

# SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY 2025/26

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# The purpose of this policy

Bright International School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that pupils are protected from harm.
- Share with the community the principles that guide the school's approach to safeguarding and child protection.
- Ensure that everyone in the school community (including pupils, families and staff members) has the necessary information to enable them to meet their safeguarding responsibilities, including understanding how to report a concern.

## Key terminology

**Staff or Staff Members:** This is a whole-school policy and applies to all Board Members; school leaders; employees; peripatetic self-employed staff using the school's premises; personal learning assistants employed by parents/guardians who are working on the school site; volunteers working in or on behalf of the school in either a paid or unpaid capacity; and paid contractors who are working on site during term time. Throughout this policy the terms '*staff*' or '*staff members*' should be taken to include all these categories.

**Safeguarding:** This term refers to the actions taken by the school to ensure that all children are kept safe; are protected from harm; grow up with the provision of safe and effective care; and are supported to have the best outcomes. Safeguarding practices are child-centred and based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all members of the school community.

**Child Protection:** This term refers to the procedures in place for children at risk of significant harm, or who have been harmed. Child protection procedures typically involve external services who provide support to a child and/or their family.

## Introduction

Bright International School is committed to upholding the provisions of both Portuguese law and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the school recognises that all children and young people, regardless of race; colour; sex; language; religion; political or other opinion; national or social origin; property status; birth status; disability; sexual or gender identity; or other protected characteristic(s); have equal rights to protection and support.

The school recognises that children have the right to protection from harm. This includes protection from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect. This also includes protecting children from specific harms including, but not limited to, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM); grooming; extremist radicalisation; 'honour'-based violence; peer-on-peer abuse; and bullying, including cyber-bullying.

The school considers that a bullying incident should be addressed as a safeguarding concern in situations when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Further details about types and potential indicators of abuse are outlined in Appendix 3. ([www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text](http://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text))

A child-friendly version is available at [www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text-childrens-version](http://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text-childrens-version)

The school recognises, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as Portuguese legal provisions on this matter, that for the full and harmonious development of a child's personality, they should grow up in an environment in an atmosphere of happiness, love, and understanding. The school is therefore committed not only to the avoidance of explicit harm, but also to supporting families to nurture the growth and development of their children.

The school recognises that certain pupils may have characteristics which make them more vulnerable to risk of harm. This includes, but is not limited to, children who are in care or are 'looked after'; children in families with a history of domestic violence; children in situations of parental substance use; children whose parents/guardians experience significant mental health difficulties; children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); and children with protected characteristics.

The school is also aware that pupils may at times face additional challenges, including mental health difficulties, which pose a risk to their own safety and wellbeing. While mental health difficulties in and of themselves do not always constitute a safeguarding concern, there may be times when a pupil's mental health difficulties place them at greater risk of harm. In such cases, the school will activate its safeguarding procedures and seek to provide additional support for pupils and families in this situation.

The school acknowledges that listening to children is an important and essential part of safeguarding them against harm. To this end, any concern in relation to an individual child or group of children will be listened to and acted upon to safeguard their welfare.

As members of staff have day-to-day contact with pupils, they are well-placed to support and monitor pupil wellbeing and to observe possible signs of harm. All staff members are obliged to ensure they are familiar with different types of harm and potential indicators of abuse (see Appendix 3 for further details). Staff members are also obliged to report any concerns immediately, in line with the reporting procedures outlined below. This includes concerns arising both within school and outside of school, for example, on school trips or educational visits, or in the wider community.

The school recognises its responsibility for reacting promptly and effectively to any safeguarding or child protection concerns that may arise, including reporting concerns about pupil safety or welfare to relevant external bodies as prescribed by law.

At Bright International School, safeguarding and child protection procedures form one part of the many ways in which the school supports pupils' safety and wellbeing. The school recognises its responsibility for educating the

school community about safeguarding and child protection issues, and opportunities for this are built into the school calendar and curriculum. In addition to equipping children with the tools to keep themselves safe, the school provides a range of supportive and collaborative learning opportunities for parents and guardians, including workshops, webinars, and signposting to resources relevant to their child's age and stage of development.

The school also engages in a process of safeguarding accreditation known as the Selo Protetor (Protective Seal) with the Comissão Nacional de Promoção dos Direitos e Proteção das Crianças e Jovens (the National Commission for the Promotion of the Rights and the Protection of Children and Young People). The commission reviews the effectiveness of school provision in relation to Article 7 of Portuguese law (*Lei n.º 147/99, de 1 de setembro 'Lei de protecção de crianças e jovens em perigo'*) on the protection of young people and children in danger and recognises the school's recognition and promotion of the rights of children.

## The Safeguarding Team

Bright International School has a dedicated whole-school safeguarding team, comprised of:

- The Head of Safeguarding, who has undertaken specialist training in safeguarding and child protection, leads the strategic direction of the school's safeguarding provision, and oversees the work of the safeguarding team.
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) who have undertaken specialist training in safeguarding and child protection and manage individual cases of concern.
- The school's psychologist, who provides consultation on issues related to pupils' mental health and wellbeing.

The Safeguarding Team also liaises closely with the School Lead First Aider in relation to cases involving pupils' physical wellbeing and/or medical concerns.

Bright International School also has an appointed Safeguarding Board Member with a strategic role relating to safeguarding and child protection. The main purpose of this role is to ensure that the correct policies and procedures regarding safeguarding and child protection are in place and are being followed. The role does not encompass routine involvement in safeguarding or child protection concerns. Any individual safeguarding concerns should be directed to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads via the procedure outlined below.

Please see Appendix 1 for details of the current members of the safeguarding team and their contact details.

## The role of the Designated Safeguarding Leads

The School's Designated Safeguarding Leads are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures are known, understood, and implemented appropriately by all members of the school community.
- Ensuring that pupils are aware of the different avenues of support available to them in school and the ways in which they can report a concern.

- Ensuring that parents/guardians are aware of the school's procedures for reporting a safeguarding or child protection concern.
- Keeping detailed, accurate, and secure records of concerns and referrals.
- Working collaboratively to review the correct course of action to take in response to specific concerns, including making referrals to external bodies as appropriate.
- Managing a caseload of specific individual concerns, ensuring that pathways are agreed with the safeguarding team, actions are carried out with sufficient urgency, and records are updated appropriately.
- Liaising with relevant teaching staff, pastoral team members, and external professionals to coordinate Team Around the Child/Family processes.
- Liaising with the school's leadership teams to ensure that the topic of safeguarding and child protection is covered with children in a developmentally appropriate way in assemblies, in tutor groups, and through the Health and Citizenship curriculum.
- Liaising with the school's Admissions Team to ensure that when children arrive at or leave the school, their child protection file is transferred confidentially and securely, and confirmation of receipt is issued/received.
- Ensuring that their safeguarding obligations under the school's Online Safety Policy are fulfilled.
- Acting as a source of support and advice in relation to safeguarding issues.
- Undertaking relevant Designated Safeguarding Lead or refresher training on an annual basis, including ensuring that they have a working knowledge of child protection procedures in Portugal.

## The role of the Head of Safeguarding

The Head of Safeguarding is responsible for:

- Leading the strategic direction of the school's safeguarding provision in consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Leads and those staff members responsible for pastoral care.
- Overseeing and supporting the work of the Designated Safeguarding Leads.
- Chairing meetings of the safeguarding team to facilitate collaborative review of specific concerns.
- Ensuring that strong decision-making processes are in place within the safeguarding team, including when an external referral is appropriate and/or required.
- Ensuring that systems are in place to support the secure storage and appropriate transfer of accurate safeguarding records.
- Holding records of staff safeguarding training and liaising with the Pedagogical Director to ensure that training is delivered and refreshed at appropriate intervals.
- Providing training and safeguarding briefings to staff members about safeguarding issues relevant to the school as required.
- Consulting with the school's leadership teams to ensure that school policies and procedures are consistent with the Safeguarding & Child Protection policy on a day-to-day basis.
- Liaising with the DSLs and staff members responsible for pastoral care to provide to the Principal and Safeguarding Board Member an anonymised termly overview of safeguarding issues being dealt with in school, details of decision-making structures to protect children from harm, and details of staff training.

- Where a concern is noted and the best course of action is not immediately clear, liaising with the Principal, and/or Safeguarding Board Member for additional support and advice.
- Liaising with Principal, and Safeguarding Board Member about high level concerns, particularly those involving police investigation or involvement of external services.
- Liaising with the Principal to ensure that any structural concerns or weaknesses in the school's safeguarding and child protection arrangements are reported and remedied without delay.
- Reporting allegations made against members of staff to the Principal or Safeguarding Board Member.
- Acting as a source of support and advice in relation to safeguarding issues.
- Undertaking relevant Designated Safeguarding Lead or refresher training on an annual basis, including ensuring that they have a working knowledge of child protection procedures in Portugal.

## The Role of the Safeguarding Board Member

The Safeguarding Board Member is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the school's procedures are consistent with this policy.
- Ensuring the school's recruitment and vetting processes are fully compliant and in place, as well as being up-to-date.
- Meeting with the Head of Safeguarding at least once per term to review an anonymised overview of safeguarding issues being dealt with in school, to ensure that appropriate decisions are being taken by the school to protect children from harm, and to ensure that adequate staff training is in place.
- Liaising with the Principal in relation to any safeguarding allegations involving members of staff or that could cause reputational damage to the school, or cases requiring legal advice or the involvement of the Portuguese judicial or law enforcement authorities.
- Supporting the annual review of the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures.

## Responsibilities of all Staff Members at Bright International School

- To read and comply with the school's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.
- To care for pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.
- To mitigate risk of harm to pupils by ensuring that all school procedures are followed meticulously (including processes around registration, behaviour, trip and event organisation etc. and procedures around crisis response).
- To be familiar with and vigilant in relation to common signs of a safeguarding or child protection need (see Appendix 3).
- To create a structured, supportive environment for pupils so that they have the opportunity to speak to a trusted adult about their concerns.
- To follow guidance on appropriate professional behaviour to ensure that pupils and staff are not placed at risk of harm or risk of allegation of harm (refer also to the Staff Code of Conduct Policy). This includes ensuring that all security and emergency procedures are followed, including the wearing of identification lanyards at all times while on the school premises.



- To maintain professional relationships with the children in their care. Staff members should not seek to develop independent personal relationships with children outside of the school setting, including online contact. Staff members should report to a member of the safeguarding team any pupil who appears to be infatuated with a staff member, that is, appears to have feelings that go beyond the normal student-adult relationship.
- To report any matters of concern about a pupil to a member of the safeguarding team in line with the procedures set out below.
- To report any matters of concern about a staff member in line with the procedures set out below.
- To maintain strict confidentiality around the reporting of concerns to safeguard the dignity and privacy of the individuals involved. Concerns should be reported via the procedures outlined below and should not be disclosed to any other party, unless the applicable law or a competent court or public authority so determines.
- To maintain strict confidentiality around the receipt of any sensitive information relating to a child. On occasion, the school's safeguarding team may need to share a pupil's personal information with a limited number of staff members in order to keep that child safe (for example, as part of a process of safety planning for a pupil experiencing self-harm). Any information shared with teachers about the personal circumstances of a child should not be disclosed to any other party and should not be discussed with the pupil themselves unless this is specified by the safeguarding team.
- To keep a sufficient record of any significant concern, complaint, conversation or event.
- To cooperate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils.
- To undertake annual safeguarding training and refresher training, and any additional training advised by the Head of Safeguarding.
- To be familiar with and comply with the school's Online Safety Policy.
- To raise all concerns including, but not limited to, poor and unsafe practice, or potential failures in safeguarding. The school is very open to hearing about and acting on any concerns raised.

## Safer recruitment

The school is committed to ensuring that all staff recruitment, selection, and appointment processes ensure the safeguarding of the children and young people in its care.

The school maintains a comprehensive spreadsheet of Recruitment and Vetting and ensures that appropriate child protection checks and procedures have been applied to all adults working with pupils.

## Safeguarding training for Staff Members

The Head of Safeguarding and the school Educational Psychologist will undertake Advanced Safeguarding Children Training (Level 3) and attend refresher training at two-year intervals, as well as relevant annual training as required.

Safeguarding training is provided for all staff members on a yearly basis, with additional updates throughout the school year as required. New staff receive training as part of the school's comprehensive induction programme.

Safeguarding training is also provided for the Safeguarding Board Member on a two-yearly basis, with refresher training in specific areas relevant to the school as required.

## Safeguarding procedures for Visitors

All visitors to the school site must report to the security desk at the gate upon arrival. Family members who have pre-registered with the school must use their orange identification badge and lanyard to enter the premises. All other visitors will be required to register separately at the security desk and will be issued with an identity badge on a red lanyard. All visitors to the campus, including family members, must ensure that their security lanyard is worn and visible at all times during their visit.

During school hours, visitors who have not yet completed vetting procedures must be supervised by a staff member. No visitor should be alone with any pupil at any time. For school events (concerts, workshops etc.) where groups of parents may be visiting the site during the school day, the school will put measures in place to ensure appropriate identification, supervision and safety.

Visitors are issued with a 'Safeguarding Information for Visitors' document which outlines expectations and guidance in relation to keeping pupils safe in school. This includes guidance on the school's emergency and evacuation procedures, safe use of school facilities, appropriate conduct, data protection, and details of how to report any safeguarding concern of which a visitor may become aware.

When visiting speakers are invited to the school campus, the school will take reasonable steps to ensure that the visitor upholds the school's values and is committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of children. Further details are outlined in the school's Procedures for Visitors document.

## Online Safety Policy

Online safety is a whole-school responsibility involving collaboration between staff, pupils, and parents/guardians. The school has an Online Safety Policy to ensure that it meets its statutory obligations to keep pupils safe and protected from potential harm, both within and outside school. The requirement to ensure that pupils are able to use the internet and related communication technologies appropriately and safely is addressed as part of the wider duty of care. The policy also outlines the specific responsibilities of all members of the school community in relation to keeping pupils safe online. Due to the ever-changing nature of digital technologies, this policy is reviewed at least annually and, if necessary, more frequently, in response to any significant new developments in the use of technologies, new threats to online safety, or any incidents that have taken place. Please see the Online Safety Policy document for further details.

## Trips, off-Site visits and academic internship

The school's responsibility to safeguard its pupils extends to all trips and off-site visits. Comprehensive procedures are in place to ensure that consent is received; risk assessments are conducted; appropriate staff-to-pupil ratios are in place; and safeguarding procedures are followed both on-site and outside of the school environment. Please refer to the school's Trips Policy for further details.

## Intimate care in school

There are occasions in school, particularly in Early Years, where children may require the assistance of a staff member with personal hygiene matters. In such cases, staff members should:

- Make it very clear to the pupil precisely what they will do to help.
- Notify another member of staff about what has happened to the student, why they require assistance, what they plan to do, and where they will go to help the child change.
- Consider the area where they go to assist the pupil with care, ensuring that the needs of the child for privacy and dignity are kept in mind.
- Notify the pupil's parents/guardians by the end of the day about what happened and what actions were taken.
- Ensure that the event is logged.

Where a pupil requires intimate care on a regular basis, a care plan should be drawn up and agreed between the student, parents/guardians, and the school.

## Staff supervision of changing rooms (for when needed)

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary or appropriate for staff members to provide supervision of pupils while they are changing. The level of appropriate supervision is determined based on the age and developmental needs of the children and young people getting changed.

The school engages in robust Safer Recruitment practices to ensure any staff members involved in providing supervision are suitable to do so.

Staff members should implement the following principles of best practice:

- In most situations, it should not be necessary for adults to remain in the changing room in order to support and monitor pupils' behaviour; being in close proximity and pupils being aware of this may be enough. Pupils should know that adults are in earshot of what is happening in the room and will enter if necessary - in response to a disturbance or a concern about bullying or unsafe behaviour, for example. Staff members should establish a clear code of behaviour in changing spaces and make sure pupils understand the expectations about their behaviour while they are unsupervised.
- If it is possible to do so discreetly while facilitating the dignity of the children, the door of the designated changing room will be left slightly open so that nobody can see inside but staff outside can hear if there is a disturbance.
- If an adult needs to enter the room they should alert pupils in advance and give pupils the opportunity to cover up if they wish to.
- Where possible, the staff members who are supervising pupils getting changed should be of the same gender as them.
- Staff should never stand in the changing room watching pupils, or go in and out repeatedly without good reason.
- Staff should not change or shower in the same space as pupils.

- Children of all ages should be encouraged to be as independent as possible when changing - staff members should consider prompting and giving verbal help and encouragement before offering physical assistance.
- If it's necessary to give a child assistance, this should be done openly and in sight of others as far as possible.
- Staff members should be especially careful when helping children with underclothes, tights and swimming costumes.

In situations where pupils are using off-site changing areas, staff members should make themselves aware in advance of whether/when members of the public will be using the facilities and implement a risk assessment.

Where possible, the school will endeavour to book enough time on either side of an activity to allow pupils to get showered and changed before the public are allowed in. If this is not possible, and members of the public will be using the changing facilities, staff members should monitor and ensure that contact between pupils and members of the public is appropriate. If changing areas are shared with pupils from another school, particularly those who are older/younger, all schools involved should conduct a thorough risk assessment together.

## Medicines in School

Pupils are not permitted to carry medication on campus. This applies to both prescription and non-prescription (over-the-counter) medication. Where a pupil with medical needs requires access to medication during the school day, this medicine should be handed in to the Medical Room where it will be stored safely, and its administration can be monitored by the medical team. Pupils with medical needs will be given permission to attend the Medical Room to take their medication as needed. In rare cases where pupils have a serious medical need that may require swift administration of medication in an emergency (for example, pupils at risk of anaphylaxis), a pupil may be given permission to carry emergency medication on their person. However, this must be agreed with the school as part of a formal care planning process, with necessary precautions in place to ensure that the medication is kept safely and securely.

## Children with multiple needs

As noted above, the school recognises that some pupils, particularly those with protected characteristics, may be more vulnerable to risk of harm. In order to prevent such harm, the school has proactive procedures in place to support pupils with a range of needs.

Where a safeguarding concern does arise in relation to a pupil with existing needs, or where a case requires input from a range of different professionals, a Team Around the Child (TAC) is formed. Where the child has a sibling in school who may also benefit from additional support, a Team Around the Family (TAF) is formed.

A TAC or TAF process involves the formation of a multidisciplinary team of practitioners, established on a case-by-case basis to support a pupil and/or their family. Professionals who contribute to the TAC/TAF may include specialists in safeguarding, pastoral, emotional, and/or learning support.

The purpose of a TAC or TAF is to enable:

- Consistency and continuity of care for the pupil
- Efficient collaboration between professionals
- Clear channels of communication both within school and between school and home.

Where it is safe and developmentally appropriate to do so, a TAC or TAF will include input from the pupil themselves and their family, with everyone working together to ensure the pupil has all the support they need.

TAC/TAF meetings follow a prescribed format (see Appendix 5) and meeting notes are stored securely to ensure appropriate confidentiality.

## Children at risk of self-harm or harm to others

The school acknowledges that, for a variety of reasons, there may be times when pupils pose a risk to their own safety or to the safety of others. This may be related to mental health difficulties or a special educational need, though it is important to note that mental health difficulties and special educational needs do not in and of themselves constitute a safeguarding concern.

Where a pupil is observed to be at risk of self-harm, already engaging in self-harm, experiencing suicidal ideation, or at risk of causing harm to others, the school will conduct a risk assessment and will convene a Team Around the Child (TAC).

In consultation with the pupil concerned, their family, the staff members working with them in school, and any external agency representatives, the TAC team will seek to put a safety and support plan in place to meet the needs of both the pupil and their peers.

In cases where the school does not feel it can keep a pupil or their peers safe from harm, it may be necessary for the pupil to remain at home for a period of time while the risk assessment and safety plan are being constructed. In such cases, alternative educational provision will be put in place. The aim will be for this alternative educational provision to be a short-term measure, with the goal of reintegrating the pupil as swiftly as possible. In such cases, a reintegration meeting will be organised to support the pupil's successful return to school.

## Missing children

The school has a range of procedures in place to ensure that all pupils are accounted for during the school day. Security gates at entrances and exits are locked and accessed only with a key & member of staff, which supports the accurate registration of each person as they enter or leave the school site.

The school registers pupil attendance in lessons first thing in the morning and throughout the day. This enables staff members to identify if a child goes missing during the school day.

If a pupil is marked absent for morning registration, and is not on the school site, the school will follow its procedures for absence, including contacting parents/guardians.

If a pupil is absent from lessons but is known to have been on the school site and has subsequently become unaccounted for, the school will enact safeguarding procedures, including an emergency sweep of the campus to locate the child.

If a child is observed to be missing from education more regularly, this is treated as a safeguarding concern. The school recognises that, as well as having a significant impact on a child's development, continued absence from education is a potential indicator of abuse, neglect, or sexual exploitation. If the school becomes aware of a pupil having run away from, or having gone missing from home, this will be dealt with as a child protection matter.

Maintaining accurate registration records is a key safeguarding responsibility of teaching staff.

## Bullying

The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as the intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face-to-face or online.

Bullying may take a variety of forms and may be targeted on the basis of race; religion; cultural identity; sexuality; gender; special educational needs and/or disability; because a child is adopted or is a carer; or for another reason, (whether or not) linked to protected characteristics.

The school takes bullying extremely seriously and will act swiftly in response to cases of bullying. Please refer to the Anti-Bullying Policy for further details.

The school considers that a bullying incident should be addressed as a safeguarding concern in situations when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.

## Crisis response procedures

The school has procedures in place for crisis response.

## Reporting a safeguarding or child protection concern

It is important to note that while this document refers to the school's safeguarding approach and procedures, anyone can refer a concern to Child Protection Services in Portugal. See Appendix 2 for details.

## Pupils reporting a concern

Pupils can report concerns by:

- Contacting a member of the School's Safeguarding Team
- Speaking with their form tutor or another trusted adult in school

Pupils are made aware that information related to safeguarding concerns must be shared with the safeguarding team, including disclosures made via the counselling service. Pupils accessing counselling are made aware from the outset that information shared in sessions is held confidentially, except in cases where there is a safeguarding or child protection concern, when it must be shared with the safeguarding team.

Other than within the safeguarding team, information about a concern will only be shared with other staff members on a need-to-know basis, and pupils will be informed of this at every stage.

In cases where information must be shared more widely (for example, where the law requires the involvement of police or child protection services), the school will seek to include pupils in the process in ways that are developmentally-appropriate and in line with their comfort and preferences, while ensuring that emotional support is available.

The school will follow the law and guidance from child protective services when determining when to inform parents of safeguarding and child protection concerns in relation to their children.

## Parents/Guardians reporting a concern

Parents/guardians can report concern about a pupil by contacting a member of the school's safeguarding team (see Appendix 1). Where the concern is about a member of staff, parents/guardians should report the concern directly to the Principal. Where the concern is about the Principal, parents/guardians should report the concern directly to the CEO and Safeguarding Board Member.

## Staff Members reporting a concern

Staff members can report concerns about a pupil by speaking with a member of the safeguarding team.

To report a concern about another member of staff, staff should liaise directly with the Principal. To report a concern about the Principal, staff should liaise directly with the Safeguarding Board Member.

Similarly, if a staff member becomes aware of an allegation made by a third party against another member of staff, this must be reported immediately to the Principal. If a staff member becomes aware of an allegation made by a third party against the Principal, this must be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Board Member.

## Procedures relating to allegations against pupils

A pupil against whom an allegation has been made may be suspended from the school while an investigation is conducted. Procedures outlined in the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and Behaviour Policy will apply and an external referral to police, child protection services, or another relevant external agency may be required. In such cases, or in cases of bullying, all parties will be treated as being at risk and the school will seek to support all pupils involved.

## Procedures relating to concerns about or allegations against Staff Members

All concerns about a staff member should be reported to the Principal, including in cases where the staff member is no longer employed at the school, or where allegations of historical abuse are concerned.

Concerns about or allegations against a member of staff will be dealt with by the Principal. This may involve the appointment of a case manager to oversee the investigation of concern. The case manager will be a member of the Safeguarding Team and/or Leadership Team, depending on the nature of the concern, and will keep the Principal continuously informed as the investigation proceeds.



Where the concern relates to the conduct of the Principal, this will be dealt with by the Safeguarding Board Member (who is also the Chair of the Board). Any allegations against the Chair of the Board will be dealt with by a select committee of Board Members, and an independent body.

As a British international school, Bright International School makes reference to the recommendations of the “Keeping Children Safe in Education” (KCSIE) guidelines when reviewing concerns or allegations related to staff conduct.

## Low level concerns

In line with KCSIE guidance, the case manager reviewing a concern will make a determination as to whether a concern meets the threshold for harm to a child. Under the KCSIE guidance, a concern is considered ‘low level’ when the threshold for harm to a child has not been met. However, it is important to note that low level concerns are not insignificant, and action must be taken to address them.

If a low-level concern is raised about a member of staff, the case manager responsible for reviewing the concern will notify the member of staff concerned as quickly as possible and will follow this up with a written notification of the concern, a record of the outcome of the safeguarding investigation, and any actions that the member of staff must take to address the concern. A low-level concern is recorded on the staff member’s personnel file (a confidential file held securely by the Principal) for the duration of their employment at Bright International School. However, if action is successfully taken to address the concern, and no further substantiated concerns arise, a low-level concern will not be shared with any potential future employers during the reference request process, as per KCSIE guidelines. In cases where there is an accumulation of low-level concerns that are not addressed, the school will be obliged to note this on reference requests to potential future employers.

## Concerns that may meet the threshold for harm

In all cases where it is alleged that someone 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 in a manner that indicates that they would pose a risk of harm to children; or behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children, the person responsible for dealing with the allegation will make immediate contact with child protection services and with the relevant public authorities, without investigating, within one working day. In cases of potential serious harm, the police will be informed from the outset. All discussions with the police and child protective services will be documented in writing. In borderline cases, discussions can be held informally with child protection services without naming the individual(s) concerned.

Having contacted child protection services, the Principal may choose to appoint a case manager. The case manager will inform the accused person of the allegation as soon as possible after the child protection team has been consulted. The parents/guardians of the child(ren) involved will be informed of the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it, depending on the guidance of the child protection team. Where the child protection team advises that a strategy discussion is needed, or that the police need to be involved, the case manager should not inform the accused or the parents/guardians until these agencies have been consulted, and it has been agreed what information can be disclosed. Parents/guardians will be kept informed of the progress of the case, including the outcome of any disciplinary process, as allowed by law.



## Suspension during an investigation of a concern or allegation

Any school employee who is the subject of a concern or an allegation may be asked to take leave of absence or may be suspended without prejudice pending the outcome of the investigation. This is decided by the Principal in consultation with the case manager, Safeguarding Board Member and, if appropriate, child protection services. If the allegation involves the Principal, then the Chair of Board Members/Safeguarding Board Member will make this decision in consultation with child protection services. The decision will take into account the seriousness and plausibility of the allegation; the risk of harm to the pupil concerned or to other pupils; the possibility that evidence will be tampered with; the interests of the person concerned; the interests of the school; and the need for a full and fair investigation. Suspension is determined under the applicable legislation; is not a disciplinary sanction; and involves full pay.

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against any unwanted publicity in any cases of allegations against staff members until and unless the person is charged with an offence.

The school has a duty of care towards its employees and as such, it will ensure that effective support is provided for anyone facing an allegation.

## Possible outcomes of a review into an allegation

The school will make reference to the following categories when determining the outcome of an allegation:

- Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation.
- Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm to the person subject of the allegation.
- False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation.
- Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.
- Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

Details of substantiated allegations will be recorded on the employee's file and retained at least until the employee retires or ceases to work in any capacity for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation, if this is longer. Allegations proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious, will not be referred to in any employer reference, but may remain on a staff member's personal file for the duration of their employment at Bright International School, for reference in the event that further concerns arise. If the school ceases to use the services of a member of staff (including the Principal) because they are deemed unsuitable to work with children, a settlement/compromise **agreement will not be used and a referral to the relevant authorities in Portugal will be initiated.**

Any such incidents will be followed by a review of the safeguarding procedures within the school, with a report being presented by the Principal to the Board Members and appropriate authorities in Portugal without delay. If the allegation is against the Principal, the report is prepared and presented by the CEO.

If a member of staff (including the Principal) who is the subject of an allegation, chooses to resign, any child protection allegations will still be followed up by the school in accordance with this policy.

## Procedures relating to allegations against Parents/Guardians

Allegations made against a parent/guardian will be reviewed by the school's Safeguarding Team, and the process followed will depend on the nature and urgency of the allegation.

Where the school considers that there may be a risk to the safety; health; development; or education of a student, the school will take immediate action to address the situation. In deciding which course of action to pursue, the school will take into account the severity and nature of the risk, the best interest of the child, and the importance of the private life of the pupil and their family. The school will seek to act in conjunction with the parent/guardian as far as possible to address the risk of harm. In enacting this duty, the school may seek the guidance and cooperation of relevant authorities, including child protective services. This may involve a formal child protection referral or may involve informal consultation with child protection services without naming the individual(s) concerned.

Depending on the nature of the allegation, and the guidance of the relevant authorities, the school may be in a position to offer a programme of support for the family, without the need for a formal referral to child protective services. Where a parent/guardian opposes intervention, the school is obliged by law to communicate the situation to child protective services or to the Public Prosecution Service as appropriate.

In urgent cases, where there is present or imminent danger to the life of a child, or a risk of significant compromise to their physical or psychological integrity, the school will take appropriate measures for the immediate protection of the child; will report the matter to child protective services; and will request the intervention of court or police services as appropriate.

## Unsubstantiated, false or malicious allegations

In cases of unsubstantiated, false, or deliberately malicious allegations made by a pupil or a member of staff, the Principal will consider whether to take disciplinary action. Depending on the nature and severity of the allegation, an external referral to police, child protection services, or another relevant external agency may be required.

In cases of unsubstantiated, false, or deliberately malicious allegations made by a parent/guardian, the Principal will consider whether to require that parent to withdraw their child or children from the school on the basis that they have treated the school or a member of staff unreasonably or in a manner that undermines the school's values. Depending on the nature and severity of the allegation, an external referral to police, child protection services, or another relevant external agency may be required.

Whether or not the person making the allegation is a student, staff member, parent, or other member of the public, the school reserves the right to contact the police to determine whether any action might be appropriate.

## Safeguarding and child protection records

Accurate record-keeping and evidence-collection is a crucial element of a school's safeguarding practice. Where a safeguarding concern arises, all linked documentation and/or evidence (including, for example, handwritten notes, mobile phones containing text or social media messages, computers, or clothing), must be kept safely and handed to a member of the safeguarding team for secure storage on CPOMS (scanned) and/or in the locked cabinet.

The school's safeguarding records in relation to children in need and/or child protection are held securely as follows:

- The secure CPOMS Platform.
- Paper records are held securely by the safeguarding team in a locked cabinet.
- Safeguarding records will be kept safely until the child reaches the age of 25.
- If a child transitions to another educational setting, the school will ensure the secure transmission of the pupil's safeguarding file to the new placement. This is a legal requirement. Where a parent declines to disclose the details of a new school, Bright International School is obliged to refer the matter to child protective services.

## Compliance

The school adheres to Portuguese legislation and is governed by Portuguese law. This policy makes explicit reference to the provisions of the Lei da Proteção de Crianças e Jovens em Perigo (Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger) and incorporates statutory guidance, including the school's obligations in the protection of minors in accordance with Article 5 of the European Council's Convention against Sexual Exploitation and the Sexual Abuse of Children. As noted in the introduction to this policy, the school is committed to upholding the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, as well as the Selo Protetor standards outlined by the National Commission for the Promotion of the Rights and the Protection of Children and Young People in Portugal. Furthermore, the Safeguarding Team are familiar with the "*Guia de Orientação para os Profissionais de Educação na Abordagem de Situações de Maus-Tratos ou Outras Situações de Perigo*" to help inform our local practices.

Bright International School also refers to the guidance of The International Taskforce on Child Protection (ITFCP) in order to ensure compliance with international safeguarding standards. As a British international school, Bright International School also refers to the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance. While this is not statutory in Portugal, as it is in the UK, it provides a helpful reference point for the school in the context of the British educational system.

## Review of the Policy

The Principal and Leadership Team, together with Board Members, will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy on at least an annual basis. This annual review will take account of evidence including visits by the Designated Safeguarding Board Member, reports from the Safeguarding Team to the governing body, staff training, referral data, and analysis of issues which have emerged in the school.

## Linked policies and documents

The following policies and procedures are mentioned in or interact with this policy:

- Acceptable Use Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Crisis Response Procedures
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Procedures for Visitors
- Safeguarding Procedures for Visitors
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Staff Concerns (Whistleblowing) Policy
- Trips Policy

## Appendix 1: Contact details for the Safeguarding Team 2024-25

Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead – Tom Caston

Designated Safeguarding Leads – Sophie Gomes, Nicolas Hildebrandt, Patricia Cardoso, Helena Silveira, Emma Torcato.

Safeguarding Board Member – Miguel Ladeira Santos

External contacts In cases of extreme and immediate danger, contact the Ministério Público at the Tribunal de Família e Menores or the Police.

## Appendix 2: Child Protection Services in Portugal

Child Protection in Portugal is overseen by the local Comissões de Protecção de Crianças e Jovens (CPCJ). Their mission is to act to promote the rights of children and young people, and to prevent or put an end to situations which may affect their safety, health, training, education, or their full development. In general, school intervention should be agreed with the parents/guardians of the student, and managed in such a way as to always preserve the pupil's and the family's right to privacy. However, the school must intervene - regardless of the aforementioned agreement - in the following situations:

- When the parents/guardians/legal representatives oppose the school's intervention, the Principal must immediately communicate the situation to the CPCJ team in the pupil's area of residence or, if none exists, to the Public Prosecutor (Ministério Público) at the Minors and Family Court (Tribunais de Família e Menores).
- When the facts that indicated a situation of danger to the pupil constitute a crime, they must be communicated to the Public Prosecutor or to the Police.
- When there is a current or imminent danger to the pupil's life or physical integrity and there is opposition from the parental authority, the school must adopt adequate measures for their immediate protection and request the Court's or the Police's intervention.
- When the behaviour of a pupil constitutes a crime, and the pupil is aged 12 to 16 years old, the Public Prosecutor must be informed. If the pupil is under 12 years old, the CPCJ should be informed.
- If the pupil exceeds the allowed number of absences to class and fails to abide by the measures set to compensate or recover from this, or if such measures are ineffective, the school has the obligation to communicate this fact to the Child Protection Committee or, if there is none in the relevant area, to the Public Prosecutor at the Minors and Family Court. The purpose is to try and find an adequate solution to support the pupil's academic path, in collaboration with the school. If a pupil is suspended in the context of a disciplinary procedure, the Principal can decide that, considering the circumstances, the suspension must be communicated to the child protection committee or to the Public Prosecutor at the Minors and Family Court.

Local contacts:

**CPCJ** - <https://www.cnpdpcj.gov.pt/o-que-sao>

CPCJ de Loulé

Morada. Rua Nossa Sra. de Fátima, Terminal Rodoviário, r/c Dto. 8100-267 Loulé

Telefone: +351 289 400 776

Email: [cpcj.loule@cnpdpcj.pt](mailto:cpcj.loule@cnpdpcj.pt)

**MINISTÉRIO PÚBLICO** - <https://ministerio-publico.pt/loule/>

SECÇÃO DE FAMÍLIA E MENORES – Faro

Email: [faro.ministeriopublico@tribunais.org.pt](mailto:faro.ministeriopublico@tribunais.org.pt)

Telefone: +351 289 091 110

Morada: Rua Antero de Quental, 9 – 2º 8000 – 210 Faro

Atendimento ao Público: O atendimento ao público é à terça-feira, entre as 14h00 e as 16h00, com inscrição presencial ou pelo telefone 289 091 110.

**PSP** - <https://www.psp.pt/Pages/onde-estamos.aspx?d=Faro>

COMANDO DISTRITAL DE FARO

Morada: Rua da Polícia de Segurança Pública, n.º 32 8000-408 Faro

Telefone: +351 289 078 100 / +351 289 078 101

## Appendix 3: Types and potential indicators of abuse

It is important to note that the potential indicators of abuse outlined below are intended as a guide to support adults to identify situations where a child may have been abused. These indicators do not in and of themselves necessarily confirm that abuse has taken place. If a child presents with one of the potential indicators, staff members should liaise with the safeguarding team regarding their concerns.

### Potential indicators of abuse

- The pupil says that they have been abused
- The pupil makes a comment or asks a question which may indicate that they have been abused
- When a pupil presents with an injury: there is no reasonable or consistent explanation for the injury; the injury is unusual in kind or location; there have been a number of injuries; or there is a pattern to the injuries
- The pupil's behaviour indicates a concern, e.g. behaviour stands out as being unusual; the pupil displays particularly withdrawn or extremely challenging behaviour; or there is a sudden change in the pupil's behaviour
- The pupil asks to drop subjects with a particular teacher and seems reluctant to discuss the reasons
- The pupil is reluctant to go home, or has been openly rejected by his/her parents or guardians
- The pupil's development is delayed
- The pupil loses or gains weight
- The pupil appears neglected, for example, dirty, hungry, inadequately clothed.

### Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse may involve any of the following:

- Inflicting physical injury on a child by other than accidental means - causing skin bruising, burns, disfigurement, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function, or death.
- Creating a substantial risk of physical harm to a child's bodily functioning.
- Committing acts that are cruel or inhumane regardless of observable injury. Such acts may include, but are not limited to, instances of extreme discipline demonstrating a disregard of a child's pain and/or mental suffering.
- Assaulting or criminally mistreating a child.
- Engaging in actions or omissions resulting in injury to or creating a substantial risk to the physical or mental health or development of a child.
- Failing to take reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any of the above.

### Possible indicators of physical abuse

- Unexplained bruises or welts on any part of the body e.g. fingertip bruising on face, neck or arms
- Bruises of different ages (various colours)
- Injuries reflecting shape of an article used (e.g. electric cord, belt, buckle, ping pong paddle, hand)



- Injuries that regularly appear after absence or vacation
- Unexplained burns, especially to soles, palms, back, or buttocks
- Burns with a pattern from an electric burner, iron, or cigarette
- Rope burns on arms, legs, neck, or torso
- Injuries inconsistent with information offered by the child
- Immersion burns with a distinct boundary line
- Unexplained laceration, abrasions, or fractures.

## **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. This may include failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing; or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. In short, neglect is a failure to provide for a child's basic needs within their own environment.

Neglect may be:

- Physical: for example, failure to provide necessary food or shelter, or lack of appropriate supervision. This would include failure to provide proper adult guardianship such as leaving children unsupervised at home for any extended period of time.
- Medical: for example, failure to provide necessary medical or mental health treatment.
- Emotional: for example, a pattern of actions, such as, inattention to a child's emotional needs, failure to provide psychological care, or permitting the child to use alcohol or other drugs. Specific examples may include verbal humiliation, refusing to acknowledge the presence of a child, invasion of privacy for no specific reason, violent threats, etc.

Possible indicators of neglect

- Child is unwashed or hungry
- Parents are uninterested in child's academic performance
- Parents do not respond to repeated communications
- Child does not want to go home
- Parents cannot be reached in the case of emergency
- Symptoms of attachment issues such as behavioural and emotional problems, which may be a consequence of neglect.
- Parents/legal guardians are absent from the family home for a period of longer than 24 hours.

## **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child causing severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. This may take the form of making a child feel that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. This may also involve the exploitation or corruption of children, causing children frequently to feel frightened, or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. In short, emotional abuse of a child involves treating them in a way which deliberately undermines their confidence, self-esteem, or self-worth.

Emotional abuse may include any of the following:

- Stigmatising, discriminating against, or humiliating a child based on their age, gender, sexual orientation, race, language, physicality, intellect or any protected characteristic
- Using name-calling, put-downs, threats or other verbal or written means to undermine the child's emotional security and psychological well being
- Inconsistent care-giving
- Threatening withdrawal of love or care as a punishment
- Swinging between overprotective and over-punitive parenting
- Parental interference in school life (as opposed to supporting school life)
- Humiliation by an adult in front of other children
- Displaying an overly negative attitude towards a child, only noticing the child's deficits and unable to notice positive aspects of the child
- Refusing to acknowledge the presence of the child (deliberate ignoring)
- Invasion of privacy or personal space for no specific reason
- Over-working a child
- Witnessing of domestic violence between parents or guardians.
- Possible indicators of emotional abuse
- Child is quiet or withdrawn
- Child is socially isolated and avoids interactions with community
- Child appears depressed
- Loss of appetite
- Sudden loss of motivation for school or activities
- Changes in behaviour
- Mood swings
- Angry outbursts
- Tearfulness
- Tiredness
- Avoidance of eye contact
- Avoidance of people, places, and/or situations
- Unwillingness to try new things
- Sleep problems
- Signs of anxiety
- Obsessions or phobias
- Attention-needing behaviours
- Seeking inappropriate relationships.

## **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or encouraging a child or 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 or non-penetrative acts. They may include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic

material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Sexual abuse may include intentionally touching - either directly or through clothing - the genitals, anus, or breasts of a child for reasons other than hygiene or child care purposes. In short, sexual abuse is committing or allowing to be committed any sexual offence against a child.

Sexual abuse has some different characteristics of child abuse that warrant special attention. While physical abuse is often the result of immediate stress and not usually planned, sometimes sexual abuse requires planning with results that are more insidious. The planning, referred to as 'grooming', often results in victims accepting responsibility for the behaviour with associated feelings of guilt and shame for the sexual behaviour of the offender. Many victims, through the process of grooming, are taught that sexual acts are a form of love, so may feel that they love their offender. This is complex and can mean that children in situations of sexual abuse present as happy and well-adjusted children with no obvious signs of abuse.

#### Possible indicators of sexual abuse

- Evidence of physical trauma or bleeding to the oral, genital, or anal areas
- Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, or sexually transmitted diseases, or difficulty in walking or sitting
- Sexual knowledge, behaviour or use of language not appropriate to the child's age level
- Refusing to change into PE clothes or becoming worried about clothing being removed
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Extreme behavioural reactions
- Signs of distress including self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdose, anorexia, or signs of depression
- Changes in behaviour, for example becoming insecure or clinging
- Regressing to behaviour patterns associated with younger children, such as thumb-sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well
- A change of demeanour in the presence of a specific adult
- Inability to concentrate
- Starting to bed-wet again, day terrors or nightmares
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect, overreacting to criticism
- Unusual interpersonal relationship patterns
- Pregnancy, especially at a young age
- Leaving notes or drawing for others to see (attempts at whistleblowing).

#### **Grooming**

Grooming is the process of preparing a child for sexual exploitation. Grooming behaviours function to elicit trust from the child whilst creating a climate within the organisation which reduces the chance of the abuser being detected or reported. Grooming behaviours may also create a climate within which it is harder for a victim to report abuse (for example, through guilt, shame, threats of loss of relationship, blackmail etc.)

Where there are situations of sexual abuse between children, similar behaviours and patterns may be identified. Opportunities for abuse are more likely to occur during unstructured and unsupervised periods and areas, such as bathrooms, toilets, bedrooms, bedtimes, play times, at times and in areas when staff are distracted or busy, during staff meetings, or at times when the majority of adults are unavailable.

Potential warning signs for grooming:

- Staff members spending a disproportionate amount of time or developing a 'special' relationship with one particular pupil
- Staff members engaging in secretive behaviours with a particular pupil
- Personal contact with pupils outside of school hours
- Staff members purchasing gifts for a pupil to the exclusion of others
- Staff members inviting children their home or to spend the night
- Intimate touch or body language between staff members and pupils
- Intimate words used by the staff member or pupil towards each other or in conversation with others
- Pupils bragging about a relationship with a particular adult.

In the context of an international school community, it is not prohibited for staff members to invite children and their peers to their homes for play dates, social time, sleep overs etc. with their own children. This is not necessarily a cause for concern.

Staff members are advised that, in circumstances where a child is visiting their home regularly, it would be advisable to notify and seek authorisation from the school.

Where concerns arise about a staff member inviting children to their home in circumstances which appear to be unusual, these should be reported via the usual channels.

### **Child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

This involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where children receive something (for example. money, gifts, or even simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. These relationships are marked by an imbalance of power, with the perpetrator always holding some kind of power over the victim which typically increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Examples of CSE in schools may also include unwanted pressure from peers to engage in sexual activities, and sexual bullying (including cyberbullying and grooming). It is important to note that some children who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

### **Female genital mutilation (FGM)**

This involves the deliberate altering or removal of female genitals for non-medical reasons. Some other common names for FGM include female circumcision, cutting, bsunna, gudniin, halalays, tahur, megrez, and khitan though it may also be referred to in other ways. There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM. It is often performed by someone with no medical training, using instruments such as knives, scalpels, scissors, glass or razor blades. Children undergoing FGM are rarely given anaesthetic or antiseptic treatment and are often forcibly restrained. FGM is used to control female sexuality and can cause long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

FGM can happen at different times in a girl or woman's life, including when a baby is new-born, during childhood or as a teenager, just before marriage, or during pregnancy.

Potential signs that FGM may happen:

- A relative or someone known as a 'cutter' visiting from abroad
- A special occasion or ceremony taking place where a girl 'becomes a woman' or is 'prepared for marriage'
- A female relative (e.g. a mother, sister or aunt) has undergone FGM
- A family arranges a long holiday overseas or visits a family abroad
- A girl has an unexpected or long absence from school
- A girl struggles to keep up in school
- A girl runs away - or plans to run away - from home.

Potential signs that FGM may already have happened:

- Having difficulty walking, standing or sitting
- Spending longer in the bathroom or toilet
- Appearing quiet, anxious or depressed
- Acting differently after an absence from school
- Reluctance to go to the doctor or have routine medical examinations
- Asking for help, though they might not be explicit about the problem because they're scared or embarrassed.

## **Extremist radicalisation**

Radicalisation is the process by which people come to support terrorism and/or violent extremism or, in very rare cases, to participate in terrorist related activity. There is no obvious profile of a person likely to become involved in extremism or a single indicator of when a person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas. The process of radicalisation is different for every individual and usually takes place over an extended period, entailing a process not unlike grooming. Vulnerable people can be exposed to the messages of extremist groups by many means. These can include through the influence of family members or friends and/or direct contact with extremist groups or organisations with a radicalising agenda. Radicalisation increasingly takes place online. Extremist radicalisation is a safeguarding concern with an emphasis on supporting vulnerable people.

## **‘Honour’-based violence**

‘Honour’-based violence encompasses acts or crimes which are committed to protect or defend the honour of the family. ‘Honour’-based violence may include:

- Forced marriage
- Domestic violence (physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse)
- Sexual harassment and sexual violence (including rape and sexual assault)
- Threat of sexual violence (including rape and sexual assault)
- Threats to kill
- Social ostracism or rejection
- Denial of access to children

- Pressure to go or move abroad
- House-arrest and excessive restrictions of freedom
- Denial of access to the telephone, internet, or passport/key documentation
- Isolation from friends and own family

Warning signs for 'honour'-based violence include threats or abuse when someone attempts to:

- Separate or divorce
- Start a new relationship
- Talk to or interact freely with men
- Become pregnant or give birth outside of marriage
- Have interfaith relationships or marry outside a specified religion
- Have sex before marriage
- Marry a person of your own choice
- Access higher education without approval of your family

Concerns about honour-based violence should be reported in the same manner as any other safeguarding concern.

### **Peer-on-peer abuse and bullying**

Peer-on-peer abuse can include, but is not limited to, physical abuse; sexual abuse; sexual harassment and violence; emotional harm; teenage relationship abuse; grooming for sexual and criminal exploitation; and/or bullying, including cyber bullying.

## Appendix 4: Guidelines for managing a disclosure of abuse

The following guidance should be followed in situations where a pupil makes a serious disclosure involving child abuse, neglect, running away from home, drug use, or anything that may put them in danger.

- Remain calm and professional and listen carefully to what the pupil is telling you.
- Demonstrate that you are taking the pupil seriously. Remember that it takes considerable courage for the child to make a disclosure and that they may have been specifically told not to tell anyone, feel that they are themselves to blame, or be frightened that their disclosure will make things worse.
- Reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing by sharing.
- Reassure them that they are not responsible for what has happened.
- Remember that it is not your role to make a decision as to whether or not abuse has taken place, to offer judgement, or to respond with your personal feelings.
- Avoid leading questions. One way to avoid this is to repeat back what the pupil has said, allowing them to confirm, correct or add to what they have said.
- Do not attempt to examine the pupil in any way that would involve the removal of clothing.
- Never promise anything, especially confidentiality.
- Explain clearly to the pupil that you will do your best to support them and that you will need to speak with a member of the safeguarding team in order to find the best course of action. Depending on the age and developmental stage of the student, it may be possible to discuss potential options for this with the pupil so that they feel a certain amount of control or forewarning as to the potential consequences. For example, they might like to accompany you to discuss this with a safeguarding lead.
- Make a record of what has been said, including the date, time, place, and any additional circumstances.
- Remember that it is not your role to investigate the concern. Pass the information to the safeguarding team.
- Do not discuss with anyone else outside of the safeguarding team. This may put the pupil at further risk of harm and may interfere in a later police investigation.
- Follow the procedures for reporting a concern. Complete the Record of Concern Form (RoC - Appendix 5) as soon as possible and report the matter to a member of the safeguarding team, or in their absence, the Principal, passing the form to them.

## Appendix 5: Pupil Disclosure Form – Record of Concerns (RoC)

This form should be used by all **peripatetic** staff to record any concerns regarding the safety and welfare of a child. If there is reason to believe that the child is at immediate risk from harm, the involvement of the police or social services should be sought without delay.

<b>Child's Name</b>	
<b>Child's Form/Year Group</b>	
<b>Time and Date of disclosure or concern</b>	
<b>Adults present</b>	

**Details of Disclosure or Concern** (e.g. bruises, marks, behaviour of child. Ensure the record is factual, noting the exact language of the child).

Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

**Signed**\_\_\_\_\_

**Time and Date**\_\_\_\_\_

**Please now pass this form (hard copy) to one of the DSL Team/Principal without delay.**



## Appendix 6 Low-level Concern Reporting Form

Thank you for reporting your concerns to the safeguarding team; we are grateful to you for taking the safety and welfare of our pupils seriously. Please fill in the below form, including as much detail as you can, and return it directly to the Principal or Safeguarding Board Member (SBM). Please refrain from discussing this concern with anyone other than the Principal or the SBM until the matter has been dealt with. We ask that you keep all details, including the name staff member to whom the concern pertains, confidential.

Your details	
Name (optional)	
Role	
Date and time of completing this form	
Details of individual whom the concern is about	
Name	
Role	
Relationship to the individual who is reporting the concern, eg manager, colleague	
Details of concern	
<p><b>Please include as much detail as possible. Think about the following:</b> What behaviour and/or incident are you reporting? What exactly happened? Why does the behaviour and/or incident worry you? Why do you believe the behaviour and/or incident is not consistent with our Staff Code of Conduct?</p>	
Details of any pupil(s) involved	

<b>Name(s)</b>		
<b>Do you believe there is a risk of harm to pupil, either now or in the future, as a result of the individual's behaviour?</b> <b>Explain your answer.</b>		
<b>Next steps</b>		
<b>What would you like to see happen in response to your concern?</b>		
<b>Signature</b>		
<b>For use by safeguarding team upon receipt of concern</b>		
<b>Date and time concern received</b>		
<b>Signature of Principal or SBM</b>		
<b>Actions to be taken, eg</b> no action, investigation, reclassification as allegation meeting the harms threshold.		

