



# Child Protection Policy



LEARNING BEYOND BORDERS



# Child Protection Policy

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**Next review:** July 2025

<b>School Director</b>  Ms Shammah Mariyam	<b>Principal</b>  Mr Gary Williams
<b>Head of Primary/SLT</b>  Ms Jo Erasmus & Ms Gihan Mansour	

## School Vision, Mission and Core Values

### Our Vision

Fostering a sustainable and inclusive future

### Our Mission

Creating a new generation of innovative minds

### Core Values

Respect | Justice | Innovation | Transparency | Kindness | Responsibility

### Distribution List:

- MD/ Board
- Principal
- SLT (Head of Primary/MOE)
- Academic Staff
- Parents

## Key Staff

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headteacher</li> <li>• Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)</li> </ul>	Gary Williams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• principal@northgatebritishschool.com</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head of Primary</li> <li>• Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)</li> </ul>	Jo Erasmus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• headofprimary@northgatebritishschool.com</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head of MoE</li> <li>• Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)</li> </ul>	Gihan Mansour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headofmoe@northgatebritishschool.com</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Counsellor</li> <li>• Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)</li> </ul>	Eman Ibrahim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cuncelor@northgatebritishschool.com</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Nurse</li> <li>• Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)</li> </ul>	Miranda Mariya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• nurse@northgatebritishschool.com</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEND-Co</li> <li>• Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)</li> </ul>	Ms Hadeel Adnan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sendco@northgatebritishschool.com</li> </ul>

## **Introduction**

- The health, safety and well-being of all our children is of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our school. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school.
- Protecting children is everyone's responsibility at our school and this includes reporting any act committed by a parent or any other person, to a child enrolled in the school which results in neglect, physical or emotional injury or sexual harm.
- All staff have a duty and will report any suspected or disclosed issues of child protection to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)/Child Protection Team. If the threat is immediate or on-going it will be reported to the appropriate local safeguarding authorities as set in place by the UAE.
- This policy is written in line with the Department for Education Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures and the UAE guidelines for Child Protection.

## **Purpose**

- The safeguarding of children and young people from harm is the highest priority here at North Gate British School. Our students have a right to feel safe and protected from significant physical and emotional harm both inside and outside of school.
- This policy is a crucial part of promoting the welfare of our students; it is designed to inform our staff regarding the signs of child abuse and to equip them with the knowledge on what to do in the event of suspected abuse.
- This policy defines abuse, outlines signs of abuse and explains the procedures for investigating and reporting suspected cases.
- North Gate British School is determined to ensure that all necessary steps are taken to protect from harm, those children and young people who participate in education and all other activities with us.

There are 3 main elements here at North Gate British School as follows:-

- Prevention through the creation of a positive school atmosphere and the teaching, and pastoral support offered to students.
- Protection by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child any protection concerns.
- Support to students who may have been abused.
- This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies.
- This policy applies to all students, staff, Board members, volunteers and visitors to North Gate British School.

## **Aims and objectives of the School Policy**

- An effective whole-school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is one which provides clear direction to staff and others about expected behaviour when dealing with child protection issues.
- An effective policy also makes explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that supports the needs of every child.
- We recognise that for our students to develop high self-esteem and confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps to prevent abuse.

## **Here at North Gate British School, We Aim to: -**

- Establish and maintain an environment where students feel safe and secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure that students know that there are adults within the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- Include within the curriculum activities and opportunities for Personal Social Health Education

- and Moral Education that equips students with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse.
- Wellbeing and Enrichment Days including assemblies are also key means of delivery.
  - Include in the curriculum material that will help students develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.

## **Equality Statement**

- Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

**We give special consideration to children who:**

- Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities.
- Are young carers.
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality.
- Have English as an Additional Language (EAL).
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence.
- Are at risk of sexual exploitation and forced marriage.
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs

## **Training and Support**

- The Principal and all other staff who work with children will undertake appropriate Child Protection awareness training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for Child Protection effectively, that is kept up to date by refresher training annually.
- The school will ensure that the DSL's also undertake training and refresher training at an advanced level on a biannual basis to keep knowledge and skills up to date. Any temporary staff who work with children in the school will be made aware of the school's arrangements for safeguarding and child protection and their responsibilities.
- All staff will have access to advice and guidance on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are referred to in the staff handbook.

## **Professional Confidentiality**

- Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of Child Protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a student, nor should they agree with a student to keep a secret, as where there is a child protection concern this must be reported to the DSL and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.
- Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a 'need to know basis' only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held confidentially to themselves.
- The school counsellor will share a student's name and reason for referral to the DSL in the school. The content of the counselling sessions will remain confidential beyond that point unless a disclosure is made; at that point safeguarding protocols are prioritised.

## **Records and Monitoring**

- The school uses a rigorous and confidential system to store all safeguarding records that are kept confidential and secured at all times.
- Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.
- Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event in context, and giving the date, time and location. All records will be noted as required by the school system.
- If a student transfers from the school, a password protected pdf copy files will be forwarded to the student's new school marked confidential and for the attention of the receiving school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## **When to be Concerned**

### **Staff should be concerned if a student:**

- Has any injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with the child's activities.
- Regularly has unexplained injuries.
- Frequently has injuries even when apparently reasonable explanations are given.
- Offers confused or conflicting explanations about how injuries were sustained.
- Exhibits significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude.
- Indulges in sexual behaviour which is unusually explicit and/or inappropriate to his or her age.
- Discloses an experience in which he or she may have been harmed.

## **Definition of Child Abuse**

- Child abuse refers to any act committed by a parent, guardian or any other person to a child under the age of 18, which results in injury to the child. It can happen over a period of time but can also be a one-off action. These acts include situations where there is neglect, emotional, physical or sexual harm. It can also happen in person or online ([Refer Appendix A Categories of Abuse](#)).

## **Categories of Abuse**

- **Neglect:** The persistent or severe neglect of a child which results in impairment of health or development.
- **Physical Abuse:** Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Actual or likely exploitation of a child by involvement in sexual activities without informed consent or understanding, or that violate social taboos or family roles.
- **Emotional Abuse:** actual or likely severe adverse effects on the emotional and behavioral development of a child by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment, inappropriate treatment, or rejection.
- **Potential Abuse:** situations where children may not have been abused but where social and medical assessments indicate a high degree of risk that they might be abused in the future, including situations where another child in the household has been abused, or where there is a known abuser.
- **Bullying:** any persistent and uninvited behaviour which insults, hurts or intimidates another individual (includes cyber bullying)

## **Roles and Responsibilities of all Staff**

- All staff must read and understand the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance and review this guidance at least annually.
  - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
  - [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66d7301b9084b18b95709f75/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_2024.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66d7301b9084b18b95709f75/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2024.pdf)
  - [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66ce094e8e33f28aae7e1f6d/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_2024\\_part\\_one.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66ce094e8e33f28aae7e1f6d/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2024_part_one.pdf)
- All staff must sign a declaration that you have read the North Gate British School Child Protection policy and received training at the beginning of the new academic year.
- Class teachers will, in most cases, be the first person to raise a concern. They will report their concerns using the NGBS reporting system that alerts the DSL.
- All school staff have a responsibility to identify, and report suspected abuse and to ensure the safety and well-being of our students at NGBS. In so doing, they should seek advice and support as necessary from the DSL's, including key senior staff.
- All school staff are expected to provide a safe and caring environment in which children can develop the confidence to voice ideas, feelings and opinions. Children should be treated with respect within a framework of agreed and understood behaviour.
- All school staff must follow all guidelines, practice and policy relating to safeguarding as laid down by the school, and the UAE Law.
- The school has a duty under UAE Law to report any abuse or suspected abuse to the Police.
- The School Nurse - It is the role of the school nurse to ensure that relevant information obtained in the course of their duties is communicated to the DSL. Types of injuries, attendance and frequency must be recorded.
- The School Counsellor/s - It is the role of the school counsellor to support the students' emotional well-being, and to report any safeguarding concerns. Any harm to the child or another individual will be reported to the DSL, and relevant information will be shared as appropriate.

## **Good Practice**

- Always working in an open environment, where possible, avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication.
- Treating all young people equally with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each, young person first.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with service users (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust and empowering children to share in decision making.
- Keeping up to date with training, qualifications and insurance.
- Involving children, young people, parents and other professional colleagues wherever possible.
- Being an excellent role model (this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people).
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people.
- Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises, to administer emergency

first aid and or other medical treatment.

- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.

### **Staff Contact with Students**

In order to minimise the risk of accusations being made against staff, as a result of their daily contact with pupils, staff should ensure that they consider the following points of guidance:-

- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead to any reasonable person questioning their motivation and intentions.
- Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way (especially when working with individual students).
- Staff should not allow students to visit their place of residence.
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff over any incident, that may raise a concern.
- Reports should be made of any such incident directly to the Principal for immediate and appropriate action.

### **Whistleblowing**

- We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- All staff are expected to fully comply, at all times, with the School's Professional Code of Conduct.
- All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of their colleagues. If necessary, they should speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- If a member of staff has concerns about the conduct of a member of the Senior Leadership Team (other than the Principal) they should contact the Headteacher.
- If a member of staff has concerns about the conduct of the Principal they should contact the Board.

### **UAE Inspection Framework and the UAE Law Context**

#### **5. The Protection, Care, Guidance and Support of Students**

##### **5.1 Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding**

**Key Elements:**

- **5.1.1 Care, welfare and safeguarding of students, including child protection**  
**(Outstanding)**
  - The school has rigorous procedures for the safeguarding of students including child protection. All staff, students and parents are fully aware of these. The school is highly effective in protecting students from abuse, including bullying and via the internet and social media
- **5.1.2 Arrangements to ensure health, safety and security**  
**(Outstanding)**
  - The school consistently provides a fully safe, hygienic and secure environment for students and staff. Safety checks are frequent and rigorous. Supervision of students is exceptionally effective at all times.

## **Federal Law No. 3 of 2016**

- Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 concerning child rights, also known as Wadeema's Law, stresses that all children must be provided with appropriate living standards, access to health services, education, equal opportunities in essential services and facilities without any kind of discrimination.
- The law protects children against all forms of negligence, exploitation, physical and psychological abuses.
- In addition, smoking in public and private vehicles and indoor facilities where children are present is also prohibited under the law. Violators will be subject to penalties as set out by the law.
- The law allows childcare specialists to remove children from their homes against parents' wishes and without judicial permission in cases of imminent danger. In less severe cases, specialists may intervene by visiting the child regularly, providing social services and mediating a solution between the family and the child.
- Those who put children in danger, abandon them, neglect them, leave them without supervision, do not enrol them in school or register them upon their birth will be subject to a prison sentence or a fine or both. The law applies to all children up to the age of 18.

## **The 'Child Protection Unit' initiative**

- Ministry of Education (MoE) launched a 'Child Protection Unit' initiative for the benefit of students of government and private schools across the UAE.
- The initiative is aimed at protecting children from all forms of harm, negligence and abuse which they may experience at school or home and maintaining their safety with regard to their physical, psychological and educational aspects.
- To report child abuse case, call either the MoE's Child Protection Unit on their dedicated number 80085 or the Ministry of Interior's Child Protection Centre on 116111 or email the report to CPU@moe.gov.ae with supporting documents, if any.

## **The Child Protection Committee and Centre**

- Ministry of Interior (MoI) established the Higher Committee for Child Protection in 2009 and the MoI's Child Protection Centre in 2011 to undertake the role of developing, implementing and customising the initiatives and processes aiming at providing safety, security and protection for all children living in the UAE or even those coming as visitors.
- The committee plays a key role in maintaining the safety of children, because achieving justice and protection for children is a shared responsibility.
- The CP Section within the Community Development Authority offering confidentiality and advice. Tel: 800988 ([www.cda.gov.ae](http://www.cda.gov.ae)).
- The CP Centre within the Ministry of Interior offering confidentiality and advice. Tel: 116111 ([www.moi-cpc.ae](http://www.moi-cpc.ae)).

<https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/children-safety#:~:text=Those%20who%20put%20children%20in,to%20the%20age%20of%2018>.

## **Other Contact Numbers Within the UAE**

- Community Development Authority- CDA on hotline: 800988
- EWAA Shelter for Women and Children on hotline: 8007283
- Dubai Foundation for Women and Children on 800111
- Child protection Centre in Sharjah on toll-free helpline number 800 700
- Hemaya Foundation for Children and Women - Ajman on hotline: 800-himaya (800446292)
- Aman Centre for Women and Children through RAK Police – 07-2356666
- Al Ameen Service 8004888

## **Policy Review**

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in their absence their Deputy or a member of the Senior Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy along with the Nominated Board member for Safeguarding & Child Protection.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in their absence their Deputy or a member of the Senior Leadership Team is also responsible for ensuring that the list of key contacts on the cover sheet is kept up to date.

## **Categories of Abuse**

There are four broad categories of abuse which are generally recognized:

**Emotional Abuse:** is failure to provide for the child's basic emotional needs such as to have a severe effect on the behaviour and development of the child. This includes conveying to children the feeling that they are worthless or unloved.

- Signs of possible emotional abuse
- Physical/mental/emotional developmental lags
- Admission of punishment which seems excessive
- Over reaction to mistakes
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional response to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviour (e.g., rocking, thumb sucking etc)
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Self-mutilation
- Extremes of passivity or aggression

**Neglect:** This refers to persistent or deliberate failure to meet a child's physical or psychological needs.

- failure to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter, failure to protect a child or failure to provide adequate medical care. It may also involve neglect or failure to give adequate response to a child's emotional needs.
- Signs of possible physical neglect
- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Frequent lateness and/or unexplained non-attendance
- Untreated medical problems
- Low self-esteem
- Poor peer relationships
- Stealing

**Physical Injury:** This involves physical harm to a child e.g. hitting, shaking, scalding and may be deliberate.

- or a result of failure to take adequate precautions. It can also include the deliberate withholding of physical needs.
- Signs of possible physical abuse
- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent.
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries.
- Refusal to discuss injuries.
- Untreated injuries, or delay in reporting them.
- Excessive physical punishment.
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home.
- Aggression towards others.
- Running away

**Sexual Abuse:** is where a child may be deemed to have been sexually abused when any person(s), by design or neglect, exploits the child, directly or indirectly, in any activity intended to lead to the sexual arousal or other forms of gratification of that person or any other person(s) – including organised networks. This definition holds whether or not there has been genital contact and whether or not the child is said to have initiated the behaviour.

- Signs of possible sexual abuse
- Age-inappropriate sexual knowledge, language, behaviours discarded cuddly toys
- Loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Regressive behaviours such as thumb sucking, needing previously
- Becoming withdrawn, isolated
- Inability to focus
- Reluctance to go home
- Bed-wetting
- Drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Over-reacting to criticism
- Have outbursts of anger/irritability

**What to do on Suspicion or Disclosure:**

Becoming aware of abuse can cause a multitude of emotional reactions, which are personal to the individual. Whatever the reaction, it must be responded to in the correct manner, outlined below.

### Child Protection Recording Sheets

#### **Appendix A: Welfare Incident/ Concern Form ('The Green Form')**

**School Name:**

**Safeguarding Incident Form:**

Student Name:	Date of birth/Year Group/Class:
Name and position of person completing form (please print):	
Date of incident /concern: (DD MM YY)	
Incident / concern (who what where when)*	
Any other relevant information (witnesses, immediate action taken)*	
Signature: (name of member of staff)	Date form completed (DD MM YY):
Role:	
Action taken (including reasons for decisions) and Outcomes* (NB – this section is only to be completed by DSL)	
Signature of DSL	Date (DD MM YY)
Signature of Lead DSL (if appropriate)	Date (DD MM YY)

## Appendix B: Sample Safeguarding Record Front Sheet

**School Name:**

<b>Student Name:</b>	<b>Date of birth:</b>		
<b>Any other name by which child is known:</b>			
<b>Home address:</b>	<b>Current address (if different)</b>		
<b>Telephone no:</b>			
<b>Family members i.e. parents / carers / siblings:</b>			
Name	Relationship	Address	School details
<b>Date file started: (DD MM YY)</b>			
<b>Are records held in school/setting relating to other connected children?</b>			
<b>Contact details of other professionals.</b>			
Name	Agency	Address	

## Appendix C: Record of DSL Meetings

**School Name:**

**Official Record of DSL Meetings (To be kept by Lead DSL)**

<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>			
<b>Present: (DSLs Name and Role)</b>			
<b>Child</b>	<b>Concern/Update</b>	<b>Action to be Taken</b>	<b>Who will take action and date to be completed</b>
<b>Other Issues Discussed:</b>			
<b>Date of Next meeting: (DD MM YY)</b>			

**Appendix D: Record of Actions/Decisions****School Name:****DSL's Detailed Record of Action/Decisions**

<b>Students Name:</b>	
<b>Date:</b> <b>(DD MM YY)</b>	<b>Details</b>
<b>Signature</b>	

## **Appendix E: Safeguarding and Recording Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why is recording important?**

We have a statutory duty to promote the well-being and safety of every child who attends our school. This is a whole school/setting task. Since members of staff have differing roles, we observe children in a range of settings and activities throughout the day. Children may show or tell us that something is wrong in a variety of ways. We all have an important role to play in helping to identify welfare concerns for children and possible indicators of abuse or neglect at an early stage. For some children a ‘one off’ serious incident or concern will come to your attention and you will have no doubt that this you must immediately record and report this. Most often however it is the accumulation of a number of small incidents, events or observations – ‘the jigsaw’ - that provide the evidence that a child is being harmed. It is vital therefore that any concern you have for a child’s welfare however small is recorded and passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

### **What is a ‘welfare concern’?**

As a rule anything that you consider unusual or out of the ordinary for the child constitutes a concern. Mostly these will arise in one or more of the following areas:

- The child’s behaviour changes or a particular behaviour is observed
- The child has a physical injury
- The child tells you something has happened to them
- The child’s physical presentation
- You receive information from or observe unusual behaviour in a parent

### **Why can’t I just pass on my concern verbally?**

It is important that the person who has the concern gives a first hand account of this so that there is a clear and accurate record of what has been seen, heard etc. A record written by you will ensure that there is no misinterpretation of your concern or that it can be overlooked or forgotten.

### **How and what do I record?**

Our school/setting’s welfare concern form is a green A4 sheet (amend as appropriate) that can be found in the staff room (amend as appropriate). There is also an aide memoire that will guide you in completing this. If you are in any doubt, about recording then please speak with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). (Names, contact details)

### **What happens to the record once I’ve written it?**

One of the main purposes of recording is to make sure that the DSL is able to respond properly to concerns for children. The DSL will decide what action is necessary in response to your concern. Actions they take will of course depend on how serious and urgent the concern is. These can range however from a decision to keep a close eye on the child, to referring the child to Specialist Children’s Services so that they can undertake an assessment of the child’s safety. The concern form you have completed will be kept by the DSL in a confidential file.

### **Who will see this? Will parents see my record?**

Information relating to children’s welfare will be shared on a strict “need to know” basis and in line with the MoE Safeguarding Children Procedures that we have a duty to work within.

Neither the parent nor the child has an automatic right of access to child protection records and in most cases, the actual record will not be shared with parents. However, we ask you to write this in a way that if we were asked to release school records perhaps by the MoE/Child protection Unit/UAE Police, the record is a fair and factual account of an incident or event.

One of the most common responses by the DSL to concerns raised by staff for children will be to share these with parents with the purpose of working with them to understand and address the issue of concern. The details of your record therefore may be presented verbally to parents. Sometimes your concern will be one of many. If the DSL is worried that talking to parents might create a risk to any member of staff's safety, they will not do this but seek the advice of colleagues in Education and Specialist Children's Services.

**Will the record be destroyed once the issue is addressed or the child leaves school?**

No. Past concerns for children and what happened in response to these can be very important information for staff who may have concerns for the child at a later time. The DfE guide us in the retention and transfer of safeguarding records. The DSL is responsible for passing these on under confidential cover to the DSL in the child's new school/setting when the child leaves us (As per MoE compliance \* seek approval)

## **Appendix F: Distinguishing fact and opinion**

Consider each of the statements below. For each one decide whether it is a fact or an opinion.

Have a go at rewriting one statement that contains an opinion in a way that makes the difference between fact and opinion clear.

- Being unemployed is depressing Mrs Bloggs.
- Alan said his mother smacked him.
- On the last contact visit the living room was not safe for the children.
- The clothing in which Mr. Smith had dressed the baby was not appropriate.
- Foster Care is not appropriate for Ian
- Jenny is a very contented child.

## **Appendix G: Distinguishing fact and opinion (answers)**

**Being unemployed is depressing Mrs. Bloggs.**

This is an opinion. A possible rewrite could be:

Mrs. Bloggs appears depressed. She is....(list her symptoms e.g. tearful, tired, listless, relationship with the children). This change in Mrs Bloggs has been noticeable since she lost her job and I think unemployment may be the main reason that she feels the way she does.

**Alan said his mother smacked him.**

This as written is a factual statement. However, it is important to know who Alan said this to. If he reported to a member of staff that his mother smacked him, one would expect a more detailed explanation to follow this statement, including what Alan said in his own words and what action the staff member has taken since.

**On the last contact visit the living room was not safe for the children.**

This is an opinion. It could be rewritten in the following way:

When I visited the family to talk about the children's attendance I did not think that it was safe to leave them in the living room. There were dirty syringes and other sharp objects within their reach. I therefore phoned their social worker.

**The clothing in which Mr. Smith had dressed the baby was not appropriate.**

This is an opinion. It could be rewritten in the following way:

I did not think that the clothing Mr. Smith had dressed the baby in was appropriate because it was a cold November morning and the baby was dressed in only a tee – shirt and shorts to be taken out in her pram with only a thin blanket to cover her.

**Foster Care is not appropriate for Ian.**

Again, this is an opinion. A possible rewrite could be:

I do not think that foster care is appropriate for Ian. This is his sixth placement in five weeks and all his previous placements with foster carers have broken down. Ian has told me that he feels that he is being disloyal to his mother by living in a family and he would like to be placed in a residential home. Although I have talked at length with him about this he remains consistent in his view and his behaviour appears to be directed at ending the placement.

**Jenny is a very contented child.**

This statement is written as if it is a fact. However it is clearly an opinion. What is meant by the phrase very contented? Would we all understand it in the same way and would we all agree on the difference between a contented and very contented child?

It would be more helpful to give description of Jenny's behaviour and appearance.

## **Appendix H: School Environment**

### **Prevention**

All staff will be expected to contribute towards an environment that offers children maximum protection e.g. contributing to creation of a positive atmosphere in which students are respected and know that they can find assistance if necessary. Children should know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they have a worry or a problem.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

It is a moral, ethical and legal responsibility of any teaching professional or other staff member to report suspected cases of child abuse, neglect or safety concerns.

### **The Role of Teachers and Support Staff**

Child protection is everybody's responsibility. When not at home or another 'caring base', children spend more time in school than anywhere else. Teachers have a very close relationship and contact with children who generally trust them .

### **All Teachers & Support Staff Members Must**

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Inform if any form of child abuse is suspected.
- Integrate child protection issues into relevant teaching and learning to help children protect themselves,
- Communicate all concerns and keep written records of concerns, even where there is lack of evidence (records should state facts not opinions).
- Respect the confidentiality of all concerned regarding the welfare of children.
- Respect children as individuals and engage them in conversations.

### **Talking and Listening to Children**

- If a child wants to confide in you, you SHOULD:
- Be accessible and receptive
- Listen carefully and uncritically, at the child's pace
- Take what is said seriously
- Reassure children that they are right to tell
- Tell the child that you must pass this information on.
- Make sure that the child is ok
- Make a careful record of what was said (see Recording)

### **You should NEVER**

- Investigate or seek to prove or disprove possible abuse
- Make promises about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets' to children
- Assume that someone else will take the necessary action
- Jump to conclusions, be dismissive or react with shock, anger, horror etc.
- Speculate or accuse anybody
- Investigate, suggest or probe for information
- Confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved
- Offer opinions about what is being said or the persons allegedly involved
- Forget to record what you have been told
- Fail to pass this information on to the correct person

## **Recordings should**

- State who was present, time, date and place
- Be written in ink and be signed by the recorder
- Be passed to the head of department.
- Use the child's words wherever possible
- Be factual/state exactly what was said

## **Differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation**

### **What information do you need to obtain?**

- Schools have no investigative role in child protection (will refer cases to the child protection)
- Never prompt or probe for information, your job is to listen, record and pass on.
- Ideally, you should be clear about what is being said in terms of who, what, where and when

### **If you do need to ask questions, what is and isn't OK?**

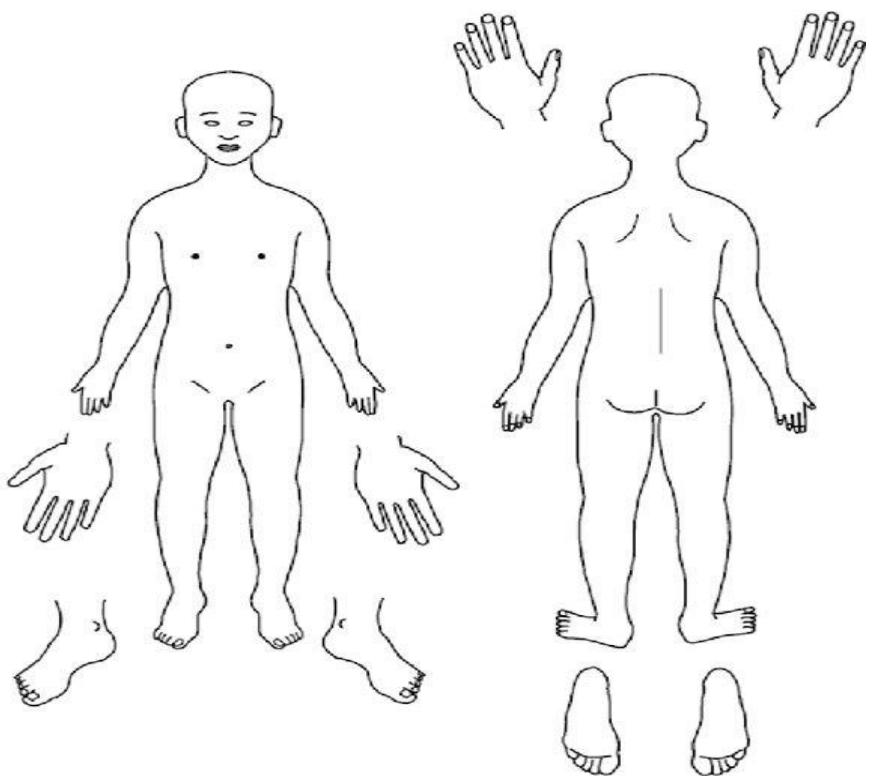
- Never asked closed questions i.e. ones which children can answer yes or no to e.g. Did he touch you?
- Never make suggestions about who, how or where someone is alleged to have touched, hit etc. e.g. top or bottom, front or back?
- If we must, use only 'minimal prompts' such as 'go on ... tell me more about that ... tell me everything that you remember about that ...'.
- Timescales are very important: 'When was the last time this happened?' is an important question

### Body Map for Reporting

Name of student:	
Class:	
Date of Birth:	
Gender:	
Name & Designation of reporting person:	
Date & time of recording:	

Indicate site of injury or concerning marks using a cross on the relevant area of the body map. Provide additional detail/ description in the space provided in the table underneath. Once completed, please submit this to the relevant lead.

#### Additional detail/description



Signature of Lead DSL:	
Signature of School Counselor:	
Signature of reporting person:	