

## **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**

### **1 Purpose**

The Sheffield Private School is concerned about the welfare and safety of all its students and attempts to create an environment in which students feel secure and valued and in which they are listened to and taken seriously.

This policy aims to outline the identification process of child abuse cases, the management of such cases, people responsible for it and the precautions taken by the school for child protection.

### **2 Scope**

In our provision for children, as a school, we will ensure that the welfare of the child is paramount, that all children, whatever their age, culture or gender have the right to protection from abuse. All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately. Every member of staff has a responsibility to report concerns to the Principal.

We endeavour to make our school a safe and happy place. We ensure that our recruitment and induction procedures are aligned to the Child Protection Policy of the School and any case of reported Child Abuse is immediately responded to as per the following procedures.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk.

Our commitment against Child Abuse is reflected in:-

- The content of the curriculum; such as our School Assemblies; Moral Education Programme and class discussions.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives students a sense of being valued.
- The school's Behaviour for Learning & Anti-bullying Policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable students in the school.
- The practice of training all teaching Staff, CPO, board of management, bus attendants and drivers and all members in the school concerned with the welfare of the students.

### **3 Recognising Signs of Abuse**

Child abuse is defined by NSPCC (1999) as "a range of ways in which people, usually adults, harm children. Often the adult is a person known and trusted by the child. Child abuse is neglect, physical injury, sexual abuse or emotional abuse inflicted or knowingly not prevented, which causes significant harm."

It can often be difficult to recognise abuse. The signs in these guidelines are only indicators and many can have reasonable explanations. Children may behave strangely or seem unhappy for many reasons, as they move through the stages of childhood or

their families experience changes. It is nevertheless important to know what could indicate that abuse is taking place and to be alert to the need to consult further. Someone can abuse a child by actively inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse can take place within a family, in an institutional or community setting, by telephone or on the internet. Abuse can be carried out by someone known to a child like the parent, sibling, relative, and teacher or by a complete stranger.

### **3.1 Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, drowning, suffocating.

Symptoms that indicate physical abuse include:

- Bruising in or around the mouth , on the back, buttocks or rectal area;
- Finger mark bruising or grasp marks on the limbs or chest of a small child;
- Burn and scald marks; small round burns that could be caused by cigarette;
- Fractures to arms, legs or ribs in a small child;
- Large numbers of scars.

Please note that according to the Dubai Police Department any visible sign of injury is physical abuse and will be recorded as an offence.

### **3.2 Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse happens when a child's need for love, security, praise and recognition is not met. It usually co-exists with other forms of abuse. Emotionally abusive behaviour occurs if a parent, teacher or authority figure is consistently hostile, rejecting, threatening or undermining. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of someone else. Symptoms that indicate emotional abuse include:

- Excessively clingy or attention-seeking behaviour
- Very low self-esteem or excessive self-criticism
- Excessively withdrawn behaviour or fearfulness;
- Lack of appropriate boundaries with strangers; too eager to please
- Eating disorders

### **3.3 Neglect**

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, causing damage to their health and development.

Symptoms of physical and emotional neglect can include:

- Inadequate supervision; being left alone for long periods of time
- Lack of stimulation, social contact or education
- Constant hunger; stealing or gorging food
- Failure to seek or to follow medical advice such that a child's life or development is endangered
- Inappropriate clothing for weather conditions

### **3.4 Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities; whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

Symptoms of sexual abuse include:

- Genital soreness, injuries or discomfort
- Sexually transmitted disease; urinary infection
- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters; inappropriately sexualised play, words or drawing
- A child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Repeated sleep disturbances through nightmares and/or bedwetting

Older children and young people may additionally exhibit:

- Depression
- Drug / Alcohol abuse
- Eating disorder; obsessive behaviour
- Self-mutilation; suicide attempts
- School/ peer/relationship problems

#### **4 Identifying Actual or Likely Occurrence of Abuse**

There are a number of ways in which abuse may become apparent:

- A child discloses abuse
- Someone else discloses that a child has told him/her that a child is being abused or that he/she strongly suspects abuse
- A child may show signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no satisfactory explanation
- A child's behaviour may indicate that it is likely that he/she is being abused
- A member of staff's behaviour or the way in which he/she relates to a child causes concern

Once abuse-apparent, actual or suspected – is disclosed, it must be responded to in the correct manner according to procedures laid down by the school. Even if the truth of the disclosure is uncertain, an appropriate response has to be made in accordance with procedures.

#### **5 Dealing with a Disclosure**

All child protection concerns should be acted upon immediately.

##### **5.1 Disclosure Involving a Child**

It is the duty of anyone who works with children to report a disclosure of abuse. It is not for the staff to decide whether or not a suspicion or allegation is true. The member of staff should never try to deal with a suspicion, allegation or actual incident of abuse by him/herself. It may sometimes be difficult to accept that something that has been disclosed in confidence should be passed on to a colleague, but the welfare of a child must be paramount and you therefore have a duty to report suspicions, allegations or actual incidents to the designated member of staff. The Principal and designated head for Child Protection should be informed.

Staff must remember that confidentiality is crucial when being party to a disclosure and staff **must not** discuss any details with any person other than the Principal (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

All child protection concerns should be acted upon immediately. If you are concerned that a child might be at risk or is actually suffering abuse:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is being said.
- Allow the child to talk freely.
- Reassure the student, but do not make promises which might be impossible to keep.
- Reassure the student that what has happened is not their fault and stress that it was right to talk.
- Listen rather than ask direct questions; ask minimal open rather than leading questions.
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.

- If you feel a physical examination & first aid is required, refer the child to the doctor in consultation with the DSL.

## **5.2 Disclosure Involving a Member of Staff**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague, including visiting professionals and volunteers, towards a student are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood a situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise a colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount.

The school's Whistleblowing Policy enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence, and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. Staff are expected to report all concerns about poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues, including what may seem minor contraventions of the school's Staff Code of Conduct Policy to the Principal, to facilitate an early intervention in order to maintain appropriate boundaries and a safe culture that protects children and reduces the risk of serious abuse in school. Concerns or complaints about the Principal should be reported to the Head of Education at Britus Education.

## **6 Assessment and Record Keeping**

- Make notes as soon as possible after the conversation on the school's concern form.
- Do not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court.
- Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the student.
- Record the site of any injury on a body map – do NOT take photos.
- Record statements and observations, not interpretations or assumptions.
- All information relating to Child Protection is maintained within a confidential file.

## **7 Possible Suspension of Member of Staff**

The member of staff may be suspended whilst an investigation is conducted but this is not an automatic procedure. Circumstances in which suspension properly occurs include:

- where a student(s) is at risk;
- where the allegations are so serious that dismissal for gross misconduct is possible;
- where a suspension is necessary to allow the conduct of the investigation to proceed unimpeded.

Where suspension is being considered, an interview should be arranged. The member of staff should be advised to seek the advice or assistance of a professional/support organisation or friend. The member of staff should be informed at the outset of the interview that an allegation has been made and that, at the conclusion of the interview, suspension might occur. It should be made clear that the interview is not a formal disciplinary hearing but is for the purpose of putting forward a serious matter which may lead to suspension and further investigation. The member of staff should be invited to respond. Full notes should be taken of the interview and the teacher invited to read and sign them as a true record after the interview. A copy of the notes will be given to the member of staff.

The member of staff should be invited to identify any persons who may have information relevant to the investigation. These names should be added to the list of those to be interviewed.

## **8 Investigation into an Allegation**

If, as a result of the interview, the Principal considers that suspension is necessary along with a full investigation of the allegation, the member of staff should be advised that he/she is suspended from duty. Written confirmation of the suspension must be given within one working day, giving reasons for the suspension. The Principal must inform the student, parents and member of staff of the likely course of action.

The Principal will nominate a member of the staff to be responsible for conducting a full investigation and produce a report of the findings. The police may be called in, depending upon the nature and severity of the alleged offence. The member of staff concerned should be given as much information as possible including reasons for any proposed suspension, as is consistent with not interfering with an investigation. The member of staff should be given an opportunity to make representations concerning the suspension. A brief adjournment should be offered to the member of staff prior to the response. Once all the relevant persons have been interviewed and all the relevant issues have been explored and the investigation is complete, the details obtained and the statements taken should then be compiled into a report. This will be given to the Principal who will decide on the outcome.

## **9 Staff Recruitment, Training and Support.**

### **9.1 Appointment of Staff**

For staff working with children, safe recruitment will be ensured by checking their suitability to work with children. Therefore the school will ensure that:

- Initial recruitment application forms elicit information about an applicant's past, including a Criminal Record Bureau and now known as DBS (Disclosure Barring Service Check) for teachers in countries where this exists
- Induction procedures will include explanation about child protection and any training needs identified
- Staff signing up to the Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct

### **9.2 Training and Support**

Newly qualified teachers should have acquired the necessary foundation to develop a working knowledge of their contractual, legal, administrative and pastoral responsibilities as teachers. This includes the care and welfare of those in their charge and so includes issues of possible or actual child abuse.

All staff and volunteers in the school need appropriate, practical in-service training to enable them to carry out their duties effectively. Awareness of child protection issues will continue to be addressed through on-going training provided by the school.

### **9.3 Staff Conduct**

All staff should demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from allegations of misconduct. Staff should maintain their standards of behaviour acting as a role model. The guidance given by the Staff Code of Conduct illustrates common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate. This should be signed by all staff on appointment to demonstrate adherence.

## **10 Contribution of the Curriculum**

Schools can and many do play a part in the prevention of child abuse through the curriculum. Courses in personal and social education can help young people to develop more realistic attitudes towards the responsibilities of adult life, including parenthood. Some schools provide courses in practical child care skills, which may contribute towards better parenting.

Any subsequent decisions on materials and the development of programmes appropriate to the level and maturity of the children concerned will be a matter of sensitive professional judgment.

Through the curriculum children can also be taught about the risks of different kinds of child abuse and be equipped with the skills they need to help them to stay safe. Teaching children possible ways to prevent or tell about abuse must be done carefully so as not to cause anxiety or upset normal, stable relationships between adults and children. The school should establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop, offering support where necessary for students who have been abused.

## **11 Disclosure From Student Concerning Home, Family, Friendship Group, etc**

Please follow reporting procedure as previously outlined. The Principal will liaise directly with concerned group after referral / consultation with relevant external agencies.

## **12 Responsibilities**

### **12.1 Responsibilities of the Principal**

The Principal has overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. In her absence the Vice-Principals will take responsibility for the above.

The Principal is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for safeguarding and child protection. There is also a Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for The Sheffield Private School is Mr James Batts.

The Deputy Safeguarding Lead is Ms Grace Aluoka, Head of Pastoral

The Principal must do all that s/he can to ensure that all those working with children at The Sheffield Private School are suitable people. This involves scrutinising applicants, after school instructors, volunteers and other agencies connected with the school by verifying their identity, obtaining references and obtaining comprehensive background checks. This involves DBS checks for all UK staff appointments and Police checks for any other nationality employees. All Board members are required to undergo suitable checks.

Ensure that training for the Designated Safeguarding Lead is up to date and includes knowledge of local procedures. Training with Educare at L3 must be updated at least every two years. All staff to receive annual training regarding the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures. A record of attendance must be maintained and kept on file.

The Principal is responsible for reviewing and amending the policy where necessary to be approved on an annual basis.

## **12.2 Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

- The DSL is responsible for training all staff (academic, support, auxiliary) at induction and with regular updates.
- The DSL is responsible for reporting suspicions of child abuse directly to the Principal.
- The DSL must ensure all volunteers and contract staff undergo suitable checks.
- The DSL must ensure that important parties such as the HoS, tutor and teachers are informed of any suspicions or allegations of abuse that have been made regarding a student.
- The DSL is responsible for ensuring that school complies with all aspects of UAE law relating to the protection of children.

When abuse is detected, the Principal will consult the appropriate Director or Board member and then may proceed by contacting the local authorities and/or Police. This does not require parental consent for referral. This will be done by contacting them and requesting that they come to the school. A record will be kept of that meeting by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The DSL should keep a record with the documents that support the allegations of abuse, signed by the person who reported it. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should also keep records of the follow up actions taken with the students after the incident was addressed by the school authorities, in terms of external support and school counselling.

## **12.3 Responsibilities of the School Development Officer**

It is the responsibility of the SDO to keep up to date and accurate records of Police and DBS checks for all employees and that all employees have completed the relevant online Child Protection course (information to be held on SIMS).

## **12.4 Responsibilities of Reception Staff and Security Personnel**

Reception staff and security personnel are required to be vigilant and adhere to the procedures governing the access, detailed record-keeping, provision of a Visitor's Pass to be worn for ease of identification and monitoring of visitors to the school.

## **12.5 Responsibilities of all TSPS employees**

All TSPS staff must complete and regularly review the Child Protection in Education online course or any other course considered appropriate by the Principal (DSL)/ DDSL. The certificate of completion of this course must be kept with the staff member's records by the Human Resources Department.

All members of the school staff have a responsibility to identify and report suspected abuse and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the students in the school. In doing so, they should seek advice and support as necessary from the DSL. The school's Whistleblowing Policy enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence, and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

Staff are expected to report all concerns about poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues - including what may seem minor contraventions of the school's Staff Code of Conduct Policy to the Principal, to facilitate an early intervention in order to maintain appropriate boundaries and a safe culture that protects children and reduces the risk of serious abuse in school.

All staff are expected to provide a safe and caring environment in which children can develop the confidence to voice ideas, feelings and opinions. Children should be treated with respect within a framework of agreed and understood behaviour.

All staff are required to adhere to the policies, protocols, Staff Code of Conduct and the standards in the Staff Handbook, many of which relate to this policy.

Staff must not take photographs of students on their own personal devices.

Staff should not give their personal mobile phone numbers or email addresses to students, nor should they communicate with them by text message, Facebook, WhatsApp, personal email or any other form of social media. If they need to speak to a student by telephone, they should use one of the school's telephones and email using the school system.

The group leader on all trips and visits involving an overnight stay may ask the students for their mobile numbers before allowing them out in small, unsupervised groups. The group leader will delete any record of students' mobile phone numbers at the end of the trip or visit and should ensure that all students delete any staff numbers that they may have acquired during the trip. Staff should be aware that it is not appropriate to use social media to communicate directly with students.

If a member of staff becomes aware that a student has his/her personal mobile number or email address, this should be reported to the Head of Phase.

All staff are responsible for ensuring that they use full privacy settings to control access to their own web pages, profiles, posts, blogs, wikis, podcasts, digital media, forums, groups, etc.

All staff are expected to attend regular and relevant professional development sessions.

All staff are expected to:

- be aware of symptoms of abuse;
- report concerns to the DSL as appropriate;
- keep clear, dated, factual and confidential records of child protection concerns.

### **13 School Commitment- Recruitment, Training and Selection**

The school safer recruitment procedures will be followed for all staff employed by the school. All staff (both teaching and non-teaching), including volunteers who apply to work at the school, will be subject to a rigorous recruitment process to ensure, as far as possible, their suitability to work with children and eligibility to work at the school.

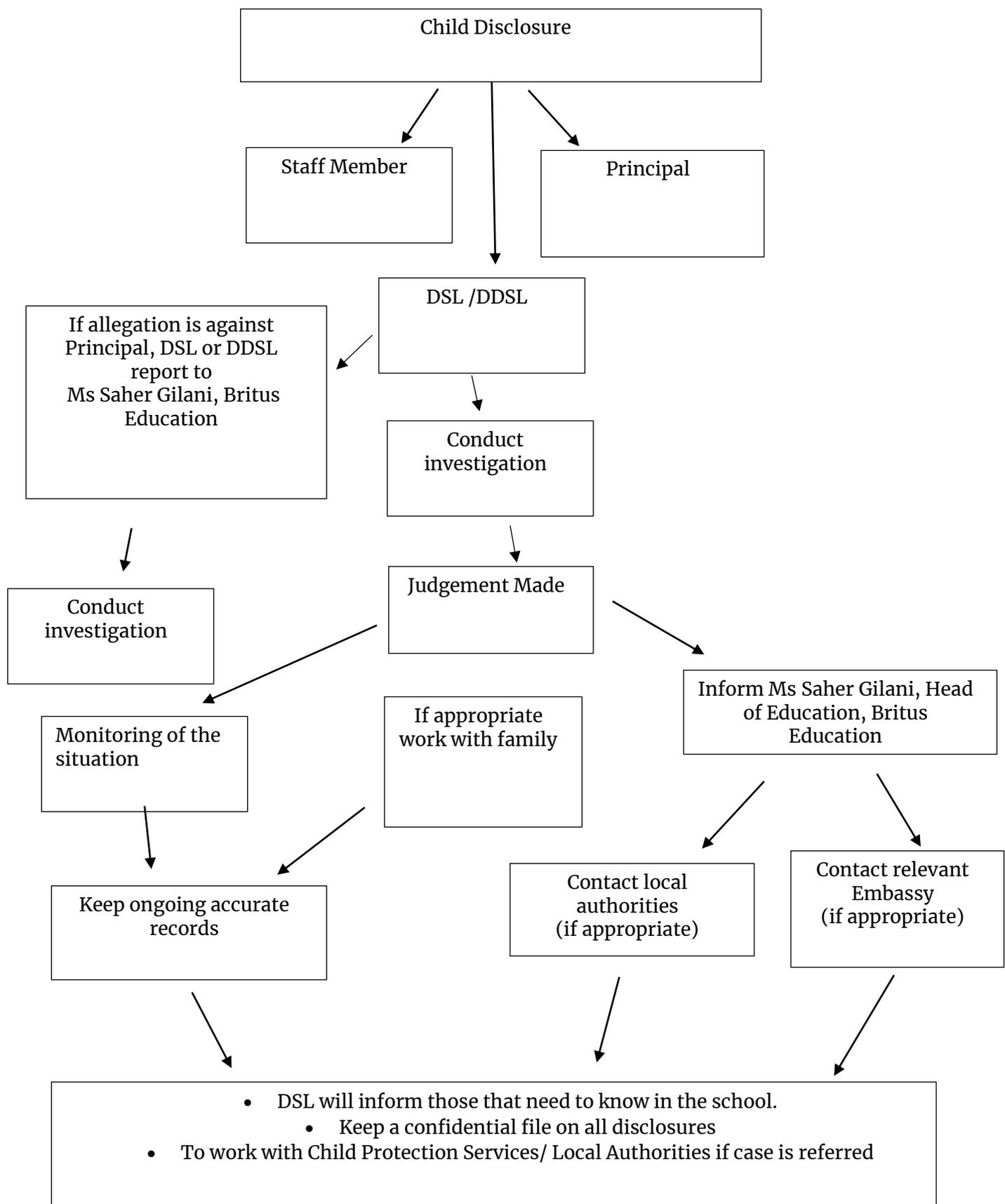
At least, two references will be taken up and they will be required to give evidence of their qualifications. References will be followed up and checked by the Principal or delegated member of staff. At least one person on an interviewing panel must have completed safer recruitment training. Staff will have access to Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and will be required to sign a document certifying that they have read it and agree to abide by its contents. All these policies are applicable when students go on trips away from school.

**(Appendix A) The Sheffield Private School  
 Child Protection Disclosure Pro-forma  
 CONFIDENTIAL**

Date:		Name and role of person completing form:	
Name of Child:			
<p align="center">Details of disclosure by child / incident / child protection concerns</p> <div align="center" data-bbox="893 492 1300 985"> </div>			
<p align="center">Action taken by person(s) above:</p>			
Date of notification to DSL:	Name of DSL:		

Detail of decision / action by DSL:		
Reason(s) for this decision or action by DSL:		
Notes of feedback between DSL and the person who raised this child protection concern, including date of feedback:		
Tick to confirm added to student's chronology and copy placed in student's C.P. file		
Date for review:		Name of person(s) to review:
Notes of review (if necessary continue on a separate page and attach):		

**(Appendix B) Flow Chart Report/ Referral of Suspected Abuse**



Reviewed: September 2020

Next Review due on: August 2021