

## Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy

Last Reviewed Date: 20th June 2021

Reviewed by: J Kingham, Deputy Headteacher of Pastoral - Primary

Next Review Date: 20th June 2022

### 1. Purpose

At NIS Lagoon (the school), we fully recognise the responsibilities and duties placed on us to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students. We recognise that all staff employed directly by the school (e.g. teachers and support staff), indirectly by the school (e.g. security guards, canteen staff) and volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting students from harm.

We believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment in which students can learn and which promotes the social, physical and emotional wellbeing of each individual student. The policy has been developed in line with the guidance set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018* and *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018*.

The school will raise child protection concerns with parents/carers at the earliest opportunity, and work in partnership with them and other agencies to improve outcomes.

The school will ensure that all the staff are provided with the appropriate training in child protection issues, as set forth in UK guidelines. In particular, the designated members of staff will be released to attend the necessary enhanced training courses to enable them to carry out their role effectively.

All staff are required to read this policy carefully and be aware of their roles in these processes. Staff are also required to read *Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1*.

This policy, however, is rooted very much in the context of Qatar and subject to Qatari law, customs and support systems.

### 2. Definition of Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. (“Working Together to Safeguarding Children” DfE 2015)

### 3. Definition of Child Protection

Child Protection is a part of the safeguarding agenda. It refers to the action that is required to be undertaken to protect children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

### 4. Aims

- To support children in line with our school mission statement and values.

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- To raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard all students and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring students known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the school, contribute to assessments of need by providing the necessary support.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff in matters relating to child protection.
- To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To ensure that all adults within our school who have substantial access to students, have been checked through references and Disclosure and Barring services (DBS).

## 5. Procedures

### At NIS Lagoon we will ensure that:

- All members of staff understand and fulfil their responsibilities.
- We will ensure that designated staff attend training every two years and all staff are provided with refresher training every year.
- New staff will be inducted into the school’s safeguarding procedures thoroughly and NQTs will have full basic awareness training..
- All staff are familiar with this school’s Child Protection Policy as well as the staff code of conduct and these issues are also included in the induction for each new staff member.
- All staff develop their understanding of signs and indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated child protection officer.
- We will ensure that all staff are aware that it is important to identify any concerns about children at as early a stage as possible so that their needs could be identified and monitored and appropriate support put in place.
- All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through the publication of the schools’ Child Protection Policy on our website.
- Community users organising activities for students are aware of the school’s child protection guidelines and procedures.
- Any visiting professionals or guest speakers will be discussed at leadership level before they can present to a body of students. This is to ensure the suitability of the visitor and appropriateness for the age of students they will present to.
- Our procedures will be regularly reviewed and updated by the Safeguarding Lead and other Senior Leaders.

## 6. Responsibilities

At NIS Lagoon, the key Designated Child Protection Officer must have relevant training.

The Designated Child Protection Officers are responsible for:

- Keeping written records of concerns about a student.
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from student records.
- Ensuring that an indication of further record keeping is marked on the student’s records.
- Providing advice, guidance and support to staff in child protection matters.
- Organising child protection training for all school staff.

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- Providing an annual report for the governing body, detailing any changes and reviews of relevant policy and procedures; training undertaken by the Designated Child Protection Officers [CC comment: query plural], and by all staff and governors; number and type of incidents/cases.
- The SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) & School Nurse will support the work of the Designated Child Protection Officers and attend regular safeguarding meetings.
- Supporting students

## **7. Our school will support all students by:**

- Providing the best pastoral care for all students – ensuring that students know their rights, know the difference between right and wrong and the difference between a good and bad secret.
- Recognising that the needs of the students are paramount and underpin all our child protection work and pastoral care.
- Encouraging development of self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as our relationships through the school’s core values and ethos, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- Liaising and working together recognising that we all have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of students.
- Providing continuing support to a student about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the student’s new school and ensuring the school medical records are forwarded as a matter of priority.

## **8. Confidentiality**

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. The Designated Child Protection Officers will disclose any information about a student to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with the Designated Child Protection Officers in order to safeguard students. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a student to keep secrets, which might compromise their safety or wellbeing.

We will always aim to share our intention to contact the student’s parents with the student before doing so. We will always aim to share our intention to contact the Police in suspected criminal cases with the student’s parents unless to do so could put the student at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation.

## **9. Supporting Staff**

We recognise that staff working in the school, who have become involved with a student who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with one of the Designated Child Protection Officers and to seek further support as appropriate.

## **10. Online Safety**

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school. Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing professional code of conduct.

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out below.

We will continue to make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school.

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## 11. Dealing with disclosure of abuse

If a student discloses abuse to a member of staff, the member of staff must do the following:

1. Explain that if you are concerned about what they have disclosed then you have to report it (no secrets).
2. Reassure them that you are doing this to help and support them and that you are taking what they are telling you seriously.
3. Allow the student to speak and listen to what they are telling you without interrupting.
4. Do not press for details or ask leading questions.
5. Only ask the minimum number of clarifying questions necessary to establish understanding of the concerns.
6. Do not ask to see any injuries.
7. If you can, write brief notes of what they are telling you, while they are speaking. These may help later, if you have to remember exactly what was said. Keep your original notes, however rough they are. It is what you write at the time that may be important later, not a tidier and improved version you write up afterwards. If you do not have the means to write at the time, make notes of what was said as soon as possible afterwards.
8. Do record date, time, place and exact words used.
9. Write facts and record what the student said, do not write your opinion or professional judgement. If you feel you must comment, ensure that it is clear that you are giving your opinion and not stating a fact.
10. Record all subsequent meetings with the student.
11. If you are concerned that the child is at risk of, or has possibly been subject to physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect then complete a note of concern either electronically or by hand.

If you complete it by hand it *must* be given in person to a Designated Safeguarding Lead - do not give it to someone else to hand over and do not leave it on a desk or pigeon hole.

If you complete it electronically, email it to all DSLs and ensure that one of them is informed in person or by phone call of the note of concern.

*It is the responsibility of the member of staff noting the concern that she or he ensures that a DSL is aware of the note of concern.*

### **The Safeguarding Team at NISL:**

#### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (whole school)**

*Head of Wellbeing (and secondary school counsellor) - Suzan Naseredine*

*Deputy Head of Pastoral (Primary) - Jonathan Kingham*

*Primary School Counsellor - Meadhbh Murphy*

#### **Senior Staff:**

##### **EYFS/Primary**

*EYFS Coordinator - Cindy Hannocks*

*Primary SEND coordinator - Denise Skyers*

##### **Secondary**

*Deputy Head of Pastoral (Secondary) - Maurice Elvie*

*Assistant Deputy Head of Pastoral (Secondary) - Houria Lahcene*

*Secondary SEND coordinator - Kholoud Al-Tanbour*

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In cases where criminal acts are involved or suspected the Headteacher will decide upon the relevant action. The options available in Qatar are:

- Phone hotline – 919 – to ensure this is solved amicably
- Contact capital police – formal investigation – 44521111
- Phone pediatric social worker – 66667725
- Investigation through the pediatric care centre on Al Saad – legally not required to get the parent’s permission
- Social workers at Family Therapy First Tel: 4456 5800
- Fax: 4466 6607
- Email to: [h.alchegab@Qfpsr.qa](mailto:h.alchegab@Qfpsr.qa)

## **12. Allegations against staff:**

- All school staff should adopt safe working practices when working with students.
- Avoid one to one situations where possible.
- Be visible if you are in the situation where you are working alone with students (let someone know where you are, who you are with and why, and for how long).
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact.
- Ensure all contact during lessons is appropriate, visible and in context.
- Adopt discretion with distressed students.
- Maintain appropriate communication with students both in and out of school.
- Staff must not have students as ‘friends’ via any social media or social networking site.
- In Qatar, male staff should deal with male students and female, female whenever 1:1 conversations are required. This may not be always possible, but in cases where it is not possible ensure that the safest working practices are in place.

If an allegation relevant to this policy is made against a member of staff is directly by a student to a staff, the staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the key Designated Child Protection Officer- the Headteacher.

The Designated Child Protection Officers will then investigate the allegations to establish:

- Who made the allegation?
- The nature of the allegation
- Where and when the alleged incident took place
- Who was involved?
- Whether there were any witnesses
- All allegations made against members of staff will be reported to the Headteacher.
- The member of staff against whom the allegations have been made, may be suspended (with pay) pending investigation, in order to protect all parties involved.

If the outcome of the investigation establishes that abuse has occurred, due to failure to meet applicable professional standards, the member of staff involved shall be dealt with through the school’s Disciplinary Policy.

## **13. Whistleblowing (confidential reporting)**

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they should speak with the Principal or Deputy-Principal.

## **14. Anti-Bullying and Cyber Bullying policy**

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Our Anti-Bullying and cyber bullying policy is set out in a separate document and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. This includes homophobic, gender related and racist bullying. The school delivers a zero tolerance approach to all forms of bullying including verbal, physical and cyber.

## 15. Prevention

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our students by providing students with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where students feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Ensure that all students know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include opportunities, across the curriculum, including and particularly within PSHE education, which equip students with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

## 16. Appendix 1 –Type of Abuse

Child abuse is taken to refer to any child of under 18 years who, through the actions of adults (with a caring role for that child) or their failure to act, has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm. Abuse is broadly divided into four categories:

1. Physical Abuse
2. Sexual Abuse
3. Emotional Abuse
4. Neglect

A child can be at risk from any combination of the four categories.

## 17. 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.

## 18. Typical signs of Physical Abuse:

- 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.
- Bruising on both sides of the ear - this is often caused by grabbing a child that is attempting to run away. It is very painful to be held by the ear, as well as humiliating and this is a common injury.
- 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.

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- 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 lips or torn skin where the upper lip joins the mouth.
- Bite marks, poisoning and other misuse of drugs - e.g. overuse of sedatives.
- Burns and/or scalds - a round red burn on tender, non-protruding parts like the 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.
- Some types of scalds known as 'dipping scalds' are always 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.

## 19. Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or a young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

## 20. Typical signs of Sexual Abuse are:

- A detailed sexual knowledge inappropriate for 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 begin 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.
- A fear of medical examinations.
- A fear of being alone - this applies to friends / family / neighbours / baby-sitters, etc.
- A sudden loss of appetite, compulsive eating, anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa.
- Excessive masturbation.
- Promiscuity.
- Unusually explicit or detailed sex play in young children.
- Sexual approaches or assaults - on other children or adults.
- Pregnancy, urinary tract infections (UTIs), sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are all cause for immediate concern in young children, or in adolescents if his / her partner cannot be identified.
- Bruising to the breasts, 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.
- The drawing of pornographic or sexually explicit images.

## 21. Emotional Abuse

The persistent ill treatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of the other person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child although it may occur alone.

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It is important to recognise that many children will be living (or may have lived) in families where domestic abuse is a factor, and that these situations have a harmful impact on children emotionally, as well as placing them at risk of physical harm.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Developmental delay
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g. anxious, indiscriminate or no attachment
- Aggressive behaviours towards others
- Scape-goated within the family
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a ‘loner’-difficulty relating to others
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate responses to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviours
- Self-harming
- Running away

## 22. Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care and treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child’s basic emotional needs.

## 23. Typical signs of Neglect are:

Underweight: a child may be frequently hungry or preoccupied with food or in the habit of stealing food or with the intention of procuring food. There is particular cause for concern where a persistently underweight child gains weight when away from home, for example, when in hospital or on a 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 clothed where the lack of care is preventing the child from thriving.

Neglect may also take other forms. For example, a child may have all that he or she wishes for in a materialistic sense but may be neglected of love and affection from parents or caregivers.

Neglect is a difficult category because it involves the making of a judgment about the seriousness of the degree of neglect. Much parenting falls short of the ideal but it may be appropriate to invoke Child Protection Procedures in the case of Neglect where the child's development is being adversely affected.

## 24. 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 that child is 'at risk', they 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 fall-off in school performance.
- Aggressive or hostile behaviour.

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- 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.
- Parental Signs of Child Abuse
- Particular 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 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.

## 25. Appendix 2 – Note of concern

Student:	Form:	Date:
Source of concern: <input type="checkbox"/> Direct disclosure <input type="checkbox"/> Observation <input type="checkbox"/> Overheard		
Staff name:	Reported to:	Via: in person / email and phone
Please give as much factual detail as possible about the concern:		
Actions taken (please state “N/A” if you have not done anything subsequently):		

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