

Gulf English School

مدرسة الخليج الإنجليزية



Child Protection Policy

Statement and Procedures

Academic Year

(2017-2018)

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Deputy Child Protection Officer: Monica Berto(Head of Secondary Department)

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Part I Introduction

1.1 Purpose/Mission Statement

The staff and members of Gulf English School (GES) are committed to promote the welfare and safety of all children and young adults entrusted to them.

The purpose of the GES Child Protection Policy Statement and Procedure is to highlight and signpost next steps should a member of staff become concerned about a child's welfare and safety (both within and outwith the school). In this way all staff contribute to a healthy school environment for GES students and also take the necessary action should they be concerned about a child's safety outwith school.

The school will take all reasonable measures in:

- Nominating Designated Officer to co-ordinate the Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Children (Child Protection Officer --- Gemma Trickett; Deputy Child Protection Officers --- Sandra William Harris and Monica Berto)
- Ensuring rigorous recruitment procedures (i.e. necessary Disclosure Barring Service checks, latterly named CRB/Disclosure Scotland, appropriate child safeguarding (refer to our HR Recruitment Policy)
- Ensuring that all visitors to the school are authorised and accompanied at all times
- Ensuring all children, whatever their culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin or religious belief, has the right to protection from abuse
- Being alert to signs of abuse both in and out of school
- Responding swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions, allegations and or disclosures of possible child safety issues
- Creating an open environment to ensure that children are aware of how to voice their concerns or to complain if there is anything that they are not comfortable with
- Being alert to the medical needs of students with medical conditions
- Operating clear and supportive policies on the use of cellphones, filming equipment and ICT
- Regularly reviewing and updating policies/procedures, including Child Protection Policy Statement and Procedures

Part II Background

2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teachers, in conjunction with the named Designated Child Protection Officer (CP Officer), have overall responsibility for the implementation of the Child Protection Policy Statement and Procedures and ensuring its objectives are met.

Each Secondary Head of Department/Primary Year Leader has responsibility for Child Protection Policy Statement and Procedures in their own area of the school. All employees are expected to follow this policy and take the appropriate action to meet the aims and objectives.

However, the Designated CP Officer and Deputy/ies CP officer have specific duties for effective functioning of this policy.

Roles and responsibilities are detailed below:

- i) Students
 - Students are responsible for making the most of their educational opportunities by respecting the rights of others and cooperating with fellow students and staff in achieving their goals.

- ii) Designated CP Officer
 - The school has appointed a member of staff with the necessary status and authority to be responsible for matters relating to child protection.
 - The main responsibilities of the Designated officer are to:
 - Be the first point of contact with the ministry, parents, students, teaching and non-teaching staff and external agencies in all matters of child protection
 - 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 Head Teacher and Deputy Heads of concerns about individual children
 - Ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing and securely and confidentially filed
 - Liaise with any outside agencies involved, for example the police/social services

- keep relevant people within the school informed about any action taken and any further action required
- Ensure that an individual case record is maintained which indicates the action taken by the school, the liaison with other agencies and the outcome
- Advise GES of child protection training needs in liaison with the SLT

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

iii) Head of Year (HOY) – Secondary / Year Leader (YL) ---

Primary The duties of the HOY/YL:

- To act as a first point of contact and support for staff in relation to child protection issues
- To record the reporting of a disclosure of alleged abuse made by a child to the Child Protection Officer. The alleged abuse could involve either an external person or a member of staff (See Appendix IV)
- To record staff suspicion of a child allegedly being abused (See Appendix IV)
- To discuss future action with the member of staff who made the report, after consulting with the CP Officer (where appropriate, another member of staff may be included where he/she has observed possible signs of abuse or heard a child disclosing details of potential abuse)
- To record all action taken and consult the CP Officer within 24hrs
 - To ensure copies of all reports of incidents are passed to the CP

Officer

- The HOY/YL has undertaken appropriate training and will be kept up to date with training sessions

2.2 Definition and Effects of Abuse

Risk is part of everyday life and can be positive or negative. Children may be harmed by abuse or neglect. Anyone may abuse or neglect a child by: directly inflicting harm, by indirectly not preventing harm or by failing to provide proper care. Children might be abused in various settings – in a family, school or local community (by people known to them and more rarely by a stranger).

There are four main categories of abuse:

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful or neglectful failure to prevent a child's physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, and drowning or suffocating. 'Munchausen's syndrome by proxy' is an illness whereby a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health in a child, and this too may amount to physical abuse. For children with disabilities, physical abuse may include confinement to a room or cot or giving drugs incorrectly to control behaviour.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child, having severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making children feel they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or only valued for what they can do for another person. Emotional abuse may also involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or exploiting or corrupting them. For children with disabilities, this type of abuse may include over protection or, conversely, failing to acknowledge or understand a child's disability, thus having unrealistic expectations. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child 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 non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and psychological needs and is likely to seriously impair the child's health or development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing; failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger; failing to ensure that the child receives appropriate medical care or treatment; lack of stimulation; or lack of supervision. It may also include neglecting a child's basic emotional needs.

Bullying is another form of abuse (Refer to Anti-Bullying Policy).

2.3 Possible Signs of Abuse

Factors which increase children and young people's vulnerability include: domestic violence; unstable parental relationships; parental misuse of drugs or alcohol; parental mental illness.

All staff should be aware of the signs and indicators of abuse and neglect, such as:

- physical injury caused by others
- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if they are on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- sexual abuse (possible sexually explicit language or behaviour)
- an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- the child describing what appears to be an abusive act involving him or herself
- emotional abuse (unexplained changes in the child's behaviour over time; e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts or temper)
- someone else --- a child or an adult --- expressing concern about the welfare of the child
- distrust of adults, particularly those with whom the child previously had, or would normally be expected to have, a close relationship
- difficulty in making friends
- the child being prevented from mixing with other children (i.e. extreme attempts to isolate a child by adults)
- displaying changes in their eating patterns, including overeating or loss of appetite, loss of weight for no apparent reason
- 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

This list is not meant to be complete, and the presence of one or more of these indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place. It should be stressed, however, that it is not the responsibility of staff to prove that abuse is taking place. Instead, it is their responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting them to the HOY/YL/CP officer.

Part III Procedure

3.1 Reporting Abuse

Reporting Procedures

A member of staff suspecting or hearing a complaint/disclosure of abuse:

- must report any suspicions to the HOY/YL/CP officer
- must listen carefully to the child and keep an open mind (i.e. without interrupting, questioning or coercing. See Appendix F: Advice to staff)
- staff should not take a decision as to whether or not the abuse has taken place
- must ensure the child is not given a guarantee of absolute confidentiality (i.e. “if I am worried about you, I cannot keep this a secret, I will need to talk to either HOY/YL or SLT”)
- the member of staff should explain that they need to pass the information to an appropriate staff member, in order to ensure they are safe
- must keep detailed records and pass on to HOY/YL/CP Officer within 24 hours (dated, signed in pen).
- once reported the HOY/YL and/or CP officer. HOY/YL consults with CP officer, next steps implemented and where necessary involve outside agencies. Where the CP Officer is unavailable the HOY/YL will report the alleged incident directly to the Deputy CP officer, who will continue the process.

A flow chart relating to Reporting Procedures is included at Appendix III.

Involving Others

When a child discloses possible abuse, it is not appropriate to include another member of staff in the conversation, as the disclosure may be traumatic for the child. Where another member of staff happens to be around, they observe the disclosure silently. This should be recorded on the report form (See Appendix IV).

Child/Young People's disclosures are always referred by staff to the HOY/YL and CP Officer. Next steps are coordinated and if further discussion is required with the child/young person either the HOY/YL or CP Officer will lead this with the child/young person. Discussion should not take place with anyone else as this impedes investigation and the communication of the child/young person can inadvertently be coerced.

Where a member of staff observes possible signs of abuse without child/young person disclosure they should involve only the relevant HOY/YL or CP officer). Extreme discretion must be taken when this occurs as the child and/or other children must not be alarmed. As above, this information should be recorded and filed.

3.2 Allegations of child abuse against a member of staff

Reporting Procedures

Allegations of child abuse can potentially be made about any member of staff. It is critical that all members of staff are aware of such issues and how to deal with any allegations appropriately. In these instances, all allegations should be reported directly to the CP officer. If, however, the allegation involves the CP officer, a report must be made to the appropriate Head Teacher. (See Appendix V).

The Head Teacher and Deputy Heads should then be informed by the CP Officer.

Next Steps

As a result of any allegation being received the member of staff will 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.

A flow chart relating to concerns regarding a member of staff is included at Appendix V.

3.3 Communicating with Parents

Contacting parents regarding possible child abuse/neglect should only be undertaken by CP Officer and/or SLT.

3.4 Dealing with Confidentiality

It must be clear to all children that GES keep and regard confidentiality carefully. Importantly, though, when a child/young person's safety is at risk or they are a risk to themselves and/or others, a teacher/member of staff has to pass this information onto other relevant staff: HOY/YL/CP Officer.

Storage and Access of confidential records

Possible abuse/neglect information is to be kept securely in lockable storage in the CP officer's office, with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties. Records of all Disclosures will be maintained in the same manner. Passing on this information could have legal repercussions, therefore all such material/files/paperwork should always be maintained by the CP Officer.

3.5 Medical Treatment

--- If, as a result of physical injury, the injury requires immediate medical treatment while the child is on school premises, the school nurse should be involved and thereafter, if warranted, arrangements made to transport the child to a hospital. Communication with parents is undertaken by CP Officer or SLT only.

3.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

GES is committed to ensuring that its Child Protection Policy Statement and Procedure is implemented, monitored and reviewed in terms of its effectiveness. The purpose of the GES Child Protection Policy Statement and Procedure is to highlight and signpost next steps should a member of staff become concerned about a child's welfare and safety (both within and outwith the school). This is a working document and therefore reviewed, updated and amended regularly. This policy highlights a process to ensure our children/young people's safety and welfare.

Therefore the following will be undertaken:

- Staff/HOY/YL/CP Officer ensure all incidents, allegations of abuse/disclosures are recorded and monitored accurately
- A central log/file of the above will be retained securely by the CP Officer
- Arrangements in place to monitor adherence with the school's child protection policy
- Arrangements in place to ensure DBS/Disclosure Scotland etc. undertaken during the recruitment and selection process for all staff
- Ensuring that personnel records are up to date, that job descriptions for new positions include reference to child protection
- Checking to see that training has been undertaken (HOY/YL/CP Officer)
- Consulting with staff, children and parents as part of the review of the Policy and Procedures, giving them a chance to contribute ideas, raise any issues and agree actions to be taken to update and amend existing policy

3.7 Duty of employees

Every employee of the school is under a general legal duty to:

- Read the GES Child Protection Policy Statement and Procedure and understand it
- Protect students from abuse and consult with HOY/YL when concerned
- Protect themselves on all forms of social media. The school strongly advises that staff should not befriend students on any form of social media such as, Facebook and Instagram.
- Be aware of Kuwaiti local culture
- Be aware of GES Child Protection Policy Statement and Procedure and follow it
- Ensure students disclosures are listened to without bias or coercion
- Keep a sufficient record of any child/young person abuse/neglect
- Report any serious matters of concern to the Designated CP Officer

Training for Staff

Once staff have been recruited, it is essential to ensure that they are all well informed, trained, supervised and supported, so that they are less likely to become involved in actions that can cause harm or be misunderstood.

This process should include the following:

Induction

New staff will be provided with an induction pack including GES Child Protection Policy Statement and Procedure. The development and suitability of new staff will be reviewed within three months of their taking up the post. If any concerns are raised regarding DBS/Disclosure Scotland checks or previous employers references, Head Teachers will take the necessary action.

Supervision and support

Supervision provides an opportunity for new staff to share concerns about their working environment.

Tips for staff to protect themselves from allegations

- Always be publicly open when working with children
- Avoid situations where individual members of staff and a child/young person are completely unobserved and/or secluded.

- Individual members of staff should avoid spending excessive amounts of time with one child/young person away from others
- Staff must never restrain students, unless trained to use supportive measures of restraint
- It is not recommended by the school that teachers take part in private 1:1 tutoring for the above named reasons (staff may inadvertently place themselves at risk of allegation)
- Staff must not have children on their own in a vehicle. It is recommended that should a student require transport in emergencies, that two members of staff should accompany the child/young person, having received parents' prior permission
- It is not recommended that staff take photographs of students. Permission is sought and gained from parents when the student enters the school as to whether they wish photographs not to be taken of their children. This is collated and recorded by the Admissions Office
- Electronic communication and feedback with regard to the student's work and progress should be professional and supportive indicating in what way students may improve the quality of their work. Employees are not allowed to 'befriend' pupils on social networks e.g. 'Facebook' (see ICT/Internet Safety Policy)
- All staff should only write appropriate notes in exercise books/homework diary, emails or letters to pupils. Texting is not recommended as it could be misinterpreted by the student

Part IV Additional Information

Appendices

Appendix F

No judgemental statement should be made about the person against whom the allegation is made.

The following advice is offered to school staff to whom a child makes a disclosure of abuse.

- Remain calm.
 - Listen to the child with sensitivity and openness.
 - Take all disclosures seriously
 - Do not ask leading questions or make suggestions to the child
 - Offer reassurance but do not make promises.
 - Do not stop a child recalling significant events
 - Do not overreact
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- Explain that further help may have to be sought
 - Record the discussion accurately and retain the record of dates, times, names, locations, context and factual details of conversation.

This information should then be passed onto the CP Officer and a record will be retained in the school.

If the reporting person or member of the school staff and the CP Officer is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the suspicion/allegation, the procedures for reporting will be adhered to.