

Gulf English School

مدرسة الخليج الإنجليزية



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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Part I Introduction

Purpose/Mission Statement

Gulf English School (GES) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students. Every child, regardless of their background, has the right to be protected from harm and to feel safe within the school environment. This policy ensures that all staff understand their responsibilities in identifying, reporting, and responding to concerns of abuse, neglect, or safeguarding risks. It aligns with KCSIE 2025 to ensure best practices are upheld across the school.

Legislative Framework

This policy is guided by:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025
- The Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- The Education Act 2002
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges
- Prevent Duty Guidance 2023

Part 2 Roles and Responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Team

The DSL and DDSLs are responsible for:

- Leading safeguarding initiatives and ensuring policy compliance.
- Acting as the first point of contact for and safeguarding concerns or regarding student welfare.
- Maintaining confidential records of safeguarding concerns using *RecordMy*
- Ensuring multi-agency collaboration when necessary.
- Providing training and updates to all school staff.
- Provide information and advice on child protection within GES
- Ensure that GES' Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Children are followed and particularly to inform the Head Teacher of concerns about individual children.
- Keep relevant people within the school informed about any action taken and any further action required

The DSL has undertaken appropriate training and will be kept up to date with their own CPD regarding Child Protection. The DDSL supports the DSL with the above responsibilities when requested and to take on the responsibilities when the DSL is absent.

All Staff Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Read and understand this policy and Part One or Annex A of KCSIE 2025, as appropriate to their role.
- Report any safeguarding concerns immediately via *RecordMy* or through alerting any member of SLT or DSL directly via phone if it seems to be a high alert concern.
- Recognise the signs of abuse, neglect, or exploitation and respond appropriately.
- Create a safe learning environment where students feel able to speak up.
- Complete safeguarding training annually and participate in ongoing updates provided throughout the year..

Head of Year / Year Leader Responsibilities

They have a crucial role in identifying, supporting, and managing safeguarding concerns at the year-group level. Responsibilities include:

- Being the first point of contact for staff regarding child protection concerns.
- Recording and reporting disclosures made by students on *RecordMy* and referring them to the DSL within the same working day.
- Documenting any concerns raised by staff regarding possible signs of abuse or neglect.
- Supporting staff members who raise concerns by liaising with the DSL to determine next steps.
- Maintaining records of all safeguarding incidents and ensuring that appropriate interventions are followed up.
- Liaising with external agencies when required to ensure appropriate multi-agency responses.
- Monitoring students identified as vulnerable and maintaining communication with the safeguarding team.
- Undertaking regular safeguarding training to ensure compliance with KCSIE 2025 and emerging safeguarding threats.

Students

Students play a crucial role in keeping themselves and others safe by:

- Reporting any concerns about their own or others' safety to a trusted adult (e.g., teacher, DSL, HOY, school counsellor).
- Speaking up about bullying, harassment, or inappropriate behaviour without fear of punishment.
- Understanding that all concerns will be taken seriously and handled sensitively.

Students are expected to help create a safe school environment.

- Treating peers and staff with respect and following school policies on behaviour, online safety and anti-bullying.
- Avoiding harmful behaviour, including bullying, harassment, or online misconduct.

With increasing online risks.

- Students must use technology responsibly and report cyberbullying or unsafe content.
- Be aware of AI risks, deep fakes and online grooming (KCSIE 2025 Update).
- Mental health is part of safeguarding
- Seek support if struggling with emotional well-being and encourage peers to do the same.

KCSIE 2025 Update: Schools must promote a "speak-up" culture, ensuring students feel safe and empowered to report concerns.

Part 3 Definitions of Abuse and Neglect

Abuse is defined as a form of maltreatment where a child is harmed physically, emotionally, sexually, or through neglect.

- **Physical Abuse:** Inflicting physical harm or failing to prevent injury. Hitting, shaking, burning, poisoning, suffocating.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Causing long-term harm through neglect, threats, or humiliation. Making a child feel worthless, unloved, or afraid.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Forcing a child into sexual activities, exploitation, or online grooming.
- **Neglect:** Failing to provide basic needs like food, shelter, supervision, or medical care.
- **Child-on-Child Abuse:** Includes bullying, sexual harassment, violence, and harmful sexual behaviours.

Part 4 Recognising the Signs of Abuse

All staff must be able to identify potential signs of abuse, including:

- Unexplained injuries or bruising
- Extreme changes in behaviour (withdrawal, aggression, eating patterns)
- Fear of going home or reluctance to interact with certain adults
- Knowledge of inappropriate sexual behaviour for their age
- Sudden changes in academic performance or attendance
- Excessive secrecy around online activity
- Increasingly dirty or unkempt appearance

In addition staff should be able to judge when children's and young people's own behaviour places them at risk, or when their behaviour may be a response to the trauma of abuse or neglect, such as:

- Inappropriate use of computers or social media
- Ill-judged relationships
- Inappropriate social behaviour such as bullying
- Misuse of drugs/alcohol (including prescribed drugs or internet purchased without prescription)
- Sexually explicit language or behaviour
- Eating disorders
- Self-harming
- Running away/often staying with friends rather than returning home

Children Missing from Education (CME)

Children missing from education, particularly repeatedly, may indicate abuse, neglect, exploitation or mental health issues. Patterns of absence or lateness must be recorded on RecordMy and acted upon by the DSL. SLT and Governors must monitor CME data.

Vulnerable Groups

Children with SEND, disabilities, or medical conditions may face additional safeguarding challenges. Staff must ensure their voices are heard, take extra care to notice concerns, and make reasonable adjustments in support.

Part 5 Procedures for Reporting Concerns

Responding to Disclosures

If a child makes a disclosure:

- Listen carefully and remain calm.
- Do not ask leading questions—allow the child to share at their own pace.
- Do not promise confidentiality—explain that their safety is the priority.
- Report the concern to the DSL immediately via *RecordMy*. Report immediately via phone to SLT if it is a high level concern.
- Record the details verbatim and submit them securely through *RecordMy*.
- Disclosures must be reported to DSL on the same day.

Low-Level Concerns

Low-level concerns must be recorded and reviewed regularly by the DSL to identify potential patterns. The school promotes a transparent, fair culture where all concerns are raised and monitored.

Allegations Against Staff

If an allegation is made against a staff member:

- It must be reported to the Headteacher immediately.
- If the allegation is against the Headteacher, it must be reported to the Director.
- The school must follow suspension and investigation procedures in line with *KCSIE 2025*.

Next Steps

- As a result of any allegation being received, the member of staff could be suspended pending a preliminary investigation.
- Following a preliminary investigation consideration will be given to:
- Whether or not the employee/s should be suspended from work while a full investigation is carried out.
- Whether or not there is a need to carry out a full investigation into the allegation/s. ·
- Whether or not the police should be informed.
- Whether or not the Ministry should be informed.
- Whether or not GES needs to carry out its own review of practice
- If gross misconduct is suspected, the employee will be suspended from work on full pay. The investigation shall be carried out in accordance with the GES' Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

Should a police investigation or a Ministry investigation take place, GES will seek information from these parties. The information may well influence the disciplinary investigation and decision. On the basis of the investigating report and, in accordance with the GES' disciplinary procedure, disciplinary action may take place, which may include dismissal.

Where a member of staff is disciplined or dismissed as a result of inappropriate behaviour, this will be recorded on their personal profile and passed onto future employers.

Guidance for Staff: Protecting Themselves from Allegations

All staff must maintain professional boundaries at all times and take proactive measures to protect themselves from potential allegations. The following guidelines should be followed to ensure transparency and accountability in all interactions with students:

- **Always work in an open and observable environment.** Avoid situations where you are alone with a student, whether in-person or online. If a 1:1 meeting is necessary, ensure another staff member or a parent is present or the meeting is conducted in a visible area.
- **Never invite just one child into an online meeting.** If using Teams or Zoom, ensure that the child's parent is present or that the session is recorded for safeguarding purposes.
- **Avoid spending excessive time with individual students in isolated areas.** If one-to-one support is required, keep the door open and ensure that another staff member is aware of the meeting.
- **Restraint should only be used when absolutely necessary and only by staff who have received specialist training in supportive measures of restraint.** All incidents must be recorded and reported to the DSL.
- **Private 1:1 tutoring is strongly discouraged.** If such support is required, all sessions must be conducted via Teams or Zoom, recorded, and authorised by senior leadership.
- **Staff must not transport students alone.** In emergency situations where transport is necessary, two staff members must accompany the student, and parental permission must be obtained in advance.
- **Photography and video recordings of students should only be taken with explicit parental consent.** This consent is recorded by the Admissions Office when a student is enrolled. Staff must not take or store images of students on personal devices.
- **Electronic communication with students must remain professional and appropriate.** Any feedback given on schoolwork must focus on constructive guidance. Staff must not use personal accounts, messaging apps, or private emails to communicate with students.
- **Staff must never befriend students on social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, or WhatsApp) as outlined in the ICT/Internet Safety Policy.**
- **Written communication, including emails, notebook comments and homework diary entries, must always be professional.** Texting students is not permitted, as messages can be misinterpreted.

Guidance for Handling Student Disclosures of Abuse against a member of staff

If a student makes a disclosure regarding abuse or safeguarding concerns, staff must handle the situation with care and sensitivity while following the correct reporting procedures:

- Remain calm and provide a reassuring presence.
- Listen to the child attentively and allow them to speak at their own pace.
- Take all disclosures seriously—never dismiss or downplay concerns.
- Do not ask leading questions or suggest possible answers.
- Offer reassurance but do not make promises (e.g., "Everything will be okay"). Instead, explain that you need to share the information with the DSL to keep them safe.
- Do not stop a child from recalling significant events or interrupt their account. • Do not overreact or express shock, as this may discourage the child from continuing.
- Explain next steps clearly, ensuring the child understands that the DSL will be involved to provide support.
- Record the disclosure accurately with details such as dates, times, locations, individuals involved, and a factual account of what was said. Do not include personal opinions or

assumptions.

- Submit the report immediately via *RecordMy* and ensure it is received by the DSL.
- All safeguarding disclosures must be securely recorded and retained by the DSL.

If the DSL determines that the disclosure warrants further investigation, the appropriate safeguarding procedures will be followed in line with KCSIE 2025.

By following these procedures, staff can ensure that students are safeguarded effectively, while also protecting themselves from potential allegations.

Storage and Access of Confidential Records

All safeguarding and child protection records must be **stored securely** to ensure confidentiality and compliance with **KCSIE 2025**.

- **All safeguarding records must be maintained within *RecordMy*** to ensure digital security and accessibility.
- Any **physical safeguarding records** must be stored **in a secure, lockable cabinet** within the **DSL's office**, with **access strictly controlled** and granted only to those with safeguarding responsibilities.
- **Records of all disclosures and concerns** must be maintained **with clear documentation** of actions taken.
- **Sharing of safeguarding information must be done securely** and only with relevant personnel.

Medical Treatment

In the event of a physical injury requiring medical attention while on school premises:

- The school nurse must be informed immediately and will assess the situation.
- If necessary, the child will be transported to a hospital, and appropriate first aid or medical support will be provided.
- Parents must only be contacted by the DSL or SLT.
- All actions taken, including medical intervention and parental communication, must be recorded in *RecordMy*.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure best practice, the following measures will be undertaken:

DSL and safeguarding staff will ensure that all incidents, concerns, and disclosures are recorded accurately within *RecordMy* and monitored regularly to identify safeguarding trends.

- A central safeguarding log will be maintained securely within *RecordMy*, with regular reviews by the DSL and SLT.
- Adherence to the school's child protection policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure all procedures are followed correctly.
- Enhanced DBS checks, Disclosure Scotland, and other vetting processes will be conducted during staff recruitment to ensure the suitability of individuals working with children.
- Personnel records will be updated regularly to ensure all safeguarding-related information is current, and job descriptions for new positions must include child protection responsibilities.

Part 6 Safer Recruitment and Training

GES is committed to safer recruitment practices to ensure that all staff working with children are suitable, properly vetted, and aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.

Staff Vetting and Social Media Checks

To ensure the safety and well-being of students, the school will implement stringent pre-employment checks, including:

- **Enhanced DBS checks or the equivalent:** All staff and regular volunteers will undergo enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or /ACRO and ICPC (International Child Protection Certificate) checks before starting employment. These checks will be renewed periodically to ensure ongoing compliance.
- **Overseas checks:** Staff who have lived or worked outside of the UK must provide an equivalent safeguarding check from the relevant country.
- **Social media screening:** As part of pre-employment vetting, all new hires will undergo social media checks to identify any inappropriate content or behaviour that could indicate a safeguarding concern.
- **Prohibition from teaching check:** This check will be conducted on all teachers to confirm they are not prohibited from working in education.
- **Identity verification:** All staff working in safeguarding-sensitive roles must provide proof of identity, address, right to work, and qualifications in person before commencing employment.
- **Safer recruitment training:** At least one member of every interview panel must have completed safer recruitment training to ensure best practices in hiring processes. To include all SLT members as well as the HR team.

Induction and Ongoing Training

All new staff, including teaching and non-teaching personnel, must complete comprehensive safeguarding induction training before they start working with students.

This includes:

- Understanding safeguarding responsibilities as outlined in *KCSIE 2025*.
- Recognising signs of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- How to report concerns using *RecordMy* and following the school's safeguarding procedures.
- Professionals conduct expectations to prevent inappropriate relationships with students, including online interactions.
- Understanding the risks of AI-generated abuse, digital exploitation, and online grooming.

Ongoing safeguarding training for all staff will include:

- Annual mandatory safeguarding training for all employees, ensuring they are aware of new threats and best practices.
- Completing any online training issued to staff from The National College training platform
- Additional role-specific training for the DSL, DDSL, Heads of Year, and Pastoral Leads to address emerging safeguarding concerns, multi-agency working, and case management.
- Safeguarding refresher sessions to update staff on policy changes, lessons learned from incidents, and safeguarding trends.
- Regular safeguarding audits and training reviews to identify any gaps in knowledge and ensure compliance with statutory requirements.

Part 7 Online Safety and Emerging Risks

GES is committed to protecting students from online harm through education, monitoring and technical controls. Risks include cyberbullying, grooming, AI-generated abuse and cyberflashing. Students are taught how to report unsafe online behaviour and image-based abuse.

Cybersecurity, Filtering and Data Protection

The school will maintain robust filtering and monitoring systems to protect students from harmful content. These systems will be reviewed annually with oversight by SLT. Staff must escalate concerns if harmful content is accessed despite protections. Students will be taught how these systems work and how to report issues.

AI and Deepfake Abuse

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) and deepfake technology can be used to create manipulated images, videos, or voice recordings that may be used for cyberbullying, harassment, or exploitation.
- Staff must be trained to recognise AI-generated abuse and report concerns immediately via *RecordMy*
- The school will conduct regular digital literacy sessions for students to raise awareness of AI-related risks and teach them how to report concerns safely.

Digital Grooming and Exploitation

- Staff must remain vigilant to signs of online grooming, such as students being secretive about their online activity, changes in behaviour, or unexplained gifts or money.
- Students will receive age-appropriate online safety education to empower them to recognise, reject, and report online grooming attempts.

Cybersecurity and Data Protection

- The school will maintain robust filtering and monitoring systems to protect students from harmful online content, including extremist material, pornography, and self-harm sites.
- Strict access controls will be in place to protect students and staff from unauthorised access to personal data.
- Staff will receive training on cybersecurity risks, including phishing scams, hacking threats, and safeguarding confidential student information.

Part 8 Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Safeguarding information must be handled with the highest level of confidentiality to protect students and ensure compliance with KCSIE 2025 and data protection regulations.

- All safeguarding records must be logged in *RecordMy*, the school's secure digital safeguarding platform.
- Physical records related to safeguarding must be stored securely in a lockable, restricted-access cabinet in the DSL's office.
- Only authorised safeguarding personnel (DSL, DDSL, SLT) may access safeguarding records.
- Records of safeguarding concerns, actions taken and referrals must be accurately recorded and updated in real-time on *RecordMy*.
- Any sharing of safeguarding information must follow GDPR guidelines, ensuring that information is only disclosed to those who need it to protect a child.

Part 9 Monitoring and Review

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is a working document that will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains effective, relevant, and compliant with legal requirements.

The following steps will be taken to monitor and evaluate the policy's effectiveness.

- Annual policy reviews to ensure compliance with KCSIE 2025 and any new statutory updates.
- Internal safeguarding audits conducted termly to assess whether staff are adhering to safeguarding procedures.
- Annual safeguarding training reviews to ensure that all staff have completed required CPD training and are aware of any new safeguarding risks.
- Feedback from staff, students, and parents through safeguarding surveys, ensuring that safeguarding procedures are understood and accessible.
- DSL reports to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Governors to provide an overview of safeguarding concerns, actions taken, and trends identified throughout the year.
- Review of RecordMy data logs to analyse safeguarding patterns, monitor effectiveness of interventions, and identify areas for improvement.

Conclusion

GES is committed to ensuring a culture of vigilance where students feel safe, valued and empowered to speak up. All staff members play a critical role in protecting children, and safeguarding must remain a top priority in all aspects of school life.

This policy is fully compliant with KCSIE 2025 and will be reviewed annually to ensure best practice.