

# GICLM CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Version

3

Status

OPERATIONAL. REVIEWED SEPT 2019, Aug 2021, Aug 2023

Date

January 2018

Next review date

Summary

Policy drawn up by Head of School and SLT in line with guidance from Examination Boards and IBO. Reviewed, edited and approved by Senior Leadership Team.

## Introduction

The health, safety and well-being of all our children are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our school. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. In our school we respect our children. The atmosphere within our school is one that encourages all children to do their best. We provide opportunities that enable our children to take and make decisions for themselves. We work to create a culture of security to enable them to feel valued, listened to and to know that their wishes and feelings are respected.

At GICLM, we recognise that abuse and neglect can result in underachievement. We strive to ensure that all our children make good educational progress. We also recognise our responsibilities with regard to the protection of children from abuse and from inappropriate and inadequate care and we are committed to acting in accordance with Indian regulations and advice as outlined in: *The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO)* in all cases where there is concern.

Teaching personal, social and health education and citizenship, as part of the curriculum helps to develop appropriate attitudes in our children, and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations, and how to behave in response to them.

This policy has been developed with additional input from best practices elsewhere to ensure the school fulfils the principles, requirements and any statutory duties established by:

- Education Act 2002
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2007
- Working together to safeguard children 2013
- Safer Working Guidance DfE 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015
- The Prevent Duty Advice June 2015

This policy applies to all staff, board members and volunteers working in the school. All policies are subject to on-going evaluation and annual reviews.

All policies are made available and explained to parents as part of the enrolment procedure and are available for inspection and reference at all times. A link to this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be on the school's website.

## Staff Roles and Responsibilities

*“Because of their day to day contact with individual children, teachers and other staff in the education service are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop” (Protecting Children from Abuse: The Role of the Education Service. Circular 10/95)*

As a staff, we have highlighted 5 key issues deemed essential in the development of each and every child:

1. ***Must be, and stay, safe***
2. ***Must be healthy.***
3. ***Must be able to enjoy and achieve.***
4. ***Must be able to achieve economic well-being.***
5. ***Must make a positive contribution.***

We understand that the school should provide a stable and secure element in the lives of all children and that all staff have a role to fulfil in relation to safeguarding children.

- The Primary Head Teacher, ***Ms Mahalakshmi Anand***, is the designated senior person for Child Protection and Safeguarding within the school. The deputy designated person is ***Ms. Sakshi Kaur (School Counsellor)***.
- The designated people highlighted above will be supported by ***Ms.Monika Koradia ( Operations Head) and the SLT members.***
- All members of staff understand their responsibility to be alert to the signs and symptoms of abuse and their responsibility for the immediate referral of any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection.
- All members of staff will establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- All members of staff will implement the school’s Health and Safety policies in order to maintain a safe and secure setting.
- All members of staff will ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are distressed or worried.
- All members of staff will promote anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice in line with school policy by providing positive role models, promoting diversity and by acknowledging and respecting the individual needs of the child.
- All members of staff will be made aware of the school’s whistle blowing policy and are encouraged to raise any concerns relating to practice in school in line with it.

## Role of the Designated Teacher/Counsellor

- To liaise with the police and other agencies when there is a concern about the pupil.
- To ensure that all board members, teaching and non-teaching staff are aware of and understand the POCSO procedures and their role within them.
- To support and advise staff when dealing with child protection issues.
- To liaise with relevant staff over teaching in the curriculum regarding child protection issues.
- To keep up to date with developments in child protection through appropriate in-service training and to disseminate such information to members of staff.
- To ensure all staff, governors and volunteers have a copy of this document and the implications of their role are fully explained.
- To ensure that appropriate ongoing training is provided to ensure that staff maintain knowledge of child protection issues specifically Safeguarding, Prevent and E-safety.

## Raising awareness

The school is committed to raising awareness of child protection and to equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe. It aims to do this by:

- Ensuring staff have access to appropriate training and resources.
- Including opportunities in the PSHE curriculum that will help children to develop skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- Teaching children about E-Safety.
- Utilising additional curriculum resources to develop pupils' ability to understand, express and cope with emotions.

**“Child abuse of all kinds has been increasingly detected and brought to the attention of the general public in recent years.”**

- Many child abusers are known to the victim either as relatives of friends of the family; some meet children in other contexts and a small minority of these may gain access to children in schools as teachers, ancillary workers or through their employment in some capacity related to school activities
- If any member of staff has a child protection concern about a pupil they must **immediately** inform the designated teacher and accurately record the event/s giving rise to the concern on the GICLM Incident Referral Form. These records must be hand-written to preserve confidentiality. They will be signed and dated by the person receiving the allegation and countersigned by the designated teacher.
- The designated teacher, in partnership with both the counsellor and Primary Headteacher, will then follow the GICLM procedures.
- Staff should be aware of the dangers which may arise from private interviews with individual pupils. There will be occasions when confidential meetings take place, but these should be in rooms with visual access or an open door. It is advisable that another adult knows that

the meeting is taking place and, if possible, is present in, or nearby. Similarly staff are not to make unnecessary physical contact with pupils.

- In all circumstances, teachers must exercise their own professional judgement. In most situations this will serve only to confirm what has always been common practice; however it is wise, from time to time, for all teachers to re-appraise their teaching styles, relationships with pupils and their manner and approach to individual pupils. However well intentioned, actions may be misconstrued and therefore they must ensure that they consider, and are aware of, the implications of their actions at all times.

## Confidentiality

Staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals. If a child confides in a member of staff and asks that the information be kept secret, it is important to tell the child that they have a responsibility to share the information with someone who can help. This needs to be done with care and sensitivity and the child needs to be reassured that the matter will only be discussed with people who need to know.

## Recognising Child Abuse

Child abuse manifests itself in a variety of ways, some overt and some less obvious. All members of staff are committed to maintaining a vigilant approach to identify potential cases. Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. At GICLM, it includes such things as pupil safety, bullying, racist abuse and harassment, educational visits, intimate care, children missing education and internet safety.

For the purpose of this policy abuse is defined under 4 categories:

- **Physical Abuse** – this can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, kicking, scalding, burning, drowning and suffocating. It can also occur when a parent/carer deliberately causes the ill health of a child to seek attention through fabricated or induced illness.
- **Emotional Abuse** – this is where a child's need for love, security, recognition and praise is not met. A parent/carer or authority figure is considered emotionally abusive when they are consistently hostile, rejecting or undermining towards a child or other family members.
- **Sexual Abuse** – this involves forcing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
  - This may include physical contact both penetrative and non-penetrative or viewing pornographic material including the use of the internet.
- **Neglect** – this is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs which can significantly harm their health and development.

## Dealing with Suspected Abuse/ Allegations

The school is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities by treating any suspected or alleged abuse seriously, objectively and sensitively. Any suspicion or disclosure of abuse must be reported to the designated senior person immediately to ensure that initial inquiries and records comply with GICLM procedures.

- All members of staff are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and must report any concerns to their line manager or designated senior person.
- All members of staff are aware that a child may display a range of symptoms and that these may have other causes. They will demonstrate great care in distinguishing between fact and opinion when recording suspected incidents
- Initial concerns should be discussed with parents/carers by the designated person or member of the SLT, unless they are related to sexual abuse or fabricated illness.
- Full written records of all reported incidents will be produced and maintained, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Written information is kept by the Head of Primary who is the designated officer and kept in her office.
- All members of staff will maintain an objective and non-judgemental approach when considering symptoms but will remember that their first priority is the protection of the child.
- The senior designated person will ensure that all records are kept securely, separate from the main children's records.
- All members of staff will ensure that all suspicions and allegations are treated sensitively and confidentially.
- Any child involved in alleged incidents will be comforted and reassured.

In incidents where a child makes an allegation or a disclosure the member of staff concerned **will**:

- Remain calm.
- Listen carefully to all the child has to say.
- Ensure the child is safe, comfortable and not left alone.
- Reassure the child that they are not to blame.
- Ask open questions that will encourage the child to speak in their own words.
- Make any observable judgement
- Not ask leading questions that put words into the child's mouth.
- Not make promises that cannot be kept e.g. promising not to tell anybody else

Further information can be found in the DfE document *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused? (2015)*.

## **Dealing With Allegations Against Staff**

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Any allegation made against any member of school staff will be fully investigated.

- If an allegation is made against a member of staff the Head Teacher/Deputy designated Safeguard Lead will immediately follow GICLM guidelines.
- If the allegation is against the Head Teacher, the Board Chair will be notified and s/he will follow the above procedures.

## **Referring Allegations to Child Protection Agencies**

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If the senior designated person has reasonable grounds to believe that a child has been, or is in grave danger of being, subject to abuse, the following procedure will be implemented, in line with GICLM procedures:

- Contact will be made, at the earliest opportunity, with the local police department.
- The senior designated person will communicate as much information about the allegation and related incidents as is consistent with advice from the police.
- At all times the safety, protection and interests of the children concerned will take precedence. The school will work with and support parents/carers as far as they are legally able.
- All members of staff will assist the police, as far as they are able, during any investigation of abuse. This will include disclosing written and verbal information and evidence and may require attendance at case conferences.

## **Supporting Victims/Witnesses of Abuse**

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We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helpless, humiliated and guilty. At school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. We understand that school may be the only predictable element in the lives of children at risk and as such, the school will endeavour to support the pupil, in accordance with any agreed child protection plan, through:

- The content of the curriculum.
- The school mission statement which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The School Behaviour Policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Establishing effective relationships, and liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, child and adult mental health service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.

- Recognising that children come from multi-cultural backgrounds and developing policies that ensure we embrace:

- Diversity in religion and faith
- Diversity of race
- Diversity of ethnicity
- Diversity of gender and sexual orientation
- The disability equality duty

*This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:*

- Health & Safety (including fire evacuation procedures)
- Social Media
- First Aid
- Attendance
- Equal Opportunities
- Behaviour, Discipline and anti-bullying

GICLM Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy