



ISS

SINGAPORE CAMPUS

Realising Potential

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES

Revised Nov 2021





ISS International School

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures a

Table of Contents

ISS School Guiding Statements	3
Introduction/Rationale	4
Terminology and Definitions	4
Responsibilities	5
Operational Procedures	5
Child Safeguarding Committee	6
The Senior Leadership Team	6
The Designated Person(s) for Child Protection (DPCP)	7
Human Resources Department	8
All Staff	10
Students Under Guardianship	11
Categories of Child Abuse and their Signs/Symptoms	12
Neglect	12
Physical	13
Sexual	13
Psychological/Emotional	14

Child Protection Process Chart	15
Child Protection Procedures	16
Handling Disclosures	16
Record keeping	17
Form 1 – Record of Child Protection Concern	18
Disclosure of abuse committed outside of school	20
Disclosure of alleged abuse committed by a staff member	21
Disclosure of abuse by another student	22
Use of force with a student	23
Sharing a concern about a staff member	23
Resources/Further Information	24



Our Vision

Educating to make a difference.

Our Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide a multicultural educational environment for our students in which they achieve academic success, personal growth and become socially responsible and active global citizens with an appreciation of learning as a life-long process.

We accomplish this through an international and dynamic curriculum delivered by an enthusiastic and experienced faculty and staff in partnership with students, parents and guardians in a caring and supportive community.

Our Promise

Realising potential - We believe in your child as much as you do. We see potential in each of our students and we are passionate and committed to ensuring that your child reaches his or her full potential. Our approach to education is inclusive, nurturing and empowering. We want to make a positive impact on the lives of our students and their families.

Beliefs and Values

ISS is a community in which we believe:

- The IB Learner Profile is the core of our teaching and learning practice
- Mutual respect and communication are essential to the educational process
- Our diverse multicultural community is essential to our identity
- All individuals are unique and valued
- All individuals are nurtured to achieve their full potential
- Self-esteem is developed in a safe and caring environment
- All individuals reflect on and inquire into their roles and responsibilities as global citizens
- We strive for academic excellence for all students

Strategic Objectives

'Educating to make a difference....'

In keeping with the mission, vision and values of the school, ISS aims to help each student reach his/her potential by maintaining an inclusive, nurturing and empowering learning culture.

An ISS education occurs within an **inclusive learning culture that nurtures all learners**, differentiating instruction to empower them with the range of competencies and characteristics they require to become **skillful, active** and **fulfilled** global citizens.

An ISS education empowers all learners to become skillful **thinkers and creators**. Learners who are able to both **pose and solve problems, researching** and **expressing** their understanding using **multiple forms of literacies**. Learners who can **manage their own learning** and **collaborate** with others to achieve shared goals. Learners who can apply their learning to new situations with **creativity and innovation**.

An ISS education inspires all learners to become **active, socially responsible** global citizens with an understanding of their responsibilities within their **local community** and as **global stewards**.

An ISS education nurtures all learners enabling them to be fulfilled individuals. Learners who move through life with a **growth mindset** and an **entrepreneurial passion** for encountering the opportunities that await them.

An education that makes a difference by developing learners who are able to make a difference.

INTRODUCTION / RATIONALE

At ISS International School we recognise our duty and responsibility to protect and safeguard the interests of all children. The school recognises that effective child protection practice requires sound procedures, good inter-agency cooperation and a workforce that is competent and confident in recognising and responding to child protection situations.

This policy provides the basis for good practice within the school for child protection work, and provides a framework to ensure that all practice in the area of child protection is consistent and will enable every child to be healthy and stay safe. It also seeks to make the professional responsibilities clear to all staff to ensure that statutory and other duties are fully met.

The procedures outlined in this policy are in line with the Manual on Management of Child Abuse in Singapore (2016) produced by the Inter-Ministry Working Group comprising the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Education of Singapore.

The manual is based on current legislation– principally the Children and Young Persons Act–and the school has a professional responsibility to comply with this.

Child Protection and Welfare Services are currently within the remit of the Singapore Ministry of Social and Family Development.

This policy also supports Article 3.1 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child which states that, “in all actions concerning children...the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.”

Singapore became a signatory to the convention in October 1995. The welfare of the child is paramount, and as such this policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and following case by case self- evaluation.

TERMINOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS

Child Protection: is part of the safeguarding process and focuses on protecting individual children where there are concerns about abuse, neglect or harassment.

Safeguarding: The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.

Abuse: A violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

Child Abuse: ‘Any act of commission or commission by a parent or guardian... (or any other person)...which would endanger or impair the child’s physical or emotional well- being or that are judged by a mixture of community values and professionals to be inappropriate’ ¹(Singapore Ministry of Social and Family Development 2016)

Categories of Abuse: Physical Abuse; Neglect; Sexual Abuse; Emotional and Psychological Abuse.

Significant risk of harm: ‘Significant risk of harm’ is the threshold which justifies compulsory intervention in the best interests of the child.

Best Interests of the Child: The principle, ‘in the best interests of the child’ guides Singapore’s policies and service provision for children and young persons, including the area of child protection.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Child abuse occurs in all communities regardless of the gender of the child or perpetrator, wealth, religion, culture or ethnicity. Schools as institutions working with children and young people, become more attractive to those who wish to exploit or abuse children. All members of the school community have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

ISS believes in proactively promoting child safety through its Pastoral Program and other learning experiences. Each year our students will be engaged in age appropriate activities designed to highlight awareness and personal safety among children. Additionally, the school partners with our PTA to ensure a team approach to child welfare and safety.

Add the new position of Board safeguarding governor

Operational Procedures

Guidelines related to how the school operates are given to protect both staff and students.

- The school encourages good practice by keeping separate toilets for adults and students.
- Meetings with students will occur in rooms with windows. Doors kept open if it is a one-to-one meeting.
- All parents, helpers and guardians arriving on foot or by car will show their identification card to enter campus. All people not employed by ISS will sign-in and receive an ISS authorized verification to be worn in clear sight while on campus.
- A photo identification display of all teaching and non-teaching staff to be clearly visible for the community on campus.

¹ Protecting Children in Singapore, Published by the Rehabilitation and Protection Group, Ministry of Social & Family Development (2016).

-
- All visitors will need a legitimate and approved reason to gain access to our campus. Permission for entry will be granted by the principal or his/her designee.
 - Dedicated student only washrooms are on campus.

Child Safeguarding Committee

The Child Protection Task Force Team was formed in the fall of 2015 in an effort to develop an informed team to prevent, recognise, and respond to all child protection situations. The team consists of administrators, DPCP's (Designated Persons for Child Protection), teachers, the Learning Group Leader for Student Services and the school counselor. This team is now the Child Protection Committee and meets on a regular basis to oversee all pertinent child protection information: they review the effectiveness of school policies and procedures, propose changes as needed, review any changes in applicable laws, including reporting requirements and identify and discuss solutions to current school wide child protection challenges. Their mission is as follows:

It is our duty and responsibility to protect and safeguard the interests of all children while ensuring a safe environment for all our community members. It is our aim to develop a strong and effective child protection structure to ensure the safety of all children. We strive to educate and facilitate training for our community and to find solutions to any challenges by using a consistent and collaborative approach.

The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures is evaluated on an annual basis by the Child Protection Committee. The procedures contained within this policy will be monitored by professional evaluation of how child safety issues are addressed in school; the Child Protection Committee will evaluate their solutions in preventing, recognising and responding to child protection situations and present their findings to the Senior Leadership Team on an annual basis.

ISS Child Safeguarding Governor.

To support the work of the school, the Board has appointed a Safeguarding Governor, trained in safeguarding practices, who works alongside ISS staff to support safeguarding. This board member meets with the Designated Child Protection Contact on a quarterly basis to review processes, lend support and serve as a sounding board. The work of this Board member is guided by the checklist below. Regular reports are made to the board to further ongoing improvement processes.

Academic Leadership Team

The Academic Leadership Team is responsible for formulating and implementing policy and procedures which:

- Prevent unsuitable people from working with children and young people i.e. safe recruitment procedures and single central vetting records.
- Promote safe practices and challenge poor and unsafe practices in the whole school context.
- Identify and support a Designated Person(s) for Child Protection.
- Identify instances where there are grounds for concern about a child's welfare and initiate appropriate action/intervention to keep them safe.
- Contribute to effective partnership working among those involved with providing services for children.

The Designated Person(s) for Child Protection (DPCP)

At ISS International School the Designated Persons for Child Protection (DPCP) are identified for each division. If the assigned DPCP is unavailable, then the matter should be directed to the school counsellor. The DPCPs will train all staff who are new to the school on the school's safeguarding policies and guidance on safe working practices. Regular meetings will be held during the first 3 months of employment between the new employee(s) and the appropriate manager(s). All staff will receive regular refresher training on Child Protection Policies and Procedures.

The DPCP's are responsible for the school's approach to:

- Policy
- Practice
- Procedures
- Professional development

Specifically the DPCP will:

- Ensure that all staff know who is responsible for child protection issues.
- Maintain staff awareness and confidence regarding child protection procedures and ensure new staff are aware of these procedures – coordinate training in this respect.
- Coordinate action where child abuse is suspected.
- Attend international and local case conferences or nominate an appropriate member of staff to attend on his/her behalf to keep abreast of legal requirements and obligations of Singapore.

Regularly attends courses and training related to child protection organised by The Ministry of Social and Family development and conducts internal awareness for staff.

- Maintain and update Child Protection records including outcomes of case conferences and other sensitive information - to be secured in a confidential file and disseminated only on a 'need to know basis'. The secure file is maintained by DPCP.
- Maintains a relationship with local police. ISS's contact is Mr Dinesh Thevar based at Bukit Merah Police Station. He can be contacted on +65 9023-1422 or +65 6377-3973.
- Understand mandatory reporting protocol and local laws pertaining to child safety. He/she communicates these appropriately to staff.

Human Resources Department

Ensure the school has effective policies and procedures in place for the recruitment of all staff and in accordance with local guidance and legal requirements (and monitor the school's compliance with them).

- Ensure that the school operates effective administration of safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff prior to working at the school.
- Keep and maintain a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks.
- Assess clearance and vetting documentation provided by contractors and agencies working at school.

Safer Recruitment

The safe recruitment of staff at ISS International School is essential to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in our care. The school is committed to safeguard and promoting the welfare of the children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is recognized that this can only be achieved through sound procedures. Good inter-agency cooperation and the recruitment and retention of competent, motivated employees.

The purpose of this document is to set out the minimum requirements of a recruitment process that aims to:

1. Attract the best possible applicants to vacancies;
2. Deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people;
3. Identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and young people.

This school seeks to achieve a diverse international workforce which includes people from different backgrounds with different skills and abilities. We are committed to ensuring that the recruitment and

selection of all who work within the school is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient, effective and promotes equality of opportunity. Recruitment must observe the Singapore Fair Consideration Framework 2014 (FCF) and comply with the Tripartite Guidelines on Fair Employment Practices.

The school will:

- Implement robust recruitment procedures and checks for appointing staff to ensure that reasonable steps are taken not to appoint a person who is unsuitable to work with children, or who is disqualified from working with children, or does not have the suitable skills and experience for the intended role.
- Keep and maintain on file a record of recruitment and vetting checks.
- Undertake qualification authentication as required by the Committee of Private Education.
- Require staff who are convicted or cautioned for any offence during their employment with the school to notify the school, in writing of the offence and the penalty.
- Verification of professional registration as a teacher-required by the Committee of Private Education.

Recruitment Procedure

Safeguarding terminology to be used in all job advertisements (on the school website, newspapers, journals or online, etc.) is as follows:

'ISS International is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in its care. As an employer, the school expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment and all post holders are appointed subject to satisfactory enhanced criminal records checks.'

Applications and shortlisting

The following application procedures are followed to ensure safe and equitable recruitment:

- Candidates are required to submit (usually electronically) a full letter of application and Curriculum Vitae.
- The school requires candidates to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history.
- Applicants should be aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and possible referral to the police, recruitment agencies, and other professional regulatory bodies. Applicants sign a Declaration Form to this effect on submission of their application.
- References will be sought directly from the referee one of whom must be the Head from the current or last school.
- References or testimonials provided by the candidate will not be accepted. ISS adopts its own Reference Request Form.
- The Reference Request Form will ask referees to comment on:
 - a) The candidate's suitability for working with children and young people;
 - b) Any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, that relate to the safeguarding of children;
 - c) The candidate's suitability for this post.

-
- Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case. Cases in which an issue was satisfactorily resolved some time ago, or an allegation was determined to be unfounded or did not require formal disciplinary sanctions, and which no further issues have been raised, are not likely to cause concern. More serious or recent concerns or issues are more likely to cause concern. A history of repeated concerns or allegations over time is also likely to give cause for concern.
 - Referees will be contacted by e-mail in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept of exchanges, should the reference check be made by telephone.
 - If a candidate is hired through a recruitment agency that requires confidential references, these references will be accepted if they include are from the candidate's current head of school and if the questions asked align with ISS mandatory child safeguarding guidelines. In case of anomalies such references may be followed on by a telephone call or email check.
 - Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees will be contacted in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges.
 - ISS reserves the right to contact any known previous employer with respect to a candidate's application.

Pre-employment Checks

Appointment is subject to the following pre-employment checks:

- Proof of identity
- Receipt of at least two satisfactory references, one of which will be from the former or most recent employer.
- Criminal/Police or equivalent background checks for all countries are to be submitted.
- Verification of the candidate's medical fitness/health
- Verification of academic qualifications

The Human Resources Department keeps and maintains recruitment and vetting checks within a staff member's personal file. This includes all staff who employed at the school, including casual staff, and those who provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members, eg: specialist sports coaches.

The school ensures that it is satisfied with the level of criminal vetting for staff employed through an agency.

It shall also indicate who undertook the checks and the dates on which the check was completed or the relevant certificate obtained. The Human Resources Department will contact the appointing Manager to confirm that all paperwork has been received before a start date can be agreed.

All Staff

All staff, which include: all employees, contracted employees and volunteers of ISS, have a shared responsibility to help keep children and young people safe by:

- Providing a safe environment for children and young people
- Identifying at risk students

-
- Taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure that children are kept safe both at home and at school.
 - Understanding school policy and procedures related to child protection and safeguarding and knowing who is the Designated Person for Child Protection.
 - Participating in professional training and awareness of Child Protection issues.

Students Under Guardianship

To ensure the safety and well-being of all students who are in Singapore without their parents, the ISS admissions policy requires that all such students stay with an ISS listed guardian. Acceptance, and continued enrolment, in ISS will depend on approval of living arrangements by the school. Students already living with guardians before their enrollment into ISS or those whose parents request a particular guardian for their child, will be enrolled on a probationary basis for a semester until their guardian becomes an ISS listed guardian. ISS has the following structures and policies in place to ensure the highest quality of guardians for ISS students:

- ISS has a Guardianship Coordinator.
- The Deputy Academic Director of Pastoral will provide the Academic Director of Pastoral and Academic Leadership and Counsellors with an updated list of guardians and students at the start of every semester.
- ISS primarily accepts students who are with parents appointed guardians or listed ISS guardians.
- Failure of the guardian to become listed with the school could result in the student being temporarily suspended, being required to move in with a guardian who is already listed, and/or withdrawn from ISS.
- Changes in guardianship or living arrangements require prior written approval from the school.
- All guardian candidates are required to sign a declaration of no criminal conviction within the application before they are eligible to become a guardian.
- All guardian candidates are required to complete a comprehensive application which will be accepted or denied by the Deputy Academic Director of Pastoral in collaboration with the Academic Director of Pastoral.
- Students will only be admitted into the school once all guardianship documentation has been completed and approved.
- A contract is signed by the guardian, Deputy Academic Director of Pastoral, parent, and student to ensure the safety of the child and that school expectations are understood by all parties.

-
- The Deputy Academic Director of Pastoral checks in with the students on a one-to-one basis four times during a school year, at minimum.
 - The Deputy Academic Director of Pastoral checks in with the guardians four times during the school year, at minimum.
 - The Deputy Academic Director of Pastoral will ensure all guardians attend the parent teacher conferences.
 - The Deputy Academic Director of Pastoral and Academic Director of Pastoral conducts a scheduled home visit at least once a school year.
 - The Deputy Academic Director of Pastoral uses an inventory list when home visits are conducted to ensure the student is safe, comfortable, and all their needs are met.
 - ISS reserves the right to direct a student to move to an alternative guardian should we feel that a student is not living in an environment where he or she is likely to be realizing his or her academic potential.
 - Students under guardianship will not be accepted into Elementary School. Students in Grades 6-8 will be monitored collectively by the School Counsellor and Deputy Academic Director of Pastoral
 - Gender will be considered when placing students into guardianship.

CATEGORIES OF CHILD ABUSE AND THEIR SIGNS / SYMPTOMS

All forms of child abuse leave emotional or physical scars, or both. These scars could affect a child's ability to function at school or home and will also impact their relationships with others.

Child abuse causes serious lifelong consequences. Earlier detection translates to better chances of recovery and appropriate treatment for the child. Sometimes a warning sign doesn't automatically mean a child is being abused. It's important to look for a pattern of abusive behavior and warning signs, delve deeper and uncover the truth. Learning about warning signs of child abuse enables one to identify the problem at earlier stages so that intervention can take place.

There are 4 main categories of child abuse.

Neglect – The persistent or severe neglect of a child which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Child neglect, a very common type of child abuse is the failure to provide for a child's basic needs like food, clothing, hygiene or supervision. Child neglect may not be easily detected. A parent/guardian or caregiver may unexpectedly become mentally or physically unable to care for a child due to emotional and physical issues such as depression, serious injury or excessive alcohol or drug use. These factors could affect sound judgment and the ability to keep a child safe. Neglected children are those whose basic, physical and emotional needs are not met.

Warning Signs of Neglect

- Bad hygiene - noticeably filthy and sloppy
- Withdrawn and anxious
- Unsupervised or left alone
- Injuries or illnesses left unattended
- Frequently late or missing school
- Poor nutrition, constantly hungry

Physical abuse is an intentional and unwanted contact/force that result in physical bodily injury, pain or impairment. This includes inappropriate hitting, restraint, burning and force or willfully feeding of controlled substances such as alcohol or drugs.

Within Singapore, disciplining children via 'physical' means is used by some but if it results in injuring a child, the perpetrator could be charged with a crime by the police. ISS does not support nor condone this mode of discipline. In certain cases, ISS will be obligated to contact the local police if physical abuse of a child is suspected.

Warning Signs of Physical Abuse

- Unexplained bruises (burns, marks) or injuries that seemed to follow a pattern. E.g., marks from a belt, burnt scars or injuries caused by the same object or method.
- Cringes from touch, recoils at sudden movements.
- Reluctant and fearful to go home.
- Wears long-sleeved pullovers/sweaters on hot days to cover up
- Self-harm
- Consistently "on high alert," as if waiting for something bad is going to happen
- Tend to be fearful of adults
- Tendency to yield readily to others in a subservient and weak way.
- Depressed and thoughts of suicide.

Sexual abuse is when a child or young person is misled, forced or pressurized into taking part in any kind of sexual activity with an adult or another young person for which he/she was not able to consent to or did not consent to. This may include any online coercion or inappropriate contact between adults and children.

It could involve:

- Befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child
- Sexual Grooming (is befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, and sometimes the family, to lower the child's inhibitions for child **sexual** abuse. It lures minors into trafficking of children, illicit businesses such as child prostitution, or the production of child pornography).
- Exploiting the child for sexual gratification

-
- Exposing the child to inappropriate sexual materials or acts
 - Inappropriate sexual acts between older individuals and the child
 - Coercing a child into posing for pornographic materials
 - Using the child as sexual stimuli for adults

Warning Signs of Sexual Abuse

- Touching others inappropriately
- Attention seeking through molestation or sexual harassment
- Difficulty sitting or walking often due to bruises or soreness in genital area
- Displays seductive behavior.
- Heightened knowledge or interest in sexual materials
- Makes every effort to avoid a particular person, without valid reasons.
- Avoid changing clothes for physical activities like PE
- Sexually explicit conduct like open masturbation
- Unusually compliant
- Runs away from home

Note that it is a criminal offence to have sexual intercourse with girls age below 14 in Singapore and even if consent has been given, this act constitutes rape. If the girl is above 14 but below 16 years old, sexual intercourse, in this case is still an offense even though consent has been granted but this act is known as 'carnal connection'

Psychological / Emotional Abuse is difficult to detect but can seriously impact a child's social, emotional and overall development. Research has shown that Psychological/Emotional Abuse and Sexual and/or Physical abuse are correlated.

It could involve:

- Persistent hostility, blaming, ignoring and blatantly rejecting the child
- Isolating the child for a long period of time
- Constantly threatening and inducing fear
- Refusing and not providing emotional love
- Instill immoral values or acts like teaching a child to lie

Warning Signs of Psychological/Emotional Abuse

- Excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong.
- Extreme mood swings - extremely compliant or extremely demanding; extremely passive or extremely aggressive
- Self-deprecation, feeling sad and hopeless
- Fearful of parent or caregiver, saying they hate the parent/caregiver
- Acts either inappropriately adult (taking care of other children) or immature (thumb-sucking, throwing tantrums) compared to peers
- Feeling disconnected or numb

-
- Difficulty concentrating

Child Protection
Process Chart



Concern or Disclosure

Staff member completes section 1 of Form 1, uses the **SSSG (Sector-Specific Screening Guide)** to determine the reporting threshold. Print Form 1, give to DPCP, and follow the appropriate step below.

If the concern falls on **green**, submit Form 1 then continue to monitor.

If the concern falls on **red** or **yellow**, staff member consults DPCP and use the SSSG then the **CARG (Child Abuse Reporting Guide)** to determine next steps. Section 2 of Form 1 is completed by counsellor or DPCP at this time. Follow the CARG reporting recommendation and discuss with the Divisional Principal, Divisional DPCP and counsellor.

Document and monitor

Consult to CPS and Follow-Up If Needed.

Report to CPS and Contact Police

DPCP, divisional Principal, and counsellor monitors case and works with family and/or guardian and provides resources, if appropriate. Staff member who reported will be updated on the case.

Outcomes From Interventions

Case is resolved. No further action.

Continued support. Family has been provided with support and resources.

Case is enhanced, moves to a higher risk.

High risk cases are reported to the Head of School.

Case may be reviewed by Division Principal, DPCP & counsellor and action steps will be discussed.

Concern continues

There are signs or suspicion of neglect, or emotional trauma, physical and/or sexual abuse, or carer concern.

DPCP calls Child Protective Service (CPS), police or Institute of Mental Health (IMH) for consult.

CPS Tel. 1.800.777.0000
Police Tel. (Henderson contact)
Dinesh Thevar - 9023 1422
IMH Tel. 6389 2000

Discuss recommendation with Division Principal, DPCP, Counsellor & Head of School.

Concern heightened

There are allegations or disclosure of sexual and/or serious physical abuse or carer concern.

DPCP contacts the police.

DPCP calls Child Protective Service within 2 hours of CARG decision of disclosure.

Academic Director of Pastoral

Academic Director of Teaching and Learning
Programme Heads
Counsellors
Teacher Reps

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Handling Disclosures

Victims of child abuse often have to relive the trauma of their experiences and these may be some of the toughest dialogues to carry out. Repeated interviews only traumatize the victims more, therefore the recommendation is for joint interviews with relevant parties. Some victims may not wish to disclose or refer the matter to the Police or Social Services for investigation. However, if the law requires disclosure of information necessary to safeguard a child, information must be released.

Within Singapore, the following are key amendments to 'The Children and Young Persons Act (CYPA) as of 2001:

- * Print and broadcast media are prohibited from disclosing any picture or particulars of the child or young person who has been involved in any court proceedings, not just within the Juvenile Court.
- * Scope of child abuse expanded to include emotional/psychological abuse.
- * The protector² is empowered to remove and send the child for medical treatment where parental consent cannot be obtained.
- * Parents or guardians may be mandated by the Court to attend counseling, psychotherapy, assessment and other treatment programmes.

The Protector also has the authority to require the assistance of parents and other significant persons to provide information regarding the circumstances of abuse.

- * The Act protects MCYS welfare officers and Police officers from civil and criminal liability if they are acting in good faith as well as an informant of suspected child abuse from personal liability.

Ref: 'Protecting Children in Singapore – A publication by the Rehabilitation and Protection Division, Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports, Oct 2005

Guidelines:

Remain calm and don't be judgmental – Disclosure of abuse by a child can be frightening and overwhelming. Listen to the child and let him/her finish without over-questioning or over-reacting. Do not get the child to demonstrate the abuse.

Empathy and Support – Express support because the child needs to be reassured that he or she has done nothing wrong. Don't overreact to the disclosure and do not place blame on the child.

Confidentiality - No promises of maintaining confidentiality should be given to the child. Explain that abuse constitutes 'unusual circumstances' which have to be reported in order to protect and safeguard the interest of the child.

Note-taking - Reassure the child that you are taking his/her seriously and therefore you need to write down notes on Form 1 (do not take notes electronically). Include the date and time of the disclosure and sign the notes. As best as you can, record the exact words that the child used and pass the recordings to the DPCP immediately.

Next Steps – After note-taking, explain clearly to the child the next steps you will take. In this case, the DPCP will be notified and notes recorded will be passed to the DPCP for further actions. The DPCP will follow the CARG in determining next steps. Possible outcomes include but are not limited to counseling for the child and family and/or notifying and coordinating discussions with relevant authorities and social services organizations such as the Child Protection Services (CPS) of The Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF). For severe or high-risk cases, the police will be contacted when it's justified. In some cases, it may be mandatory for the Police to file charges against the abuser.

Record Keeping

The DPCP will maintain the official record of Form 1 to record all information concerning a suspicion, allegation or disclosure of child abuse. **Form 1 should be printed and completed by hand. Include** facts regarding the issue, the actions the school took and the actions the school decided not to take with explanation.

All records of Child Protection allegations, suspicions, or disclosures are centrally kept by the DPCP and the hard file copy is in a locked cabinet.

- a) Make note of any concerns, providing facts (specific details, dates, etc.), but be discreet whilst interviewing the child - they may find note taking at the time disconcerting.
- b) Keep all notes factual.
- c) Do not read your summary back to the victim as this can repeat the trauma.
- d) If you have a discussion with a child, keep a record of timing, setting, personnel present, what was said and any action taken/not taken.
- e) Complete a new Form 1 for any subsequent events.

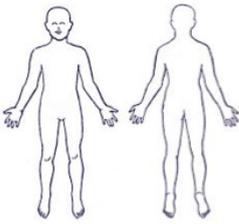


Confidential: Single Copy

RECORD OF CHILD PROTECTION CONCERN – FORM 1

Submit handwritten copy to DPCP.

Section 1

Student's Name:	Date and Time of Concern:
Mother Tongue:	Grade and Homeroom Teacher:
DOB:	Age:
Reporting Teacher/Staff Name :	Are you aware that anyone else has been informed or has information.:
Account of Concern: (what was said, observed, reported and by who)	
Indicate of any markings on body below related to this concern: 	Additional Information: (e.g. context of concern; disclosure; details of any physical harm; emotional signs of concern; witnesses)
SSSG outcome review: <input type="checkbox"/> Proceed Normally (green) <input type="checkbox"/> Consult (yellow) <input type="checkbox"/> Immediate Consult / Report (red)	Is the family aware of this concern?
<input type="checkbox"/> Form submitted to DPCP for file. <input type="checkbox"/> Name of DPCP:and date submitted:	<input type="checkbox"/> DPCP notifies counsellor and together determine to whether to notify classroom teacher(s),



Confidential: Single Copy

Section 2

To be completed by counsellor or division level DPCP in partnership with the reporting staff member.

Information we have about the family's involvement or knowledge of the concern.

Action(s) Taken:	When (date):	By Whom:

SSSG and/or CARG outcome:

Follow-up Plan: (Post consultation of SSSG and/or CARG).

Notify Deputy Academic Director of Pastoral and Academic Director of Pastoral prior to calling CPS.

Completed by DPCP or Counsellor and date:

Disclosure of Abuse Committed Outside of School

If a staff member suspects a child is or has been abused by someone outside of school, the following procedures will be implemented.

- i. ISS staff will complete Form 1, section 1 and reference the SSSG then report concerns immediately to the Designated Person for Child Protection (DPCP). There is one assigned DPCP for each division at ISS: Primary School and High School. The DPCP will review Form 1 with the reporting staff member then reference the SSSG and CARG while completing Form 1, section 2. The DPCP is responsible for keeping all records and evidence safe. The DPCP is also responsible for documenting and following CARG procedures, which may include notifying all the necessary people of the concerns, notifying the parents/guardians of ISS's policies on abuse, referring outside agencies (when necessary), and ensuring the student and family are receiving support (when appropriate). The DPCP and Counsellor will work closely to monitor and follow up with the student and family.
- ii. In the event that the suspected abuse is severe, The DPCP will be committed to taking action and arranging consultation with the Academic Director of Pastoral. In collaboration with the Academic Leadership/ Director, when deemed appropriate after further investigation, the DPCP will inform the Child Protection Service Branch under the Ministry of Social and Family Development umbrella at Child Protective Service Helpline: [1-800-777-0000](tel:1-800-777-0000). The DPCP will keep the teacher, Academic Leadership, Director, CEO and School Counselor(s) up to date with developments on a 'need to know' basis.
- iii. If there are obvious signs of harm, the student will be taken to the School Nurse immediately. If the student is not in need of urgent medical attention, then the family will be notified, if appropriate and may be requested to meet with the DPCP for consultation. If the student is in need of urgent medical attention, he/she should be taken to either the KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH) or to the National University Hospital (NUH), the 2 designated **pediatric** hospitals. If it is not possible or advisable to obtain parent consent CPS will be contacted for consultation. Where we suspect the abuse has occurred or is about to occur and the child is unsafe and in imminent risk of further harm, we are committed to reporting the matter to the Child Protective Service Branch during working hours and call the **Child Protection Service Helpline at 1800 777 0000 (after office hours) and the Police**.
- iv. In the event of suspected sexual abuse, it is a requirement for the school to contact the Child Protection and Services (CPS) and the police, when appropriate. For cases happening within the

context of the family, the family should not be alerted to the allegations being made and the report can either be made with the police or CPS. For sexual abuse cases happening outside the context of the family, the family will be informed of the incident and a report needs to be made to the CPS/Police.

ISS makes decisions in the best interests of the child, and this may mean not disclosing information to parents.

- v. Where we suspect that the abuse has been perpetrated by someone close to the family or within the family network, the DPCP will contact the family and discuss ways on how the student could be kept safe and managed more appropriately. Full consideration as to whether contact with the immediate family would increase the risk of harm will be given.

Disclosure of Alleged Abuse Committed by A Staff Member

The following procedures apply where a member of staff has been implicated:

- i. Meeting with Student/Alleged Victim with the School Counselor present, the DPCP and as appropriate The Academic Director of Pastoral. The School Counselor and DPCP will communicate with the student/s directly. If there is more than one student who has been a victim of abuse, the students will be interviewed individually. A summary of what was learned from investigations will be made by the DPCP on Form 1.
- ii. The DPCP and the Principal (as appropriate) will coordinate interviews with any bystanders/witnesses and notes taken for Form 1.
- iii. Meeting with Accused Staff Member - The accused staff member will be requested to attend a meeting with the Academic Director of Pastoral and DPCP and questioned regarding the accusations being made. The meeting will be documented. Notes from this meeting will be recorded on the Form 1.
- iv. Contacting Parent/Caregivers - Parents/Caregivers of the student/s being questioned will be contacted by telephone by the Academic Director of Pastoral or DPCP and informed of the meetings that took place. The alleged victim's parents will be invited into school to discuss the alleged abuse face-to-face.
- v. DPCP consults with the Academic Director of Pastoral and Deputy CEO (as appropriate) - The Academic Director of Pastoral and DPCP will be committed to taking action and arrange

consultation with the Deputy CEO (as appropriate). Consideration will be given as to whether that member of staff should face suspension pending further investigations.

- vi. Communication with Child Protection Agency - The DPCP will follow CARG manual procedure in reporting the matter to Child Protection Services Helpline at 1-800-777-0000 (office hours) and/or the police. The Academic Director of Pastoral/DPCP will keep those directly concerned with the case up to date with developments.
- vii. Counseling - In consultation with parents/caregivers, the CYP will be offered in-school counseling and provided with referrals for off-campus professional counseling services.

Disclosure of Abuse by Another Student

If a student in the school is suspected of abusing another student, the following steps will be implemented.

- i. Initial Record of Concern - The adult who has suspicions of a student being abused by another child, or is approached directly by a student/s about being abused, completes Form 1, section 1, and delivers it to the DPCP.
- ii. Meeting with targeted CYP(s) – The DPCP will meet with the targeted CYP directly. In the case of more than one target, the CYPs will be interviewed individually and a summary of what was learned from investigations will be made by the DPCP on Form 1. The counsellor will be available for these meetings or for follow up to support to the student.
- iii. Meeting with Bystanders - The DPCP will communicate with possible witnesses individually to the abuse that has occurred, and make notes to contribute on Form 1.
- iv. Meeting with Accused Student/s – The DPCP will communicate with the student(s) accused of causing abuse to a fellow student or students. If there is more than one student who has taken part in an incident involving the abuse of other students, the students accused will be met individually. Notes from this meeting will be recorded on the Form 1 by the DPCP.
- v. Consultation - Consultation and agreement between school Principal, and DPCP.
- vi. Parents of Accused Student/s Contacted - The parents/caregivers of the student/s accused of abuse towards another student/s will be telephoned to attend a meeting with the Academic Director of Pastoral and/or DPCP. In-school counseling and off-campus professional counseling referrals will be offered to the family.

vii. Parents of Victims Contacted - Parents/Caregivers of the student/s who were abused will be contacted by the Academic Director of Pastoral or DPCP and informed of the meetings that took place. The course of action will be explained regarding the student/s who carried out the abuse on their child. In-school counseling and off-campus professional counseling referrals will be offered to the family.

viii. Action - If abuse by student(s) proves to be beyond doubt, immediate action will be taken to remove the offenders from the school context. Appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken aligned with the divisional code of conduct.

The Academic Director of Pastoral will be committed to taking action and will inform the Academic Leadership of proportionate responses. In extreme cases, expulsions will be considered. Appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken aligned with the divisional code of conduct.

The parents/caregivers of the student/s accused of abuse towards another student/s will be requested to attend a meeting with the Academic Director of Pastoral and DPCP. In-school counseling and off-campus professional counseling referrals will be provided to the family.

ix. Communication with the Child Protection Agency - The Academic Director of Pastoral and/or DPCP may report the matter to the Child Protection Service Helpline at 1-800-777-0000 (during office hours) or the police following the CARG manual.

Procedure for When A Staff Member/Outside Provider Considers Use of Force With A Student

Staff will refrain from being physical with any student, under any circumstance. If a situation with a student escalates and the student is being physical, the staff member or outside provider will seek immediate assistance from an administrator in addressing the situation.

Sharing a concern about Staff

The earlier a concern is expressed the easier to follow up on and the sooner action can be taken. It is a staff's individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention to administration and/or the DPCP. Although this can be difficult, it is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

There may be occasions where a member of staff has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with the Academic Director of Pastoral and personal support can be offered to the member of staff concerned. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most

instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children.

ISS Child Safeguarding Checklist

<u>Area</u>	<u>Y/N</u>	<u>Action</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Has the school created a definition of child protection with ensuing policies/procedures which are fully understood and followed by Board Members/ Governors/Owners, school leaders, staff, students, parents and volunteers?</u> 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Do the school's culture and values support and encourage good practice leading to enhanced child protection?</u> 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Does the school comply with all legal and statutory requirements / obligations in relation to child protection within the country in which it operates? Does it have effective working relationships with support agencies (where they exist)?</u> 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Does the school have robust policy/procedures, which are successfully implemented, to ensure that it only employs and engages people of sound moral character? If so, is the school compliant?</u> 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Does the school have robust and fully implemented policies/procedures to ensure that all helpers, volunteers and contract workers are people of sound moral character and suitable to work with children?</u> 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Does the school communicate publicly its child protection policy/procedures?</u> 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Are child protection policies and procedures reviewed with sufficient regularity and systematically?</u> 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Is there a designated Child Protection Officer (CPO) in the school with oversight of child protection procedures and related school policies?</u> 		
<p>9.</p> <p><u>Do the school’s operational procedures support and encourage good practice leading to enhanced child protection, including:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <u>Training and Support;</u> b. <u>Identification/Disclosure; and</u> c. <u>Reporting in line with policy.</u> 		
<p>10.</p> <p><u>Are the school’s buildings and facilities, security and protection measures compatible with child protection and related policies?</u></p>		
<p>11.</p> <p><u>Does child protection education and on-line/virtual safety form part of the written and taught curriculum?</u></p>		
<p>12.</p> <p><u>Are students, staff and volunteers aware of what to do if they feel uncomfortable or have concerns about mistreatment or abuse?</u></p>		
<p>13.</p> <p><u>What measures are taken by the school to ensure the safety and protection of students in homestay accommodation or on residential trips and student-exchange programmes, and to what extent are they successful?</u></p>		

14.

Does the Board have a trained Safeguarding Governor

who:

- a. **Supports the work of the designated Child Protection Officer**
- b. **Reports to the Board on safeguarding matters**
- c. **Maintains confidential safeguarding records**
- d. **Ensures consistency of practice across the school**
- e. **Checks that the school remains compliant with regulatory authorities and accreditation bodies.**
- f. **Ensures systems are in place to protect vulnerable children**
- g. **Ensures that annual audits take place**
- h. **Champions safeguarding in the community.**

RESOURCES / FURTHER INFORMATION

1. Policy on Protection & Welfare of Children (MSF) (2014)
2. Protecting Children in Singapore - Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) (2005).
3. Amendments to the Children and Young Persons Act (2001)