

Keeping children safe at Sandford International School 2022

**Based on DfE Keeping children safe in
education (UK)**

Part one: Information for all school staff

September 2022



Summary

Keeping children safe at Sandford International School is guidance that staff must have regard to when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of our children.

It is essential that **everybody** working in the school understands their safeguarding responsibilities. The Head of School will ensure that all staff who work either directly with children or do not work directly with children:

- a) sign a declaration that they have read and understood their responsibilities set out in Part One of the guidance and that it is formally reported to the Board.

W/ro Tenagne Lemma is the Designated Board member for Safeguarding (DBG)



Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff

What SIS staff should know and do

A child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding

1. SIS staff are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for our children.
2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that we should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.
3. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, **everyone** who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
4. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:
 - protecting children from maltreatment
 - preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Children includes every student in our school.

The role of SIS staff

5. **SIS staff** are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.
6. **All staff** have responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
7. **All staff** should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.
8. **Any staff member** who has **any** concerns about a child's welfare should complete a SIS referral form and give it to a DSL or deputy DSL.
9. **Our school** has **3 designated safeguarding leads and one deputy** who provide support to staff to carry out their safeguarding duties.



10. The designated safeguarding leads (and deputy) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.

What SIS staff need to know

11. **All staff** should be aware of systems within Sandford which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include the:

- a) **child protection policy** (which should amongst other things also include the policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse)
- b) **behaviour policy** (which should include measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- c) **staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct)** should amongst other things, include low-level concerns and allegations against staff) and
- d) role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).

Copies of policies and a copy of Part one of this document will be provided to all staff at induction.

12. **All staff** will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction. The training will be regularly updated. In addition, **all staff** will receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

13. **All staff** should be aware of Sandford's early help process and understand their role in it.

14. **All staff** should know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding leads (or a deputy) **Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.**

15. **All staff** should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting **any** form of abuse and/or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

16. **All staff** should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or are being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or language barriers. **This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity** and speaking to the designated safeguarding leads (DSL) if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.



What SIS staff should look out for

Early help

17. **Any** child may benefit from early help, but SIS staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:
- a) is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
 - b) has special educational needs
 - c) has a mental health need
 - d) is being bullied
 - e) has lost a parent (bereavement)
 - f) is a young carer for an adult
 - g) is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
 - h) is frequently missing/goes missing from home
 - i) is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation
 - j) has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
 - k) is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
 - l) is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
 - m) has recently returned home to their family
 - n) is persistently absent from school, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

Abuse and neglect

18. **All SIS** staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home and online. **Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital** for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

19. **All SIS** staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

20. **All SIS** staff, but especially the designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation and serious youth violence.



21. **All SIS staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.** Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content.

22. **In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.**

Indicators of abuse and neglect

23. **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

24. **Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

25. **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

26. **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The



sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and **all SIS** staff should be aware of it.

27. **Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Safeguarding issues

28. **All SIS** staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education, serious violence and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk. Below are some safeguarding issues all SIS staff should be aware of.

Child-on-child abuse

29. **All SIS** staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or online. **All SIS** staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

30. **All SIS** staff should understand that even if there are no reports in the school it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have **any** concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

31. It is essential that **all SIS** staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children, many of which are listed below, that are abusive in nature. **Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.**

32. Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- a) bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- b) abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- c) physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)



- d) sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- e) sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- f) causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- g) consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- h) upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm, and
- i) initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

33. Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

34. Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

35. It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however SIS staff should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.



Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

36. CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

37. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

38. CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. Some children may not realise they are being exploited for example they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Domestic Abuse

39. Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

Mental Health

40. **All SIS** staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

41. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. However, we are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

42. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediately inform a DSL or deputy.

Serious violence

43. **All SIS** staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved



with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

What SIS staff should do if they have concerns about a child

44. Staff at SIS are advised to maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the **best interests** of the child.

45. If staff have **any concerns** about a child's welfare, they should act on them **immediately**.

46. If staff have a concern, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

47. Options will then include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the school's pastoral support processes
- undertaking an early help assessment via a DSL or deputy

48. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. **Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team.** Any action taken should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) as soon as is practically possible.

49. Staff should not assume a colleague, or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

Record keeping

50. **All** concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. This will also help if/when responding to any complaints about the way a case has been handled by the school. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. Concerns and referrals will be kept secure in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, and
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

51. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).



Why is all of this important?

52. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address safeguarding risks, prevent issues escalating and to promote children's welfare.. Examples of poor practice include:

- failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect
- poor record keeping
- failing to listen to the views of the child
- failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve
- sharing information too slowly, and
- a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

What SIS staff should do if they have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another staff member

53. If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors) **harming or posing a risk of harm to children**, then this should be immediately referred to the Head of School.

Anthony Hamilton – September

