



# Durham School for Girls Doha

## Safeguarding Policy

Version 4.0 | September 2024

**FIRST IMPLEMENTATION DATE | AUGUST 2019**

**REVIEW PERIOD | ANNUAL**

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**REVIEWED BY | DEPUTY HEAD PASTORAL**

### VALUES

قيمي ترسم هويتي

MARK VALUES AND QATARI VALUES ARE AT THE HEART OF  
A DURHAM GIRL

## **1. Section 1: Introduction and Context**

### **1.1. Durham School for Girls Doha safeguarding philosophy and vision**

Durham School for Girls Doha ensures that students are supported and empowered to achieve their academic and personal potential. The foundation for enabling this to be realised is our strong commitment to ensuring the highest standards of safeguarding and our active promotion of the welfare of children and young people. Safeguarding is a key component of the ethos of the school and there is an expectation that all stakeholders in our school community share and understand this commitment.

Durham School for Girls Doha fully recognises the moral and statutory responsibility in Qatar as well as meeting international standards to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that receive effective support, protection and justice.

Durham School for Girls acknowledges that every child has basic fundamental rights. These include the right to:

- life, survival and development
- protection from violence, abuse or neglect
- an education that enables children to fulfil their potential
- be raised by, or have a relationship with, their parents
- express their opinions and be listened to.

Therefore, the welfare of the child is paramount;

- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection;
- All members of staff have equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm;
- Children and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support.

This document outlines the various procedures we have implemented to make sure every child remains safe and happy. It applies to staff, volunteers and contractors working with pupils on school premises or away from the school on an activity, visit or other educational pursuit.

This policy therefore complements and supports a range of other policies (e.g. Complaints, Safer Recruitment, Health and Safety). When undertaking development or planning of any kind, the School will consider safeguarding aspects.

## 1.2. What is safeguarding

### 1.2.1 :Key definitions

#### Key Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of 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.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Members of staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, including contracted staff such as cleaners and kitchen staff, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Child includes everyone under the age of 18. However, our duty to promote the welfare and health and safety applies to all students in our care whether they are under or over the age of 18.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, guardians, foster carers and adoptive parents.

### 1.2.2 :Safeguarding at Durham School for Girls Doha

This includes:

- ensuring pupil health and safety
- referring concerns or allegations about a child to the appropriate bodies promptly.
- bullying
- all forms of abuse;
- harassment and discrimination.
- use of physical intervention;
- meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions
- providing first aid;
- drug and substance misuse;
- educational visits;
- intimate care;
- internet safety;
- issues which may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity;
- school security

### 1.3. Designated Safeguarding Leadership Team

1.3.1 : Designated Safeguarding Leadership Team at Durham School for Girls Doha

Designated Safeguarding Leads: Jo Hayward; Sharni Stocker-Jones and Denice Wallace

Designated Safeguarding Team: Carolyn Burke, Jackie Whay; Somaia Mehana; Fatme Mazeh

1.3.2 : Wider Safeguarding Members

In addition to the DSL Team the following members of staff are level 2/ 3 safeguarding trained and / or key members of the wider safeguarding team:

Gemma Taylor

1.3.3 : Key safeguarding contacts

Jo Hayward [Jhayward@durhamqatar.com](mailto:Jhayward@durhamqatar.com)

Sharni Stocker-Jones [SStocker-Jones@durhamqatar.com](mailto:SStocker-Jones@durhamqatar.com)

Denice Wallace [DWallace@durhamqatar.com](mailto:DWallace@durhamqatar.com)

Somaia Mehana [SMehana@durhamqatar.com](mailto:SMehana@durhamqatar.com)

EXTERNAL CONTACTS:

[About AMAN Centre | Aman](#)

[Sidra Child Advocacy Program \(S-CAP\) | Sidra Medicine](#)

### 1.4. Our safeguarding guiding principles

1.4.1 : Core safeguarding principles

The School's core safeguarding principles are:

- the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance;
- safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play in keeping children safe
- listening to Children and to all members of the community is fundamental to safeguarding and is in the best interest of the child
- Durham School for Girls is committed to a 'speak up culture' and believes in the notion that if you see something or sense something then you should say something – no concern is considered too small. If concerns are raised early then help can be provided at an early stage

- early indication that a child may need help is critical and a crucial part of our 'speak up culture'.
- all staff must have the attitude of 'it could happen here' with regard to safeguarding.
- safer children make more successful learners;
- representatives of the whole School community will be involved in safeguarding policy development and review;
- policies will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.

#### 1.4.2 :Core operational principles

- This policy applies to all students in the School policy but legally as some students will be 18 years and over they may be treated differently outside of school. Any student under the age of 18 will be regarded as a child for the purpose of this policy.
- All staff have a responsibility for the implementation of this policy;
- Any concerns regarding safeguarding and/or child protection must be reported using the safeguarding reporting procedure CPOMS as soon as practicable and within 6 hours.
- Any concerns where a child is at an immediate risk of harm or has disclosed abuse should be reported immediately to DSL or, when unavailable, a member of the DSL Team and followed up with a CPOMS Report as soon as practicable and within 6 hours.
- If a crime has been committed, it should be reported to the DSL or, when unavailable, the DSL team immediately and followed up with a CPOMS Report as soon as practicable and within 6 hours.
- All staff must have read and completed Safeguarding Training on The National College and act in accordance with the DfE Statutory Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) and the Durham School for Girls Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- All staff must know who the members of the Designated Safeguarding Leadership Team are;
- All safeguarding and child protection concerns must be treated in the utmost confidence
- The DSL Team must report all concerns in line with Qatar Laws and in line with best practice as defined in the UK.
- Allegations of abuse in relation to adults must be dealt with in line with the associated policy.

### 1.5. Aims of the policy

- To raise awareness of all school staff of the need to safeguard all children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities;
- To promote safe practices and challenge poor and unsafe practices.
- To provide an environment where pupils feel safe, secure, valued and respected; confident to talk openly and sure of being listened to.
- To demonstrate the School's commitment with regard to child protection to students, parents and other partners.

There are seven main elements to our policy:

1. Establishing a safe environment in which students can learn and develop; include in the curriculum activities and opportunities, which equip children with the skills needed to stay safe from abuse and will develop resilience and realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life;
2. Ensuring the governance of safeguarding and promotion of welfare is fully embedded within the school;
3. Raising awareness of child protection issues and ensuring staff, volunteers and contractors working at the school are fully aware of presenting issues and how to act in the event of concerns being raised;
4. Ensuring staff recruitment practice is safe and fully accords with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education so the school operate safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with the children;
5. Supporting pupils who are in need of protection or require additional help to achieve good outcomes.
6. Listening to the children in our care and ensuring that children know that there are adults in the School whom they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty, as the ethos is one where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;
7. Creating an open-culture where staff feel confident to speak-up whenever they have concerns about a child or a particular adult and are aware of how and when to act on concerns that they have and work in a safe and appropriate manner at all times.

### 1.6. Confidentiality and information sharing

Durham School for Girls Doha recognises that all matters relating to child protection are highly confidential. The Designated Safeguarding Leadership Team will share that information on a 'need to know, what, and when' basis. Concerns about individuals should never be discussed elsewhere, inside or outside the School unless in confidential meetings for that purpose.

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the child and staff involved but also to ensure that being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence. Members of staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL Team or the Principal. That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with GDPR principles (please see data protection policy). Information is:

- processed for limited purposes;
- adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- accurate;
- kept no longer than necessary;
- processed in accordance with the data subject's rights;
- secure.

Child Protection Records and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information such as on CPOMS will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort will be made to prevent unauthorised access, and sensitive information should not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. When members of staff write up safeguarding concerns on their laptops etc. once the files are sent to the DSL or logged on CPOMS they must be deleted from their email accounts and own computers.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of data protection. This means that students and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a student or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the Principal. In line with best safeguarding practices, data protection does not prevent the DSL from sharing information with relevant agencies/future schools, where that information may help to protect a child.

### 1.7. Key safeguarding policy links

Throughout this policy we refer to the following policies:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2024)
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations (DfE, 2014)

- The Education Act (DfE, 2002)
- The Non-Maintained Special Schools Regulations (DfE, 2015)
- The Teacher Standards (DfE, 2012)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2018)
- Prevent Duty Guidance (DfE, 2015 and 2023)
- United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1990)
- MOEHE Guideline to security, child protection and (Health and Safety) in private schools and Kindergartens

## **2. Safeguarding Legislation, Guidelines and Procedures**

### **2.1. Safeguarding legislation, guidance and compliance**

Durham School for Girls Doha is committed to being compliant with all standards for safeguarding in Qatar and in line with the UK. Due to their day-to-day contact with students, members of staff in schools and colleges are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in school when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that members of school staff are alert to the signs of abuse and understand the procedures for reporting their concerns. The School will act on identified concerns and provide early help to prevent concerns from escalating.

#### **The UK**

Section 94 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requires the Secretary of State to prescribe standards for independent educational institutions to safeguard the welfare, health and safety of children. The relevant standards are set out in the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations (the ISS Regulations 2014).

The statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE) (2024) is issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015. Schools must have regard to it when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This means that they should comply with it unless exceptional circumstances arise, such as conflict with the requirements of the Qatari law, due to the differing social services provisions in Qatar compared to the UK.

All members of staff are required to have signed a Code of Conduct in relation to Safeguarding which includes a clause to confirm that they have read and understood this document.

This guidance underpins Durham School for Girls Doha's commitment to safeguarding.

The Teacher Standards state that teachers, including head teachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.



The statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2023; last updated 2024) covers the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services (including schools and colleges) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Prevent Duty Guidance 2015: With effect from 1st July 2015 all schools became subject to a duty under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 in exercising their functions “to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”.

The School recognises that “safeguarding vulnerable people from radicalisation is no different from safeguarding them from other forms of harm”.

An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. It often happens over a period of time, rather than being a one-off event, and it can increasingly happen online.

## **Qatar**

Under Article 19 children have the right to be protected from physical and mental violence, neglect, sexual abuse and exploitation, while they are in the care of parents or any other person.

Article 22 of the Permanent Constitution of the State, which states that “The State shall provide care for the young and protect them from corruption, exploitation, and the evils of physical, mental and spiritual neglect

QATARI PENALTIES LAW (11/2004); Chapter 3; Article 189: ‘The penalty of imprisonment for a period not exceeding 3 years and a fine not exceeding 10,000 Riyal or one of the two penalties shall apply to any public officer assigned to investigate about crimes or identify them if he neglects to inform about the offence he knows about or postpones such information.’

## **2.2. Child protection procedures**

Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. We are aware that all our members of staff have a responsibility in school to identify the symptoms and triggers of abuse and neglect, to share information and work together to provide children and young people with the help they need.

KCSIE (2024) states that: ‘Where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action should be taken to protect that child’. Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or are at immediate risk.’

Sometimes a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm, such as poisoning or a violent assault. However, more often it is a compilation of significant events, both acute and longstanding, which can change or damage a child’s physical and psychological development.

Some children have a family and/or social circumstances where their health and development are neglected. For them it is the corrosiveness of long-term neglect, emotional, physical or sexual abuse that causes impairment to the extent of constituting significant harm.

### 2.2.1 : Recognising abuse

To ensure that our children are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm (for example by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or matches within reach of an unattended toddler). Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). Internet abuse is a growing concern, and schools should be vigilant to this.

There are four main categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. All staff should be aware that abuse, or safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

#### **Physical abuse**

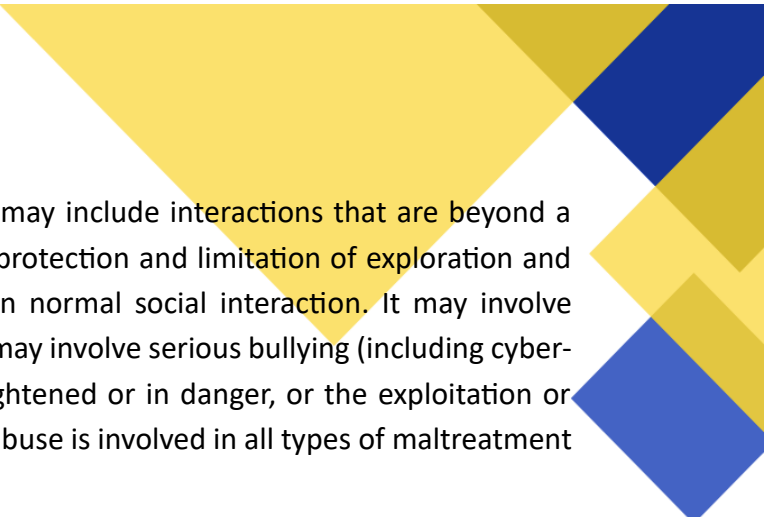
Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in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

Some indicators of physical abuse included:

- Bumps, bruises, cuts or scars in an unusual place or where the explanation does not match the injury.
- Bite marks
- Unexplained fractures or discoloration of limbs
- Dental injuries
- Rope burns

#### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's psychological state and 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 participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), 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.

Some further indicators of emotional abuse may include:

- Lack of confidence or self esteem
- Difficulties controlling behaviour
- Change in behaviour
- Physical changes
- Fear

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of 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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Some indicators of sexual abuse may include:

- Language of a sexual nature not in-line with age expectations
- Bed wetting
- Bleeding and/ or discharge
- Changes in eating habits
- Seeming distant or upset
- Self-harm
- Alcohol or drug misuse
- Avoiding being alone
- Nightmares
- Being secretive about how they are spending their time
- Changes in mood

## **Neglect**

Neglect is 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 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.

This form of abuse may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. The above categories are identified by the NSPCC, and definitions have been taken from *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (DfE, 2018) and *KCSIE* (2024).

Further indicators of neglect may include:

- Poor appearance
- Being hungry all the time
- Becoming clingy
- Health and development problems
- Having frequent or untreated nappy rash in infants
- Unwashed clothes
- Anaemia
- Body issues
- Regular illness
- Poor language or social skills
- Being smelly or dirty
- Missing school
- Becoming aggressive
- Being withdrawn, depressed or anxious

## **Child on Child Abuse**

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as 'child on child' or 'peer on peer' abuse).

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing

- physical harm
- threatens and/or encourages physical abuse; sexual violence, such as rape, assault by
- penetration and sexual assault;
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;

All staff should recognise that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child on child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in their schools 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 deputy).

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature.

Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “girls being girls” 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.

This may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence); ‘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 initiation/hazing type violence and rituals 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; consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery); harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

### 2.2.2 : Specific safeguarding issues

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues-some of which are listed below:

- bullying including cyber bullying
- children missing education
- child missing from home or care
- child sexual exploitation (CSE)

- domestic violence
- drugs
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- forced marriage
- gangs and youth violence
- gender based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- hate
- mental health
- missing children and adults strategy
- private fostering
- preventing radicalisation
- relationship abuse
- sexting
- trafficking

KCSIE (2024) contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues.

Staff should be aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truancy and sexting put children in danger.

All staff should be aware safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults and sexting.

Staff should be clear as to Durham School for Girls Dohas policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse.

### 2.2.3 : Bullying

Bullying is defined by the school as behaviour that creates a real or perceived power imbalance and is:

- One sided (but can escalate from conflict)
- Repeated (not a one-off incident and therefore repeated after being asked to stop)
- Intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- Often targeted at certain individuals because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level,

bullying can have a disastrous effect on a child's wellbeing and in very rare cases has been a feature in the suicide of some young people. All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. Year Group Leaders will keep records of bullying-type behaviour through CPOMS.

The subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals via the school's policies and curriculum for Personal Development. If the bullying is particularly serious, or the anti-bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the Principal and the DSL will consider implementing child protection procedures.

#### 2.2.4 : Indicators of abuse

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons, it is vital that members of staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns following the School's safeguarding concern reporting procedure.

A child who is being abused or neglected may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries;
- show signs of pain or discomfort;
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather;
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming;
- look unkempt and uncared for;
- change their eating habits;
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships;
- appear fearful;
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety;
- self-harm;
- show signs of not wanting to go home;
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn;
- challenge authority;
- become disinterested in their school work;
- be constantly tired or preoccupied;
- be wary of physical contact;
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol; or

- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL team to decide how to proceed. It is therefore essential that staff report their concerns. Staff do not need 'absolute proof' that a child is at risk but should act on any hunches or worries in the knowledge that they will be supported in their safeguarding role. Reports made in good faith will always be dealt with in accordance with the School's Whistleblowing Policy, regardless of outcome.

#### 2.2.5 : Impact of abuse

The impact of child abuse should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

#### 2.2.6 : 'It could happen here' culture "

Any child, in any family, in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here". Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to immediately help the child;
- follow the School's safeguarding reporting procedure.
- do not start your own investigation;
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family;
- seek support for yourself, if you are distressed.

### 2.3. Safeguarding reporting procedure

#### 2.3.1 : What to do if you have a safeguarding concern about a child

There will be occasions when a member of staff may suspect that a child may be at risk, but have no 'real' evidence. The child's behaviour may have changed, his actions may reveal confusion or distress, or physical but inconclusive signs may have been noticed. The child may have a sign, or their behaviour may indicate possible abuse. In this circumstance, staff are still expected to report.



It is not the role of staff members to commence their own investigations into safeguarding concerns. This must be the role of the DSL team. The staff member can, however, provide the child with an opportunity to talk. This information should then be included in your CPOMS Report.

### 2.3.2 : What to do if a child discloses abuse or significant harm to you

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault.

If a child talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, the staff member will need to let the child know that they must pass the information on – staff are not allowed to keep secrets and must never promise to do so. The point at which they tell the child this is a matter for professional judgement. If they jump in immediately, the student may think that they do not want to listen. If left until the very end of the conversation, the child may feel that he has been misled into revealing more than he would have otherwise.

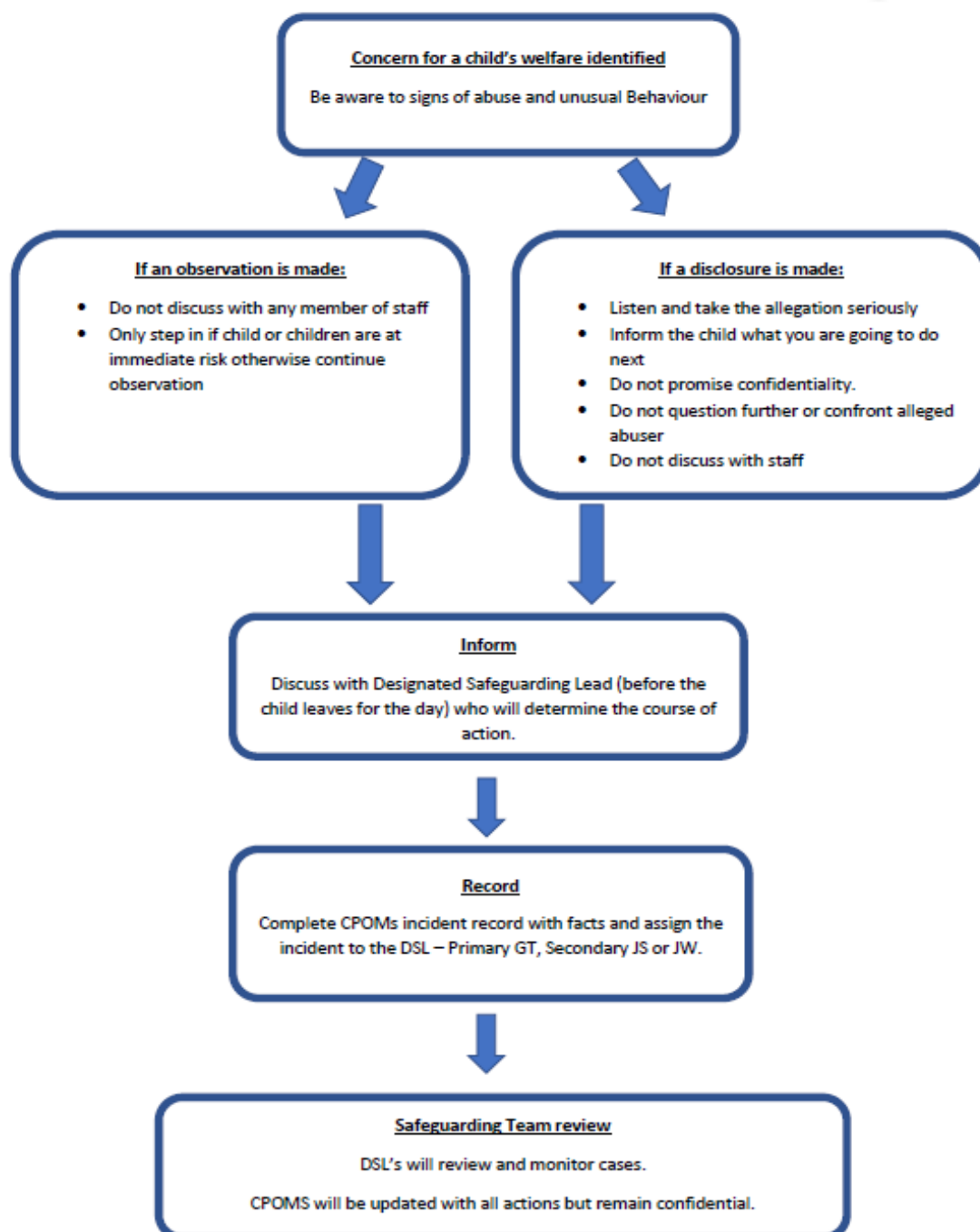
During their conversations with the children members of staff will:

- allow them to speak freely;
- remain calm and not overreact – the child may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting their listener;
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’;
- not be afraid of silences – members of staff must remember how hard this must be for the child;
- under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the student’s parent(s) think about all this;
- at an appropriate time tell the child that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on;
- not to offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused;
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ may be the staff member’s way of being supportive but could be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong;
- tell the child what will happen next. The child may agree to go to see the DSL. Otherwise let the child know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day;

- report verbally to the DSL, even if the child has promised to do it by themselves;
- write up an accurate and objective account of the conversation as soon as possible, and upload to CPOMS;
- seek support from a member of the DSL team if you feel distressed and wish to discuss. Do not divulge details of the disclosure to anyone else;

In summary, if a child makes a disclosure of abuse and/or significant or possible immediate harm then the necessary procedures must be followed.

For all safeguarding concerns, no matter the perceived severity the following flow chat indicates the necessary action:



### 2.3.3 : Notifying parents about safeguarding concerns

The School will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a child with their parents. This must be handled sensitively. A member of the DSL team will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure. However, if the School believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the student or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from other agencies where possible.

### 2.3.4 : Children and families requiring external/additional support

As distinct from cases where a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm, where children and families need support from agencies beyond our School, we will respond according by consultation with the DSL Team. We will liaise closely to co-ordinate support, with the agreement of the child and their parent/carer(s), and in accordance with local children's social care procedures in Qatar where available.

## **3. Specific Safeguarding Issues:**

### 3.1. Children with sexually harmful behaviour

Staff will be sensitive to the nature of relationships within a boarding setting which will be different to students in a day school and respond accordingly. It is important to recognise the potential for abuse by peers. With regards to child on child abuse staff will refer such abuse to the DSL Team using the safeguarding concern reporting procedure. The DSL will consult with external professional and/or agencies where there is a risk of significant harm. Allegations of child on child abuse will involve parents being contacted.

Staff will be aware of harm caused by bullying and will use the School's anti-bullying procedures where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a child's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex. The School will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator. Members of Staff, who become concerned about a child's sexual behaviour, should follow the School's safeguarding concern reporting procedure.

### 3.2. Sexual exploitation of children

Sexual exploitation involves an individual or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of an individual or groups of children or young people, and victims can be boys or girls. Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs and alcohol, and sometimes accommodation. Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse

impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to child trafficking. All members of staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation in their safeguarding training and any concerns should be reported following the safeguarding reporting procedure.

### 3.3. The Prevent Duty

The Prevent Duty is an effort to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism – this is a global concern. We expect school staff to use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

Members of staff, who have concerns about a pupil, will make these concerns known following the School's safeguarding reporting procedure. The DSL will then make a judgement as to whether or not it is appropriate to make a referral to external agencies in Qatar or the appropriate embassies for foreign nationals.

#### 3.3.1 : Signs of vulnerability to terrorist influence/attraction or radicalization

There are no known definitive indicators that a young person is vulnerable to radicalisation, but there are a number of signs that together increase the risk.

Signs of vulnerability include:

- underachievement
- being in possession of extremist literature
- poverty
- social exclusion
- traumatic events
- global or national events events
- change in behaviour
- extremist influences
- conflict with family over lifestyle
- confused identity
- victim or witness to race or hate crimes
- rejection by peers, family, social groups or faith

#### 3.3.2 : Indicators of radicalization or extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures

- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can
- secretive behaviour
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- advocating violence towards others

### 3.4. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls, and therefore should be dealt with as part of existing child safeguarding/protection structures, policies and procedures. FGM is illegal in the UK and not a practice that is deemed safe for children.

Members of staff should recognise the possibility that a girl may disclose information relating to a sibling or close friend who has suffered abuse in the form of FGM. Any disclosures of information or concern regarding possible FGM should be reported to the DSL Team immediately following the procedure for disclosure/immediate and significant harm reporting.

## **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

### 4.1. Professional expectations

At Durham School for Girls Doha safeguarding is the responsibility of all staff members. Their primary duty is to ensure the safety and well-being of our students.

Everyone who comes into contact with our children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. We place a high priority on identifying concerns early and provide help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating. We do this because we are acutely aware that we play a vital role in the wider safeguarding system for children. Together with our colleagues in the police, health and other children's services, we promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

All our staff are aware that Teacher Standards (2012) state that teachers, including Heads, should safeguard children's well-being and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as

part of their professional duties. These standards also apply to trainees, inductees and Newly Qualified Teachers and we fully adhere to these standards with rigour; applying our school disciplinary procedures, where appropriate, in cases of misconduct.

#### 4.2. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is responsible for policy generation; systems and compliance related to safeguarding; oversight of staff safeguarding training; coordination of safeguarding audits; devising the safeguarding action plan; maintaining the momentum of the safeguarding action plan; conducting internal audits of safeguarding; leading the safeguarding taskforce; maintaining the confidentiality and integrity of safeguarding records; leading on difficult or stressful safeguarding cases; the understanding of filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place, ensuring that safeguarding remains at the forefront of the school's corporate consciousness; reviewing, and acting upon, serious case reviews; and any other duties which may periodically be necessary to maintain or improve the school's safeguarding policy and procedures.

The DSL should help promote educational outcomes by working closely with their teachers and sharing information about their welfare, safeguarding and child protection concerns.

#### 4.3. The Safeguarding Team

- The Team must be appropriately trained in child protection at least every two years. In the absence of the DSL, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of the students.
- in the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, a member from the Safeguarding team will assume all of the functions as for the manin DSL, above.
- 4.3. The Principal
- ensures that the Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Procedures are implemented and followed by all staff;
- allocates sufficient time, training, support and resources, including cover arrangements, when necessary, to enable the DSL and deputy to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of children and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings.
- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle blowing procedures;
- ensures that children are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum and in Personal Development to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online;
- liaises with the appropriate bodies where an allegation is made against a member of staff and

- ensures that anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service, if a UK national, or to the relevant embassy for other foreign nationals.

## **5. Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct**

### **5.1. Staff professional conduct**

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards the students Durham School for Girls will agree standards of good practice, which will be published as professional guidelines in the relevant handbooks. These include guidelines on physical contact, use of reasonable force, visiting students' rooms and other sensitive areas, language, searching and confiscation, when and where to meet students, alcohol, social events, communications, use of sanctions, bullying and psychological abuse, favouritism, gifts and hospitality.

Members of staff are expected to follow the guidance given in the document 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People' (DfE, 2009) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2024).

Good practice includes:

- treating all children with respect;
- setting a good example by conducting themselves appropriately;
- involving children in decisions that protect them;
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among children;
- being a good listener;
- being alert to changes in children' behaviour and to signs of abuse and neglect;
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of unhappiness or abuse;
- reading and understanding the School's Child Protection Policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, including: Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, Expeditions, E-Safety, First Aid, Health & Safety, Confidentiality & Information-sharing, Drugs & Legal Highs;
- asking the child's permission before initiating physical contact, physical support during PE, touching during music lessons for the purposes of demonstration or administering first aid; other physical contact,
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between children and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language;
- meeting with a child in a room where the teacher can be seen so that a child is never a risk or the teacher open to false allegations
- ensuring that students bathrooms and changing rooms are never used or frequented by adults and staff

- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some children may lead to an increased risk of abuse;
- applying the use of reasonable force/restraint only as a last resort and in compliance with the School policy on Safer Restraint;
- referring all concerns about a child's safety and welfare using the appropriate reporting procedure;
- following the School's rules with regard to communication with children and use of social media and online networking;
- following the School's policy on Screening and Searching in Behaviour Management Policy; and
- All staff will be expected to sign a Code of Conduct at the start of each academic year and at the commencement of their employment.

### 5.2. Abuse of trust

All members of staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards children is unacceptable and that their conduct towards children must be beyond reproach.

In addition, members of staff should understand that, under the UK Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have any kind of sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the School staff and a student under 18 would be a criminal offence, even if that student is over the age of consent. It is also offence for minors to distribute child pornography to each other including photos and sexting including through social media.

Members of staff must not use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with students which are of a sexual nature, or which may become so once the student leaves the school. Therefore, sexual relationships with former students once they leave school, may be open to scrutiny that the member of staff was grooming the person while they were a student of the school and constitute an abuse of trust.

### 5.3. Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children may be at an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is more likely due to societal attitudes and assumptions, and failures to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual's personality, impairment, or circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that our children receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:



- disabled or have special educational needs;
- young carers at home during term time, pauses and holidays;
- living in a domestic abuse situation;
- affected by parental substance misuse;
- living away from home;
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying;
- living in temporary accommodation;
- living transient lifestyles;
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations;
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality;
- involved directly or indirectly in sexual exploitation;
- or who whose level of English makes it more difficult for them to express themselves to staff in school.

This list provides examples of particularly vulnerable groups but is not exhaustive. These students are monitored primarily through pastoral meetings and information on their well-being is provided through our close, personal approach to tutoring.

#### 5.4. Missing children

The School will follow its robust procedures for registration and attendance to ensure the safety of all children and to carry out its duty of care. The School recognises that a child going missing from education could be a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. Therefore, members of staff will respond promptly to absences and follow the School's Missing Child procedures, which are part of the Attendance Policy as appropriate. The DSL Team with support from the Heads of Year and attendance team, will monitor any unauthorised absence at the start or end of any leave period, and will be particularly cautious if a child goes missing on repeated occasions.

The School recognises the duty to inform the parents of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period as determined in the Attendance Policy.

If a child is missing during the school day, SLT will be notified via the missing students email and action will be taken to promptly locate the student so that they can return to lessons.

#### 5.5. Helping children to keep themselves safe

Children are taught to understand and manage risk through numerous programmes (for example Fellowship week, cyber security) some of which are part of the PSHE Programme and through all aspects of their life at the School. Children are encouraged to think about risks they may encounter and to work out how such risks can be overcome. These discussions are

empowering and enabling. They aim to promote sensible behaviour rather than fear or anxiety. Children are taught how to conduct themselves in a safe and responsible manner. They are also regularly reminded about E- Safety. The School continually promotes an ethos of care and respect for others. Children are encouraged to speak to a member of staff in confidence about any worries they may have.

Heads of Year and tutors undertake regular check-ins with students to make sure they are ok. The School also conducts surveys which helps to inform our pastoral strategies as well as shedding light upon areas of concern or specific trends in behaviour which is fed back to individual Heads of Year, who cascade back to their teams. The Pastoral Support Committee analyses the data from a school-wide perspective.

### 5.6. Support for those involved in a child protection issue

Child abuse is devastating for the child. It can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. The School will support children, their families, and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously;
- nominating a link person (normally the DSL) who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact;
- where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a child, separate (independent) link people will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest and appropriate support provided for her
- responding sympathetically to any request from children or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety;
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies;
- storing records securely;
- offering details of help lines, counselling or other avenues of external support;
- following the procedures laid down in our whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures; and
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

## **6. Staff training and Staff Allegations**

### 6.1 Safeguarding Training

Training should provide designated safeguarding leads with a good understanding of their own role, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care.

The school's HR Manager, supported by the Safeguarding Leads, keeps detailed records of all staff safeguarding training and issue reminders when training updates are required.

It is good practice to include a safeguarding agenda item in all staff meetings.

Safer recruitment training is compulsory for Heads of Departments every 2 years.

National College training should be renewed annually by all staff.

Staff members who are key members of the safeguarding team will keep their level 3 safeguarding training up to date.

#### 6.2 If a staff member has concerns about a colleague

A member of staff who is concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a child is undoubtedly placed in a difficult situation. He or she may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and will wonder whether a report could jeopardise a colleague's career. However, all staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount.

All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported directly to the Principal or DSL.

#### 6.3 Allegations against staff

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen.

A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals can pose a serious risk to children and we must therefore act on every allegation. Members of staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not the default option and alternatives to suspension will always be considered. In some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.

#### 6.4 Safeguarding requirements expected of contractors

We expect the following as a minimum in the case of all contractors:

- Induction training provided which covers safeguarding;
- Contractors to read and sign the safeguarding policy
- Police checks for any member of staff who will be employed on-site for longer than 6 days
- Our Code of Conduct for contractors is shared and a record is kept of their having read and understood it.

## Site Safety and Security

### 7.1 Safety requirements on campus

- The school is monitored at all times by the security team and the CCTV is fully operational.
- All staff and contractors must wear Durham School lanyards.
- Visitors must follow the visitors' procedures and should always be accompanied by a member of staff.
- A positive health and safety culture is always promoted throughout the school, with all staff being encouraged to be vigilant of potential risks.

### 7.2 Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is undertaken to good effect in promoting safety. Such assessments cover all aspects of the school's work, such as premises and equipment, on-site activities, off-site activities and the venues used, use of buses and other forms of transport.

Our risk assessments include sections to address child safeguarding risks and a risk management plan.

Our risk assessments consider all safeguarding matters when working with other partners and third-party providers, for example on expeditions and trips.

Where appropriate, short briefings/training input are given to staff of host organisations/locations on child safeguarding and how to report issues of concern.

Risk assessments are signed off by managers/senior leaders, not only by the trip or expedition leader.

### 7.3 Photography and images on site

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place.

To protect our children we will:

- seek parental consent for photography of our students
- demonstrate respect, care and caution when including photographs of students in Newsletters, Blogs and any other School publication; and
- encourage children to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

#### 7.4 E-safety including staff use of social media

Children increasingly use mobile phones, tablets and computers on a daily basis. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some adults and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. The Prevent Duty requires the School to safeguard vulnerable individuals from being radicalised or drawn into extremism through the internet or social media.

The following measures are in place to promote e-safety within the School:

- ICT Acceptable Use Policy - protects all parties by clearly stating what is acceptable and what is not. Children and their parents are expected to sign up to this at the start of each academic year and before access can be given to the School's ICT facilities.
- Induction and Education - all children are inducted in appropriate use of the School's ICT facilities and other aspects of this policy upon arrival. Subsequently, Tutors remind children at the start of each academic year about their obligations and code of conduct. This is reinforced by a presentation in PSHE about E-Safety.
- The school has a firewall in place to ensure students are unable to access inappropriate content at school.
- Direction for staff on e-safety
- Staff should:
  - ensure that personal social networking sites are set at private and students are never listed as approved contacts;
  - never use or access social networking sites of students;
  - should not take photographs of students on their personal devices;
  - should not give their personal contact details to students or parents, including their mobile telephone number;
  - only make contact with students for professional reasons and in accordance with the School's policy and this should be through the school's Outlook/Teams account;

END

Appendix 1: Durham School for Girls Safeguarding Poster



## **Your Safeguarding Team** at Durham School for Girls



If you don't feel safe or you're worried about the safety of another student, our safeguarding team is here to help. Come and find us at any time!

### **Designated Safeguarding Leads**



**Ms Stocker-Jones**  
Whole School Executive DSL



**Ms Mehana**  
Whole School DDSL



**Ms Wallace**  
DSL of Primary School



**Ms Bassadien**  
DSL of Secondary School

### **Member of staff or a visitor to the school?**

If you have concerns about the needs or welfare of a student, please don't hesitate to speak to one of us. We all share a responsibility for our students' safety and well-being.