



BRITISH INTERATIONAL SCHOOL POLICY FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

CHILD & ADULT AT RISK PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding is at the heart of all our work with children, young people and Adults at Risk.

2. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

The policy is to be used by any member of staff or volunteer working directly with children and young people, and Adults at Risk, and to any other support staff or Trustee of the organization who become involved in a child protection concern during their work for Safety. Children, young people, Adults at Risk and parents/careers are informed of the policy as appropriate.

The policy applies to anyone with whom we are in contact during our work, who is a child, a young person, or Adult at Risk. Where the policy or procedure refers to a 'child' or 'young person' we mean anyone who has not yet reached the age of 18 years. Where the policy refers to an 'Adult at Risk', we mean anyone who is 18 years or older and who is vulnerable.

This policy is reviewed, endorsed and approved by the board of management once every two months, or when legislation changes.

3. PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

This policy and procedure sets out how Safe & Sound implements safeguarding for children, young people, and Adults at Risk with whom they come into contact during their work.

BIS is committed to devising and implementing policies so that everyone within the organisation accepts their responsibilities for safeguarding children, young people and Adults at Risk from abuse and neglect. This means following procedures to protect them and reporting any concerns about their welfare to the Vice Principals.

This policy and procedure helps us to achieve this by:

- Supporting us to safeguard children, young people and Adults at Risk in practice, by defining abuse and informing us on what to do
- Ensuring we all work to the same policy and procedure
- Making sure we are accountable for what we do
- Being clear what roles and responsibilities we all have in safeguarding
- Saying what staff can expect from the organisation to help them work effectively

This policy is informed by and supports our organisational purpose and is how we comply with the Ghanaian Safeguarding Children procedures, and the Adults at Risk procedures.

4. WHO IS A CHILD, YOUNG PERSON, AND ADULT AT RISK?

Child/Young Person

A child or young person means someone who is under 18 years of age, that is, has not reached their 18th birthday.

For Safe & Sound, this could refer to the child/young person we are working with directly, or the child of one of these young persons, or of another person, with whom we are in contact in the course of our work.

When concerns are raised about the child of a service user (child or vulnerable adult), the needs of the youngest takes precedence.

Adult at Risk

This policy applies to any 'Adult at Risk', defined by the following:

Any person aged eighteen or over who –

- Is or may need community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and
- Is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

The designated person will sometimes be working with an Adult at Risk where a child/young person has reached 18 years and support is continuing, usually short term. Also, Safe & Sound will come across adults at risk in the course of their parent support work. There may be occasions when we come across adults at risk within the household of or associating with a child/young person or parent we are working with and we will adopt the Think Family approach, working with adult agencies to meet their needs.

In all instances, our approach to safeguarding Adults at Risk we are in contact with follows the same principles, and safeguarding processes as we do for safeguarding children.

5. OBJECTIVES OF POLICY

We will achieve the outcome by having these things in place:

- **Safe organisational ethos**
- **Safe environment**
- **Safe processes for working with service users**

- **Safe collection and use of information, and ways of communicating**
- **Safe staff**

Principles

In support of these objectives, we are committed to the following principles.

To achieve a safe ethos, we will:

- work to support the organisational purpose which is to reach out to, and seek to protect, children and young people who are at risk of or are being sexually exploited
- promote the safety of children, young people and adults at risk in all our work, both directly and indirectly through our partnership and campaigning work
- support the spirit and practice of Safe & Sound's safeguarding ethos in all that we personally do
- have in place quality assurance processes that help us to ensure we are all safeguarding in practice
- treat all children, young people and adults fairly in being able to access services which meet their needs, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs

To achieve a safe environment, we will:

- ensure the welfare and safety of children, young people and Adults at Risk is paramount in all our activities
- listen to service users and take account of what they tell us in making decisions about them
- take all reasonable steps to protect service users from harm, discrimination, and degrading treatment
- practice with respect for children's rights, wishes and feelings
- regularly assess and review safety risks which arise from premises, activities, equipment and travel arrangements, as outlined in the organisation's Health and Safety Policy

To achieve safe processes, we will:

- take all suspicions and allegations of abuse, from inside or outside the organisation, seriously, and respond to them promptly and appropriately
- be clear about everyone's roles and responsibilities
- implement safeguarding procedures that are compliant with the expectations of the Derby City and County safeguarding arrangements

- Have in place clear arrangements for how we would respond to concerns about how we implement safeguarding in practice within the organisation this.

To achieve safe information, we will:

- be clear with service users how the things they tell us will be used
- Communicate promptly and clearly within Safe and Sound and with external agencies, and follow the requirements of information with the designated persons.
- keep good records of our work with service users and also of our management of staff's work
- hold service user's information with care, and use it for agreed purposes only

To achieve safe staff, we will:

- Our recruitment policy will include enhanced disclosure and barring service provide trustees, staff and volunteers with guidance and training in their safeguarding role, and ensure they have access to our policies and procedures.
- make sure everyone has access to advice on safeguarding always in the course of their work
- be clear with everyone what their individual role and responsibility is in safeguarding
- support staff and volunteers to carry out their job with appropriate supervision

6. What is child abuse or neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse means a child's rights and needs are not being met as defined in The Ghana Children's act and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. Abuse may occur through the actions of an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Where a child is disabled, injuries or behavioural symptoms may mistakenly be attributed to his/her disability rather than the abuse. Similarly, from a minority ethnic group, aggressive behaviour, emotional and behavioural problems and educational difficulties may be wrongly attributed to racial stereotypes, rather than abuse. Cultural and religious beliefs should not be used to justify hurting a child. Safeguards for all children and young people are the same regardless of disability or ethnicity.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse 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 guardian fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces or causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is called Induced Fabrication Illness by a Guardian (formerly known as Munchausen's by proxy).

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 emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Witnessing the harm of another person, such as in the case of domestic violence, is a form of emotional abuse. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse & Sexual Exploitation

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including sexual exploitation, whether the child is aware of what is happening, and whether it is for money or reward or not. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative contact (e.g. rape and buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in seeing or receiving or sending sexually suggestive emails or text-messages, or inappropriate behaviour in Internet chat rooms, involving children looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

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 because of maternal substance abuse during pregnancy. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or guardian failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-givers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Abuse of Disabled Children

Disabled children are at increased risk of abuse and those with multiple disabilities are at even more significant risk both of abuse and neglect. Parents of disabled children may experience multiple stresses. This group of children may be particularly vulnerable to abuse for several reasons including:

- Having fewer social contacts than other children;
- Receiving intimate personal care from a larger number of guardians;
- Having an impaired capacity to understand what they are experiencing is abuse or to challenge the abuser;
- Having communication difficulties resulting in difficulties in telling people what is happening;
- Being reluctant to complain about fear of losing services;
- Being particularly vulnerable to bullying or intimidation;
- Being more vulnerable to abuse by peers than other children.

Disability is defined as:

A major physical impairment, severe illness and/or a moderate to severe learning difficulty; An ongoing high level of dependency on others for personal care and the meeting of other basic needs.

Bullying

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group). There is increasing use of modern technologies as a tool for bullying and such incidents should be taken seriously.

Self-Harming Behaviour

Children and young people who harm or attempt to harm themselves should be taken seriously. The self-harming behaviour may cause impairment of the child's health or development and in some circumstances present significant harm or the risk of significant harm.

Self-harming behaviour may also arise alongside eating disorders and/or drug misuse.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation is a collective term for procedures that include the removal of part or all the external female genitalia for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious physical and mental health consequences both at the time and in later life. The procedure is typically performed on girls of 4 -13 years but may be performed on new born babies or on young women. FGM can result in death.

FGM is a criminal offence (Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act). Under the act it is an offence to arrange, procure, aid or abet female genital mutilation. Parents/guardians may be liable under this act.

It is also an offence to allow the procedure to be undertaken in another country.

Where agencies become aware that a girl is at risk of FGM a referral should be made to Children's Social Care.

Domestic Violence as Abuse

Domestic Violence is defined by the Home Office as: 'Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.'

The term domestic violence is used to include any form of physical, sexual or emotional abuse between people in a close relationship. It can take several forms such as physical assault, sexual abuse, rape, threats and intimidation. It may be accompanied by other kinds of intimidation such as

degradation, mental and verbal abuse, humiliation, deprivation, systematic criticism and belittling. The term domestic violence includes the term domestic abuse.

Marriage

A forced marriage is one that is conducted without the full consent of both parties and where duress is a factor. Forced marriage can amount to sexual and emotional abuse and put children or adults at risk of physical abuse. In circumstances where there are concerns that someone is at imminent risk of a forced marriage urgent referrals should be made to Children's Adults' Social Care.

In the case of a young person at risk of forced marriage it is likely that an initial discussion with the parent, guardian or other community member may significantly increase the level of risk to the young person.

Internet Harm

Sexual exploitation (see above) also includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in seeing or receiving or sending sexually suggestive emails or text-messages, or inappropriate behaviour in Internet chat rooms, involving children looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material of watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Trafficking

Children can be trafficked into, within and out of the country for many reasons and all diverse types of exploitation. Trafficking is a form of child abuse and needs an appropriate safeguarding response. Any child who is recruited, transported, transferred, harboured or received for exploitative reasons is a victim of trafficking, whether they have been forced or deceived. This is because it is not considered possible for children in this situation to give informed consent. Even when a child understands what has happened, they may still appear to submit willingly to what they believe to be the will of their parents or accompanying adult. It is important these children are protected too.

Children are trafficked for many reasons, including sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, labour, benefit fraud, forced marriage, begging and involvement in criminal activity such as pick pocketing, theft and working on cannabis farms. They are likely to be subjected to other forms of abuse, as a means of coercing and controlling them.

Trafficking is carried out by individual adults and organised crime groups.

Sexual activity with child/young person under the age of 18, or living away from home

Consensual sexual activity involving a young person under 18 years is not abusive, but it may be, and the BIS Safeguarding Procedure offers guidance where this might be so. A child's or young person's ability to consent can be impaired due to lack of freedom, capacity or choice; for example, because of an age/power imbalance; because it is leading into sexual exploitation; because one person is in a position of trust with the other (e.g. a teacher); where one person is vulnerable because of disability or capacity; where the child/young person is in the care of another away from home. No child can consent to any sexual activity according to the Sexual Offences Act in Ghana.

7. WHAT IS ABUSE OF AN ADULT AT RISK?

Abuse is a violation of a person's rights or dignity by someone else. It can be done by anyone including relatives and family members, professional staff, paid care workers, volunteers, other users of services, neighbours, friends and associates or strangers. There are many kinds of abuse including:

Physical

This could be hitting, slapping, pushing and kicking.

Sexual

This includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult at risk:

- has not consented
- could not consent
- was pressured into consenting

Emotional/Psychological

This could be:

- emotional abuse
- threats of harm or abandonment
- depriving the person of contact
- humiliating
- blaming
- controlling
- intimidating
- coercing
- harassing
- verbally abusing
- isolating
- withdrawing a person from services or support networks

Financial or material

This includes:

- theft

- fraud
- exploitation
- pressure in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions misusing or misappropriating property, possessions or benefits

Neglect or acts of omission

This includes:

- ignoring medical or physical care needs
- failing to provide access to appropriate health care, social care or education services
- misusing medication
- inadequate nutrition or heating

Discriminatory

This includes:

- racist behaviour
- sexist behaviour
- harassment based on a person's ethnicity, race, culture, sexual orientation, age or disability
- other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment

Identification and Reporting

All members of staff will have training in order to help them to identify and be aware of the different forms of abuse. These forms are neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. All members of staff are encouraged to report anything that is giving them a feeling of concern to the school administrator or School Principal.

Staff are also trained to listen, reassure, report and help record significant information to the named staff or to the School Consultant.

Parental involvement

We aim to include parents at the earliest opportunity. All involvement with parents is carried out in accordance with the official procedure decided on by senior management and the governing board. In all meetings with parents the School Consultant will be accompanied by the designated Child Protection Governor. A supportive representative may also accompany parents.

Health & Safety & First Aid Procedures

The Health and Safety Representative is the HRM.

Any "hazards" around the school or playground must be reported to the HRM. Health and Safety issues must be reported immediately. If a member of staff has an accident at school, this must be reported to the HRM immediately.

- UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD ANY CHILD BE SENT OUT OF A CLASSROOM ALONE. Never send a child who is very upset out of the room unaccompanied. Parents should not leave children unattended before 7am. Children can be left with a teacher or teaching assistant. Preschool and Primary children should not be left unsupervised in the classroom, on the playgrounds and lunchtime during school hours. Secondary children should not be unsupervised for more than 5 minutes. Parents are expected to pick their children latest by 4pm. All teachers must ensure to hand over children who have not been picked up after 4pm to the after-school care lady. ***All children who have not been picked up by 6pm, will be sent to the boarding house and will attract a penalty which will be charged on the parent's bill.***

The school has a qualified nurse who administers **ONLY** First aid. Parents should clearly label all prescribed medicines with a parental concern.

Serious injuries – The Senior Management **MUST BE INFORMED** of any head injuries, facial injuries, deep cuts and more serious injuries. An accident report form may need to be filled in and signed by the adult in charge when the accident occurred. The Accident book kept at the sick bay must be filled in and parents notified of any accident or head injuries, a note is given to the parent or the child as soon as possible. For serious accidents involving pupils or staff the Incident book (kept in office) must be filled out. Serious injuries will be rushed to the nearest hospital and the parent/guardian will be informed immediately.

If a child is taken ill, alert the Teacher. He / she will take charge of the child and alert the Inclusion Manager or School Admin, or any other members of SLT; and the office if the child needs to be sent home. The Inclusion Manager or any member of SLT must be consulted in the event of a child becoming unwell and possibly needing to be sent home. Details also to be noted in the Record book in the office.

Seek a second opinion if in doubt about the severity of an injury, preferably from a First Aider. Any accident or concern regarding a child's health must be mentioned to the person collecting the child at 3.30pm.

Training

The school's designated persons will attend regular training and update sessions.

Safe guarding for children in the school- Below will outline some measures taken by the school that all staff should follow:

- Drop off and picking up children

- Parents will have to sign in a book in their wards class to pick up their children
- Parents will have to provide the school with photo ID's of two representatives who can pick up their wards on their behalf

- Children not allowed to go out alone or with an unauthorised person
- During school events
 - During school events security will ensure that children going out are with the right adult by checking authorisation slip
 - Parents and visitors are not allowed in certain parts of the building beyond the assembly door without the permission of the vice principal or the school principal
 - There will be designated person by that door during events
 - Admin must submit a plan of who is in charge of how people move around in the school and who is in charge of keeping an eye on school property
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- Staff police report
 - All staff must have guarantors, and next of kin to sign their contract form
 - Photo ID's will be passed on to the police in case of any illegal offense against the laws of the country
 - Filling of contract must be fully completed before staff starts work.