact with children. We will always check the identity of contractors and their staff on arrival at the School.

### **3. Allegations Against Staff**

Adults have a position of power and trust in relation to children and this power or influence might be abused to persuade and encourage or intimidate a child or young person into certain behaviours or activities. All staff at the School are trained to recognise the responsibility they have to ensure they do not abuse their positions of trust.

The UK Sexual Offences Act (2003) re-enacts and extends the abuse of position of trust offences set out in the UK Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act (2000).

These procedures are used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a teacher or member of staff (including volunteers) in the School has:

- 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; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

While young people aged between 16 and 18 can legally consent to some types of sexual activity, this is not the case in a situation where there is an abuse of trust. Inappropriate behaviour by those in positions of trust, responsibility or authority could constitute a criminal offence which will be dealt with through notification by the School to the School Board. They will advise whether the police should be contacted and the next course of action and investigation.

A student may make an allegation against a member of staff. A member of staff may have concern or make an allegation against another member of staff (including supply staff and volunteers). If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Executive Principal. The Executive Principal will make contact with the School Board, including in relation to supply teachers. The agency of the supply teacher will also be involved and must co-operate with the School Board. The DSL will take the lead in managing the allegation. If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Executive Principal, then John O'Connor (Inspired Education Director – Africa & Middle East) should be informed directly. Procedures are as follows: email John O'Connor directly ([oconnor@brookhouse.ac.ke](mailto:oconnor@brookhouse.ac.ke)), or call the School and ask to speak to John O'Connor directly on +254 (0) 722 204 413 or +254 (0) 733 602 797.

Staff, parents and carers should also be made aware of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers whilst investigations are ongoing. If someone wishes to have reporting restrictions removed, they should be told to seek legal advice.

### **4. Whistleblowing**

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues. All Staff should be aware of the School's whistle-blowing procedures and share immediately any disclosure or concern that relates to a member of staff with the Executive Principal or the DSL (Ian Lohan) if the Executive Principal is not available, and nothing should be said to the colleague involved. It should be shared directly with John O'Connor if it relates to the Executive Principal.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

- Logging onto [www.safecall.co.uk/report](http://www.safecall.co.uk/report) , and sending a confidential report in their own language by typing the details into the message boxes.
- Dialling the in-country phone number on the list attached in Annex I of the Whistleblowing Policy. You will be able to speak to a specially trained person (English speaking) and/or request the use of a translator if required.

Where there are concerns of extremism or radicalisation of students, staff and governors will be encouraged to make use of our internal systems to whistle blow or raise any issue in confidence. They must inform the Executive Principal straight away (or if it relates to the Executive Principal) inform John O'Connor (*Inspired* Education Director – Africa & Middle East), as detailed on the previous page.

## **5. Monitoring the effectiveness of this policy**

This will be achieved through a variety of ways:

- The Policy will be reviewed by the School Board and staff annually;
- Safeguarding will be a regular and frequent part of SLT and School Board meeting agendas;
- An important part of any School review process will include asking pupils if they feel safe in the School.
- Regular safeguarding updates will be included in staff briefings.
- A student focus group will be formed and meet on a half termly basis to ensure the student body are informed of and involved in Safeguarding practices at the School.
- A termly report on safeguarding will be prepared for the School Board, this will include information on students on different plans and so on.
- Governors when undertaking visits will ask staff and students about how they feel in terms of safeguarding and being safe when at the School.
- There will be regular surveys of parents, staff and students that will ask safeguarding specific questions. We will be sure to include open text so any respondent can explain any concerns rather than just disagreeing to a given statement. This includes surveys tailored to vulnerable groups such as those who have SEND.
- We will regularly ask external agencies and those we work with for feedback on the application of our procedures.
- *Inspired* Education Group will also review our procedures, for example in relation to safer recruitment and compliance.

## SECTION D

### Other risks of safeguarding and child protection (to be read with Annex B of KCSiE)

Appendix 1 summarises the types of abuse and their symptoms. In addition to these, there are specific aspects that all adults working with children should be aware of:

#### 1. Vulnerable Students

Particular vigilance will be exercised in respect of students who are subject to a Child Protection Plan, Child In Need or are Children who are Looked After. Any incidents or concerns involving these children must be reported immediately to the DSL and will be reported to the Ministry of Social Development. A vulnerable students list will be made available to staff.

If a student discloses that they have witnessed domestic abuse or it is suspected that they may be living in a household which is affected by family violence, this will be referred to the DSL as a safeguarding issue.

We will always ascertain the views and feelings of all children. The School fully supports the additional need for support and protection of children who are vulnerable by virtue of disability, homelessness, refugee/asylum seeker status, the effects of substance abuse within the family, those who are young carers, mid-year admissions, students where English is an additional language and we will use a translation service if necessary.

We know that children who are affected by abuse or neglect may demonstrate their needs and distress through their words, actions, behaviour, demeanour, school work or interactions with other children. The School has a strong commitment to an anti-bullying policy and will not tolerate any form of bullying which includes homophobic or racist bullying. The School will consider all coercive acts and inappropriate child-on-child behaviour and sexual activity within a Child Protection context.

#### 2. Homelessness

The School is aware that being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare.

Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include:

- household debt,
- rent arrears,
- domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour,
- family being asked to leave a property.

Referrals and/or discussion with the Ministry of Social Development should be progressed as appropriate. However, this should not replace additional referrals where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm. Staff need to remain alert to any changes in the circumstances of children so that preventative action can be taken to avoid the child becoming homeless. Staff should raise any concerns regarding potential homelessness with the DSL immediately, who will investigate.

### 3. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

*Statutory definition: Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.*

CSE is a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. Children or young people may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed online.

All sexual activity outside of marriage is illegal in Oman. The minimum age of marriage for both men and women is 18 years old. It is an offence for a person to have a sexual relationship with anyone that they are not married to. Non-consensual sex is rape, whatever the age of the victim. If the victim is incapacitated through drink or drugs, or the victim or his or her family has been subject to violence or the threat of it, they cannot be considered to have given true consent and therefore offences may have been committed. Child sexual exploitation is therefore potentially a child protection issue for all children under the age of 18.

Where it comes to our notice that a child under the age of 18 is, or may be, sexually active, whether or not they are a student of this School, this will result in an immediate referral to the DSL. In the case of a young person between the ages of 14 and 18, an individual risk assessment will be conducted. This will determine how and when information will be shared with parents and the investigating agencies.

Children rarely self-report child sexual exploitation so it is important that practitioners are aware of potential indicators of risk, including:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc without plausible explanation;
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks;
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work;
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late;
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls;
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol;
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections;
- Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault;
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups;
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers);
- Frequenting areas known for sex work;
- Concerning use of internet or other social media;
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

We should also remain open to the fact that child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these risk indicators being obviously present. We should also be alert to the fact that some risk assessments have been constructed around indicators of face-to-face perpetration by adults and



may not adequately capture online or peer-perpetrated forms of harm. It is also important to remember that risk assessments only capture risk at the point of assessment and that levels of risk vary over time, and that the presence of these indicators may be explained by other forms of vulnerability rather than child sexual exploitation.

#### **4. Forced marriage**

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in Oman. Article 16 and 17 of Oman's Personal Status Law (1997) requires consent to be clearly indicated verbally or in writing. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of forced marriage, details of which can be found on pages 13-14 of the [UK Multi-agency guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage](#). School staff can also contact the Ministry of Social Development if they have concerns about forced marriage.

#### **5. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

Professionals in all agencies, individuals, and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

#### **THE LAW**

FGM is Child Abuse and is against the Law in Oman. The Child Law (2019) makes it illegal to:

- Practice FGM in the Sultanate of Oman
- To take girls who are Omani Nationals or who are residents of Oman abroad for FGM whether or not it is lawful in that country
- To aid, abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of FGM abroad
- Penalty of up to 3 years in prison

FGM is a deeply rooted practice, widely carried out mainly among specific ethnic populations in Africa and parts of the Middle East and Asia. It serves as a complex form of social control of women's sexual and reproductive rights. The exact number of girls and women alive today who have undergone FGM is unknown, however, UNICEF estimates that over 200 million girls and women worldwide have undergone FGM. FGM is mainly concentrated in countries around the Atlantic coast to the Horn of Africa, and areas of the Middle East including Oman.

The child victims regularly suffer several of the following health implications:

- Shock severe pain & trauma
- Wound Infection, Septicaemia, Tetanus
- Urine retention
- HIV & Hepatitis Infection
- Exhaustion from Screaming
- Failure to heal
- Abscess formation
- Excessive growth of scar tissue
- Pelvic Infection due to menstrual obstruction
- Obstruction to Urinary Flow & Urine Infections
- Broken/fractured bones from being pinned down against their will

Long term consequences can include:

- Recurrent bladder and urinary tract infections;
- Cysts;
- Infertility;
- An increased risk of childbirth complications and new born deaths;
- A need for further surgery. For example, the FGM procedure that seals or narrows a vaginal opening (type 3 above) needs to be cut open later to allow for sexual intercourse and childbirth. Sometimes it is stitched again several times, including after childbirth, hence the woman goes through repeated opening and closing procedures, further increasing and repeated both immediate and long-term risks.

## **FGM INDICATORS**

The girl may confide that she is to have a “special procedure’ which will make her a woman or talk of a ceremony taking place for her or other siblings. There may be talk of vaccinations or talk of absence from school. Girls are more at risk of FGM during school summer holidays. A girl or her family may talk about a long holiday to her country of origin or to a country where the practice is prevalent. This is not enough on its own but might be significant when added to other concerns. A mother or an older sibling had already undergone FGM.

Signs that FGM may have occurred:

- Prolonged absence from school with a noticeable change in behaviour on return
- Finding it difficult to sit still and appears to be experiencing discomfort or pain
- Spending a long time away from class for toilet breaks
- Asking to be excused from PE or swimming
- Suddenly visiting the school nurse more frequently
- A sudden change in dress

**Any concerns regarding FGM must be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. ALL STAFF HAVE A LEGAL DUTY TO REPORT ANY SUSPECTED FGM TO THE POLICE.**

## **6. Honour based abuse (HBA)**

HBA can be described as a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such abuse can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or

community by breaking their honour code. Staff should note that the focus is abuse, not limited to honour-based violence.

## **7. Children missing education (CME)**

The School monitors attendance very carefully. Full referrals using the Ministry of Education Portal are made before any student is taken off roll, including those that attend new schools. Students who have not attended are monitored, home visits undertaken, and any referrals made to the Ministry of Education quickly. Evidence of a student's attendance at other schools is confirmed with the school directly before any files are transferred or the student removed from the roll. Any files for students who have child protection needs are transported securely in line with KCSIE requirements.

## **8. The Prevent Duty (extremism, radicalisation and terrorism)**

For the School to fulfil the Prevent duty, it is essential that staff can identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is seen as part of our wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences. The School will also build students' resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental universal Islamic values and enabling them to challenge extremist views. It is important to emphasise that the Prevent duty is not intended to stop students debating controversial issues. On the contrary, we will provide a safe space in which children, young people and staff can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments.

Our 100% commitment to safeguarding student welfare means we are vigilant to monitoring vulnerability to radicalisation including:

- Family tensions
- Sense of isolation
- Migration
- Distance from cultural heritage
- Experience of racism or discrimination
- Feeling of failure

## **9. Child criminal exploitation: (CCE)**

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas. Key to identifying potential involvement in criminal activity are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, child criminal exploitation:

- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. It is about coercing, controlling, manipulating or deceiving a student into criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults.

Some indicators include students: appearing with unexplained gifts/possessions, associating with other young people involved in CCE, changes in emotional well-being, misuse of drugs/alcohol, CME, coming home late.

The School will be quick to identify any risk of CCE through students missing episodes and/or patterns in absence. Any safeguarding referral for CCE will also consider local/third party support for CCE.

### **10. Child on Child abuse (including sexual violence, harassment and upskirting)**

Staff will be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as Child on Child abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- 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. It is a criminal offence and anyone of any gender can be a victim.
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Staff at the School are clear that it should:

- be treated no differently to any other referral / concern
- not be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'

### **Actions for dealing with a disclosure: (in line with guidance issued in KCSIE)**

#### **Procedures for any staff to whom a disclosure is made:**

- Do not promise confidentiality – explain that this will **only** be passed on to most relevant member of staff
- Recognise that the child has placed them in a position of trust – be supportive and respectful
- Listen carefully and only prompt with open questions where necessary
- Make a written record of the account. Making notes while listening is fine if you can remain engaged with what the child is saying
- Only record the facts the child is saying
- Follow advice on [UKCCIS sexting](#) when a report includes an online element
- Inform the DSL immediately

### Procedures for safeguarding team following report from member of staff:

- Speak to any students involved and gather statements (this may include witnesses)
- Complete an assessment and follow guidance developed from that assessment. [Brook's Traffic Light Tool](#) should also be consulted.
- Complete risk assessment and safety plan if report involved sexual violence. This should include the victim, the alleged perpetrator and the other children.
- Engage with children's social care, safer schools officer and specialist services as required

### Points to be considered:

- wishes of victim (and reassurance that they are being taken seriously)
- nature of incidents: whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour
- age and developmental stage of children involved
- any power imbalance between the children e.g. difference in age/maturity/disability/learning difficulty
- one-off or sustained pattern
- any on-going risks to anyone in the school community
- any other wider contextual issues
- **Immediate** consideration should be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator (and any other children involved/impacted)

### Possible outcomes

- a. Manage internally
- b. Early help
- c. Referral to Ministry of Social Development
- d. Report to the police

The possible outcome of the disclosure will be determined by the safeguarding team, in conjunction with the Executive Principal and advice offered by the Ministry of Social Development, and police (where relevant and appropriate). Follow up guidance as outlined in KCSIE will be followed by the School in terms of the criminal process and safeguarding/supporting the victim and alleged perpetrator.

## 11. Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes

In the latest advice for schools and colleges, sexting is defined as **the production and/or sharing of sexual photos and videos of and by young people who are under the age of 18**. It includes nude or nearly nude images and/or sexual acts. It has also been referred to as 'youth produced sexual imagery' and sexting.

The sending of provocative sexual material (including photos, videos and texts) is inappropriate and unsafe behaviour which threatens the social, emotional and/or physical safety of students. Although sharing nudes and semi-nudes is typically voluntary at first, it raises many serious legal and social concerns, especially when the images are spread beyond the control of the sender. It can result in humiliation, bullying and harassment of students. The School has the responsibility to prevent sharing nudes and semi nudes, and the dissemination of inappropriate or offensive material and to educate both students and staff about both the legal and social dangers of texting.

This guidance does not apply the sharing of sexual photos and videos of under-18-year olds with or by adults. This is a form of child sexual abuse and must be referred to the police immediately.

Staff should follow standard procedures and alert the DSL immediately when they suspect image sharing has occurred. In addition to this, they are aware of the following guidance:

- Never view, download or share the imagery yourself, or ask a child to share or download – this is illegal.
- If you have already viewed the imagery by accident (e.g. if a young person has showed it to you before you could ask them not to), report this to the DSL.
- Do not delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it.
- Do not ask the young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL.
- Do not share information about the incident to other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Do not say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.
- Do explain to them that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

## **12. Private fostering**

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately between two parties without the involvement of the authorities for a child under the age of 18. This arrangement would be with someone who is not a parent or close relative and lasts 28 days or more.

Private fostering is used as a form of childcare by parents who are not able to take care of their child on a day to day basis, for whatever reason. However, unreported private fostering arrangements can be used in order to exploit children. The School requires that parents should inform them of any change in address or circumstances for their children.

The School will:

- Make contact with the foster family to ascertain the suitability of living arrangements
- Monitor the child's attendance and behaviours, and check in regularly with the child to assess the living situation
- Make a home visit to monitor the standard of care where appropriate; and
- Ensure that private foster carers and birth families have all the necessary information and advice they require.

## **13. Children with SEN and disabilities (SEND)**

Children with SEND can face additional safeguarding challenges. The School policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- Children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying-without outwardly showing any signs;
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Our staff, supported by the SENCO, will be particularly aware of the need for vigilance with SEND students.

## **SECTION E**

### **APPENDIX 1 – TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE AND THEIR SYMPTOMS**

Child abuse can be categorised into four distinct types, i.e.:

- a) Physical Abuse
- b) Sexual Abuse
- c) Emotional Abuse
- d) Physical Neglect
- e) Grave Concern/At Risk – this is not a distinct category but is dealt with separately.

A child can be at risk from any combination of the four categories. These different types of abuse require different approaches. A child suffering from physical abuse may be in immediate and serious danger. Action should therefore be taken immediately. With other forms of abuse, there is a need to ensure that adequate information is gathered. There is also a need to make sure that grounds for suspicion have been adequately investigated and recorded. The need to collate information must be balanced against the need for urgent action. If there are reasonable grounds for suspicion, then a decision to monitor the situation should only be taken after consultation. A situation that should cause particular concern is that of a child who fails to thrive without any obvious reason. In such a situation a medical investigation will be required to consider the causes. Each of the five categories will now be explored in more detail.

#### **a) Physical Abuse**

This involves physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge or a reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

Typical signs of Physical Abuse are:

- Bruises and abrasions – especially about the face, head, genitals or other parts of the body where they would not be expected to occur given the age of the child. Some types of bruising are particularly characteristic of non-accidental injury especially when the child's explanation does not match the nature of injury, or when it appears frequently;
- Slap marks – these may be visible on cheeks or buttocks;
- Twin bruises on either side of the mouth or cheeks – can be caused by pinching or grabbing, sometimes to make a child eat or to stop a child from speaking;
- Grip marks on arms or trunk – gripping bruises on arm or trunk can be associated with shaking a child. Shaking can cause one of the most serious injuries to a child; i.e. a brain haemorrhage, as the brain hits the inside of the skull. X-rays and other tests are required to fully diagnose the effects of shaking. Grip marks can also be indicative of sexual abuse;
- Black eyes – are most commonly caused by an object, such as a fist, coming into contact with the eye socket. N.B. A heavy bang on the nose, however, can cause bruising to spread around the eye but a doctor will be able to tell if this has occurred;
- Damage to the mouth – e.g. bruised/cut lip or torn skin where the upper lips join the mouth;
- Bite marks;
- Fractures;
- Poisoning or other misuse of drugs – e.g. overuse of sedatives;

- Burns and/or scalds – a round, red burn on tender, non-protruding parts, like a mouth; inside arms and on the genitals will almost certainly have been deliberately inflicted. Any burns that appear to be cigarette burns should be cause for concern. An experienced person will notice skin splashes caused when a child accidentally knocks over a hot cup of tea. In contrast, a child who has been deliberately ‘dipped’ in a hot bath will not have splash marks.

## **b) Sexual Abuse**

The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent, or that violate the social taboos of family roles. Typical signs of Sexual Abuse are:

- Detailed sexual knowledge inappropriate to the age of the child;
- Behaviour that is excessively affectionate or sexual towards other children or adults;
- Attempts to inform, by making a disclosure about the sexual abuse - often by the initial sharing of limited information with an adult. It is also very characteristic of such children that they have an excessive pre-occupation with secrecy and try to bind the adults to secrecy or confidentiality;
- Fear of medical examinations;
- Fear of being alone – this applies to friends/family/neighbours/baby-sitters etc.;
- Sudden loss of appetite, compulsive eating, anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa;
- Excessive masturbation is especially worrying when it takes place in public;
- Promiscuity
- Sexual approaches or assaults – on other children or adults;
- Urinary tract infections (UTI) and/or sexually transmitted disease (STD) are cause for immediate concern in young children, or in adolescents if his/her partner cannot be identified;
- Bruising to the buttocks, lower abdomen, thighs and genital/rectal areas. Bruises may be confined to grip marks where a child has been held so that sexual abuse can take place;
- Discomfort or pain particularly in the genital or anal areas;
- Drawing of pornographic or sexually explicit images.

## **c) Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is defined as the severe and adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment – this category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

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 cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the



exploitation or corruption of children. Emotional Abuse may also be a factor if a child is in a home where domestic abuse takes place. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

#### **d) Physical Neglect**

Physical neglect is defined as the persistent or severe neglect of a child (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation), which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive. Persistent stomach aches, feeling unwell and apparent anorexia can be associated with physical neglect.

However, typical signs of Physical Neglect are:

- Underweight – a child may be frequently hungry or pre-occupied with food, or in the habit of stealing food or procuring food. There is a cause for concern where a persistently underweight child gains weight when away from home, for example, when in hospital or on an School trip. Some children also lose weight or fail to gain weight during School holidays when School lunches are not available, and this is a cause for concern;
- Inadequately clad – a distinction needs to be made between situations where children are inadequately clad, dirty or smelly because they come from homes where neatness and cleanliness are unimportant, and those where the lack of care is preventing the child from thriving.

Physical neglect is a difficult category because it involves the making of a judgement about the seriousness of the degree of neglect. Much parenting falls short of the ideal, but it may be appropriate to involve safeguarding procedures in the case of neglect where the child's development is being adversely affected.

#### **e) Grave Concern/At Risk**

This is not a separate category of child abuse as such but covers several situations where a child may be at risk. It is in reference to children whose situations do not currently fit the above categories but where social and medical assessments indicate that they are at significant risk of harm. Grave concern may be felt where a child shows symptoms of stress or distress (see below) and any of the following circumstances apply:

- There is a known child abuser in the family;
- Another child in the family is known to have been abused;
- The parents are involved with pornographic material to an unusual degree;
- There is an adult in the family with a history of violent behaviour; and/or
- The child is exposed to potential risk or exploitation via the Internet e.g. pornographic material or chat rooms.

#### **The symptoms of stress and distress**

When a child is suffering from any one or more of the previous four 'Categories of Abuse', or if the child is 'at risk', he/she will nearly always suffer from/display signs of stress and distress. An abused child is likely to show signs of stress and distress as listed below:

- A lack of concentration and a decline in academic performance;
- Aggressive and hostile behaviour;
- Moodiness, depression, irritability, listlessness, fearfulness, tiredness, temper tantrums, short concentration span, acting withdrawn or crying at minor occurrences;
- Difficulties in relationships with peers;
- Regression to more immature forms of behaviour, e.g. thumb sucking;
- Self-harming or suicidal behaviour;
- Low self-esteem;
- Wariness, insecurity, running away or truancy – children who persistently run away from home may be escaping from sexual physical abuse;
- Disturbed sleep;
- General personality changes such as unacceptable behaviour or severe attention seeking behaviour;
- A sudden change in academic performance in general.

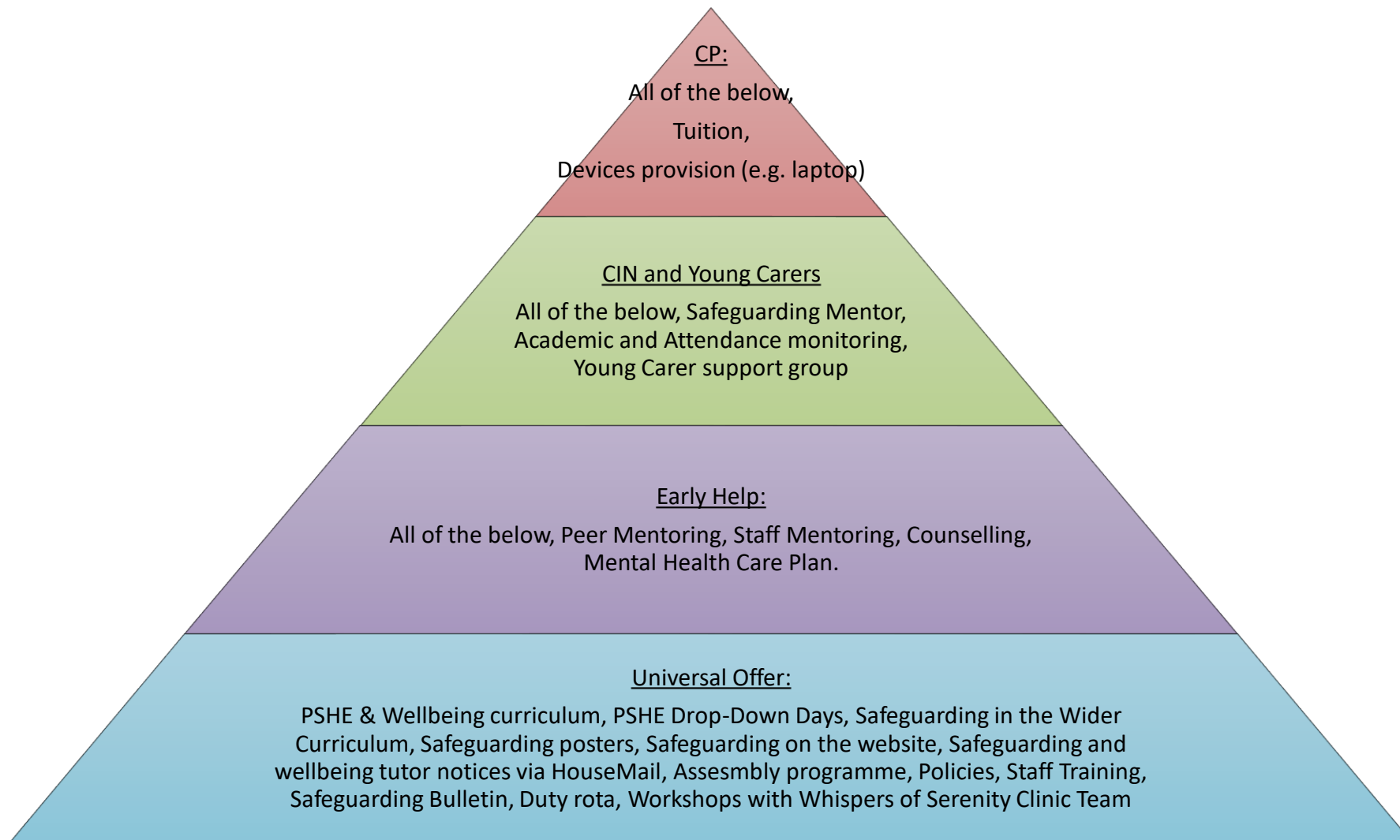
### **Parental signs of child abuse**

Forms of parental behaviour that could raise or reinforce concerns are:

- Implausible explanations of injuries;
- Unwillingness to seek appropriate medical treatment for injuries;
- Injured child kept away from the School until injuries have healed without adequate reason;
- A high level of expressed hostility to the child;
- Grossly unrealistic assumptions about child development;
- General dislike of child-like behaviour;
- Inappropriate labelling of child's behaviour as bad or naughty;
- Leaving children unsupervised when they are too young to be left unattended.

## APPENDIX 2 – OUTLINE OF OUR SAFEGUARDING SUPPORT PROVISION

Please note this support is regularly updated in line with the emerging needs of our students and the availability of services.



Ratified Date: September 2022

Review Date: September 2023

Persons responsible: Ms. Liz Stanley (Executive Principal) & Mr. Ian Lohan (DSL)

Named Safeguarding Governor: Mr. John O'Connor

Chair of Governors: Mr. Nicholas Wergan

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Executive Principal: Ms. Liz Stanley

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_