



# ST. JOSEPH'S INSTITUTION INTERNATIONAL

A Lasallian Catholic School

## SJI International Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures

SJI International adheres to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), of which the host country, Singapore, is a signatory. SJI International seeks to be a safe haven for students who may be experiencing abuse or neglect in any aspect of their lives. SJI International's safeguarding policy is reviewed and is available to be viewed by all stakeholders, we communicate this policy annually to students through assemblies, we provide annual training for all staff, and prioritises child protection process during the recruitment of all staff.

### Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Rationale	2
Terminology and Definitions	2
Responsibilities	3
3.1 The Senior Leadership Team	3
3.2 The Designated Person(s) for Safeguarding Team (DST)	3
3.3 All Staff	4
3.4 Human Resources Manager in relation to Safer Recruitment	4
4. Monitoring and Evaluation	4
5. Categories of Child Abuse and their Signs/Symptoms	4
5.1 Neglect	4
5.2 Physical	5
5.3 Sexual	5
5.4 Psychological/Emotional	6
5.5 Radicalisation	7
5.6 Peer on Peer	7
6. Child Protection Procedure	8
6.1 Disclose of abuse perpetrated outside of school	8
6.2 Disclosure of alleged abuse perpetrated by a staff member	8
6.3 When a student is suspected of seriously abusing another student	9
6.4 Child Protection Process Chart	11
7. Managing Disclosure	12
8. Record Keeping (CPOMS)	12
8.1 Guidance	12
9. Safer Recruitment	13
9.1 Recruitment Procedure	13
10. Sharing a concern about Staff (Whistleblowing)	15
11. Resources/Further Information	17

# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

## 1. Rationale

At SJI International 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 co-operation 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 (2008) 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 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.

## 2. Terminology and definitions

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 successful.*

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’ (Singapore Ministry of Social and Family Development 2002)*

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.*

### 3. 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.

#### 3.1 The Senior Leadership Team

The Senior 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 who is a member of the senior leadership team.
- 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 between all those involved with providing services for children.

#### 3.2 The Designated Person(s) for Safeguarding Team (DST)

At SJI International the **Designated Safeguarding Team (DST)** are **RICHARD SELLERS** (Vice Principal & Safeguarding Lead - Pastoral) **RENATO RAINONE** (Head of Senior School) **GARY CRUMBIE** (Head of Grade) & **LAURA HEYWORTH** (Head of Grade). If none of these personnel are available, then the matter should be directed to the most senior member of the School Leadership Team.

The DST is responsible for the schools' approach to:

- Policy
- Practice
- Procedures
- Professional development

Specifically the DST will:

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

- Maintain and update Child Protection records including outcomes of case conferences and other sensitive information - to be secured (double key) in a confidential file and disseminated only on a 'need to know basis'. The secure file is maintained by SJII Pastoral Administrator (see Record Keeping section 8).
- Keep up to date with current practice by participating in training opportunities at the highest level.

### 3.3 All Staff

All staff have a shared responsibility to help keep children and young people safe by:

- Providing a safe environment for children and young people
- Identifying young people who are suffering or who are at **significant risk of harm**
- 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 the members of the Designated Safeguarding Team (DST).
- Contributing to professional training and awareness of Child Protection issues.

### 3.4 Human Resources Department in relation to Safer Recruitment

- 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 all incoming teachers have completed and signed a 'Information and Declaration Form'.
- 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 where possible.
- Keep and maintain a central record of recruitment and vetting checks.

## **4. Monitoring and evaluation**

This policy will be evaluated on an annual basis. The procedures contained within this policy will be monitored by regular stakeholder surveys, and professional evaluation of how child safety issues are addressed in school eg Curriculum reviews of PSE; quality of related Assemblies etc.

## **5. Categories of Child Abuse and their Signs/Symptoms**

There are four main areas of Child Abuse. It should be recognised that the following suggested signs of abuse may also be a symptom of another problem.

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

Neglect can occur where parents/guardians fail to meet the basic and essential needs of their children such as food, clothing and medical care. Leaving small children alone and unsupervised is another example of neglect or

where older children are left alone for longer periods of time. Parents refusing or failing to give love and affection to their child is a case of emotional neglect.

Signs or symptoms which may possibly indicate neglect:

- Hunger
- Tiredness or listlessness
- Child dirty or unkempt
- Poor school attendance or often late for school (or conversely not wanting to go home)
- Poor concentration. Affection – demanding or attention-seeking behaviour
- Stealing or scavenging compulsively
- Anxiety due to the burden of pressure.
- Failure to achieve developmental milestones

**5.2 Physical Abuse** – Physical injury to a child, or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

It involves any non-accidental injury where adults physically hurt, injure or kill a child. This can involve hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning and biting. It also includes giving a child poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs or alcohol.

Signs or symptoms which may indicate physical abuse:

- Bruising, Inconsistent account of how bruising or injuries occurred
- Bald patches
- Burns or scalds
- Fear of going home or parents being contacted
- Fear of medical help
- Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance
- Violence or aggression towards others including bullying

Please note some physical disciplining of children is used in Singapore. Parents are likely to be charged with child abuse if the child is significantly injured as a result of excessive force. At SJI International the physical disciplining of students is never acceptable.

**5.3 Sexual Abuse** – The exploitation of a child or young person for sexual gratification or any sexual activity. This includes adult on child and child on child.

There are 2 different types of child sexual abuse. These are called contact abuse and non-contact abuse.

**Contact abuse** involves touching activities where an abuser makes physical contact with a child, including penetration. It includes:

- sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child's wearing clothes or not
- rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus
- forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity
- making a child take their clothes off, touch someone else's genitals or masturbate.

**Non-contact abuse** involves non-touching activities, such as grooming, exploitation, persuading children to perform sexual acts over the internet and flashing. It includes:

- encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts
- not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others
- meeting a child following sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them
- online abuse including making, viewing or distributing child abuse images
- allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images
- showing pornography to a child
- sexually exploiting a child for money, power or status (child exploitation).

Signs or symptoms which may indicate sexual abuse (*Please note- most frequently there are no signs of this type of abuse*):

- Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age inappropriate behaviour
- Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching
- Persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains
- Eating disorders
- Attention-seeking behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation
- Regressive behaviour
- Enuresis, soiling and smearing faeces.
- Frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately
- Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming
- Bruises, scratches in genital area
- Lack of trust of a familiar or particular adult
- Unusually compliant

Please note in Singapore sexual intercourse with a girl below the age of 14 years constitutes the criminal offence of rape, even if the girl gives her consent. When the girl is already 14 years old but not yet 16, the activity is an offence called “carnal connection”, provided she has given consent.

**5.4 Psychological/Emotional Abuse** – persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. This occurs where constant lack of love and affection, threats, verbal attacks, taunting, shouting, can lead to a child’s loss of self-esteem. It can also include harassment or indifference on the basis of race, culture, gender or disability.

Aspects of psychological and emotional abuse include:

- hostile rejecting/degrading (eg taunts)
- terrorising (eg threats or acts that induce fear)
- actively isolating (eg locking a child in a room for extended periods of time)
- exploiting/corrupting (eg teaching a child to steal)
- denying emotional responsiveness (eg denying affection and shows of love)

Signs or symptoms which may indicate psychological abuse:

- a) Rocking, banging head, regression
- b) Self-mutilation, drug or solvent abuse
- c) Fear of parents being contacted
- d) Running away, compulsive stealing
- e) Masturbation

- f) Eating disorders
- g) Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis
- h) Sudden speech disorders, selective mutism
- i) Over-reaction to mistakes, continual self-deprecation
- j) Delayed physical/mental/emotional development

**5.4 Radicalisation** is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and violent extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups. The process of radicalisation is different for every individual and is a process, not a one off event; it can take place over an extended period or within a very short time frame. It is important that staff are able to recognise possible signs and indicators of radicalisation. Children and young people may be vulnerable to exposure or involvement with groups or individuals who advocate violence as a means to a political or ideological end. Children and young people can be drawn into violence or they can be exposed to the messages of extremist groups by many means. These can include family members or friends, direct contact with members groups and organisations or, increasingly, through the internet, including through social media sites. This can put children and young people at risk of being drawn into criminal activity and has the potential to cause significant harm. Examples of extremist causes that have used violence to achieve their ends include animal rights and international terrorist organisations such as Al Qaeda and the Daesh.

Potential indicators identified include:

- Use of inappropriate language
- Possession of violent extremist literature
- Changes in behaviour, language, clothing or appearance
- The expression of extremist views
- Advocating violent actions and means
- Association with known extremists
- Seeking to recruit others to an extremist ideology

Responding to concerns: If staff are concerned about a change in the behaviour of an individual or see something that concerns them (this could be a colleague too) they should seek advice appropriately with the Designated Safeguarding Team. Effective early help relies on all staff to be vigilant and aware of the nature of the risk for children and young people.

**5.5 Peer on Peer Abuse** The school recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers and that peer on peer abuse can manifest in many different ways, including online bullying, sexting, initiation / hazing and inappropriate / harmful sexualised behaviours. Where children and young people have exhibited sexually inappropriate / harmful sexualised behaviour and / or exhibited sexually inappropriate / harmful sexualised behaviour towards others the school will follow the 'High Risk / Significant Harm' procedure (see child protection process chart page 11).

The school will ensure that the needs of children and young people who abuse others will be considered separately from the needs of their victims. Children and young people who abuse others will be responded to in a way that meets their needs as well as protecting others within the school community through a multiagency risk assessment.

## 6. Child Protection Procedure

### 6.1 Disclose of abuse perpetrated outside of school

If a member of staff suspects a child has been abused or neglected by someone outside of school, the following procedures should be implemented:

- i. SJII staff will report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Team (DST). They will be required to record observations that will contribute to the Record of Child Protection Concern (CPOMS). The DST records all information on CPOMS and is responsible for keeping all records and evidence safe.
- ii. In the event of suspected sexual abuse happening, it is a requirement for the school to contact the Child Protection and Service (CPS) or the Police. 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 should be informed of the incident and a report needs to be made to the CPS/Police. The school should record any disclosure factually (see section 6).
  - a. Note - The 'paramountcy principle' supports agencies making decisions in the best interests of the child, and this may mean not disclosing information to parents.
- iii. In the event of other forms of abuse, the DST will be committed to taking action and arranging consultation with the School Principal and/or CEO. In collaboration with the Principal/CEO, when deemed appropriate after further investigation, the DST will inform the Child Protection Service. The DST will keep the teacher, HOG and School Counselor(s) up to date with developments on a 'need to know' basis.
- iv. If there are obvious signs of harm, the student will be taken to the School Nurse immediately. 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 **paediatric** hospitals. If it is not possible or advisable to obtain parent consent the CPS should 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 **Child Protection Service Helpline at 1800 777 0000 (office hours) or the Police**.
- v. Where we suspect that the abuse has been perpetrated by someone close to the family or within the family network, the DST or a designated member of staff (probably the School Counsellor) 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 should be given.

### 6.2 Disclosure of alleged abuse perpetrated 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 DST or Principal 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 DST on CPOMS.

- ii. The DST or Principal will co-ordinate interviews with any bystanders/witnesses and notes taken for CPOMS.
- iii. Meeting with Accused Staff Member - The accused staff member will be requested to attend a meeting with the High School Principal and DST and questioned regarding the accusations being made. The meeting will be documented. Notes from this meeting will be recorded on CPOMS.
- iv. Contacting Parent/Caregivers - Parents/Caregivers of the student/s being questioned will be contacted by telephone by the High School Principal or DST and informed of the meetings that took place. The alleged victim's parents will be invited into school to discuss the issue face to face.
- v. Consultation with Brother President or CEO - The High School Principal and DST will be committed to taking action and arrange consultation with the Brother President or CEO. Consideration will be given as to whether that member of staff should face suspension pending further investigations.
- vi. Communication with Child Protection Agency - The High School Principal, DST, Brother President or CEO will report the matter to Child Protection Services Helpline at 1800 777 0000 (office hours) or the police after careful consideration of seriousness of offense is given. Parents of student victims will be made aware of their right to do this also. The Principal/DST will keep those directly concerned with the case up to date with developments.
- vii. Counseling - With permission from parents/caregivers, student victims and suspected staff members will be offered in-school counseling. Off-campus professional counseling contact details will also be offered.

### **6.3 Disclosure of Abuse by Another Student**

If a student in the school is suspected of abusing another student, the following steps should all take place within the school day.

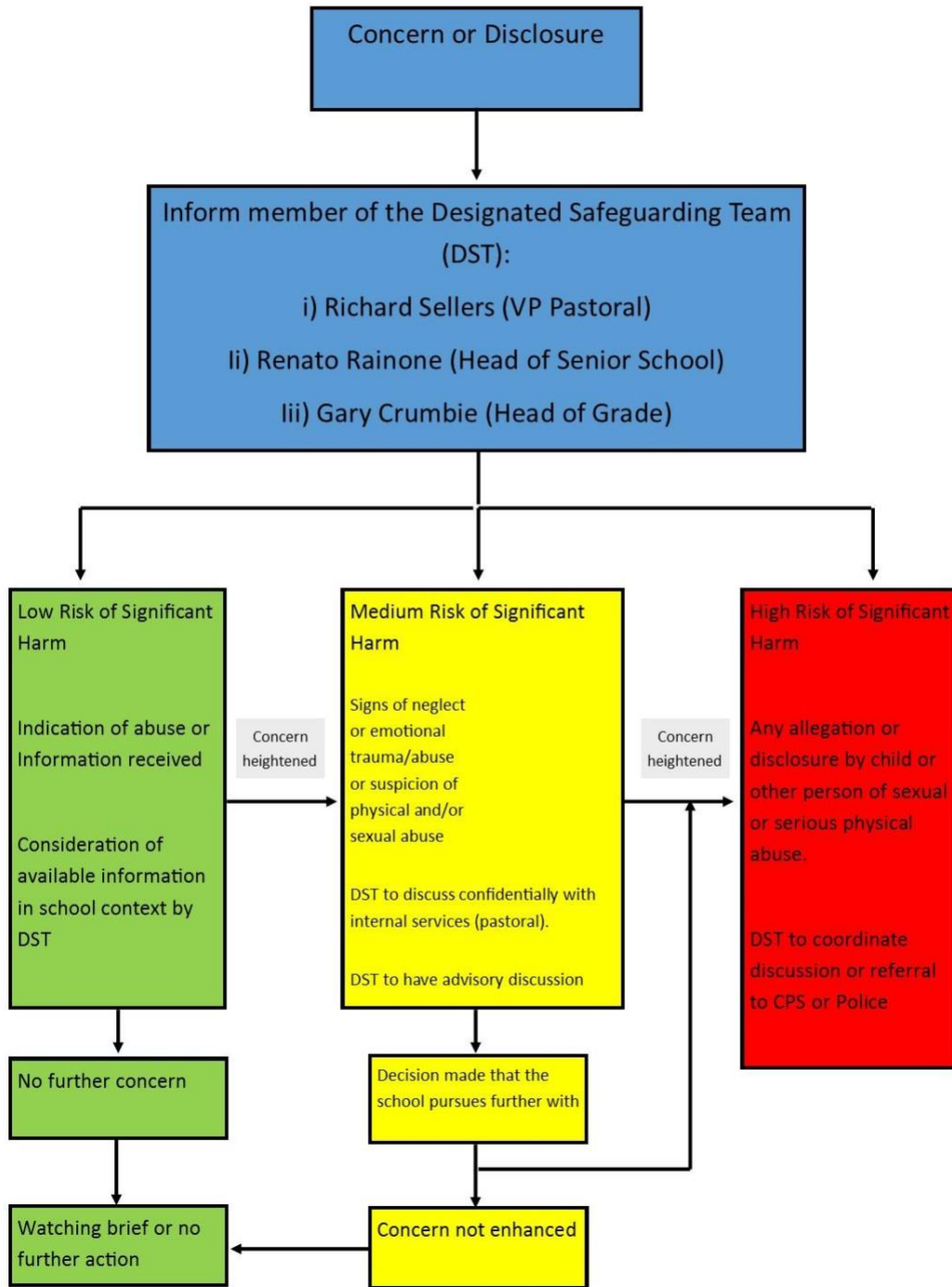
- i. Initial Record of Concern - The adult who has suspicions of a student being abused by another child, or is approached directly by a student/s about being abused, completes a written statement, and handed to the DST. Head of Grade should be informed.
- ii. Meeting with Victim/s – The DST and/or Head of Grade will meet with the victim directly. In the case of more than one victim, children will be interviewed individually and a summary of what was learned from investigations will be made by the Vice Principal (Pastoral) on CPOMS.
- iii. Meeting with Bystanders - The DST and/or Head of Grade will communicate with possible witnesses individually to the abuse that has occurred, and make notes to contribute to records on CPOMS.
- iv. Meeting with Accused Student/s – The DST or Principal will communicate with the student 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 with individually. Notes from this meeting will be recorded on CPOMS coordinated by the DST.
- v. Consultation - Consultation and agreement between the High School Principal, and DST.

- vi. Parents of Accused Student/s Contacted - If abuse by student/s proves to be beyond doubt, the student/s are collected from wherever they are on the school campus and asked to bring their bags to the school office. The parents/caregivers of the student/s accused of abuse towards another student/s will be telephoned to attend a meeting with the High School Principal and/or DST before being asked to take their child/children home for the rest of the day. An offer of counseling for their child will be made.
- vii. Parents of Victims Contacted - Parents/Caregivers of the student/s who were abused will be contacted by telephone by the High School Principal or DST 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 and an offer of counseling for their child made.
- viii. Action - The High School Principal will be committed to taking action and will inform the CEO of proportionate responses in accordance with the schools behavior for learning policy. In extreme cases, expulsions will be considered. Further consequences including an apology letter to victim/s and exclusion from upcoming events will be considered.
- ix. Communication with Child Protection Agency - The High School Principal and/or DST may report the matter to Child Protection Service Helpline at 1800 777 0000 (office hours) or the police after careful consideration of seriousness of offense is given. Parents of student victims will be made aware of their right to do this also.

Please note that incidents of 'bullying' are defined and resolved according to our Behaviour for Learning Policy.

6.4 Child Protection Process Chart

**Child Protection Process at SJI International**



## 7. Managing Disclosure

The disclosure of child abuse by a child to an adult is likely to be one of the hardest conversations that all parties will face. It is essential that we show empathy and professionalism in our approach to managing such conversations, mindful that what is said and what is recorded could influence criminal proceedings at a later date. The following professional guidelines protect both the child and the person who is receiving the disclosure:

- i. **No Promise Of Confidentiality** - Staff should never give students or adults an absolute guarantee of confidentiality but **must** ensure that the information is disclosed only to the people who need to know.
- ii. **Listen Without Judgment** - Listen, allow the pupil to finish without directly questioning, leading or stopping them. On no account should a pupil be asked to demonstrate the abuse. Let them tell you what they want to and no more. They may need to disclose to a social worker, police officer or other specialist later and too much detail now may interfere with later investigation.
- iii. **Take Notes** - Write down notes, including date and time of the interview and sign the notes. Record as much as you can remember, as soon as possible (preferably immediately) afterwards, using the pupils own words and pass to the designated child protection teacher for the school.
- iv. **Empathy** - Remember that it may be very traumatic for a pupil to recall and describe events.
- v. **Next Steps** - When the pupil has finished, make sure they feel secure and explain what you are going to do next.
- vi. **Professional** - stay calm and convey this through word and action; reassure the child or young person that you are taking what they have to say seriously.

## 8. Record Keeping (CPOMS)

All staff must record any safeguarding concerns on CPOMS immediately. All prior notes should be attached to the CPOMS file, information recorded must be factual. The DST will ensure that the correct categories are logged and record 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 **DST** on CPOMS.

### 8.1 Guidance :

- a) Record notes of any concerns, giving the issues, dates etc, but be discrete whilst interviewing the child - they may find note taking at the time disconcerting.
- b) Keep all records 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) Keep a record of any subsequent events and log it on CPOMS.

## 9. Safer Recruitment

The safe recruitment of staff at SJI International is essential to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in our care. The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is recognised 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 a central record of recruitment and vetting checks. Held and maintained by HR.
- 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 Ministry of Education.

### 9.1 Recruitment Procedure

#### i. Advertising a Post

To ensure equality of opportunity, the school will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible, normally this will entail an external advertisement. However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient qualified internal candidates or where staff are at risk of redundancy, an internal advertisement may be considered appropriate.

Note - In support of the Singapore Fair Consideration Framework, from 1 August 2014, firms submitting Employment Pass (EP) applications (including for EP holders who are changing employers) are required to advertise their job vacancies on the Jobs Bank. The job advertisement must be open to Singaporeans, comply with the Tripartite Guidelines on Fair Employment Practices, and run for or at least 14 calendar days. Firms that submit

EP applications prior to the close of the 14 day advertising period will not be able to proceed with their EP applications. After the advertising period, the firm can hire the most qualified candidate, regardless of nationality.

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

*'SJJ 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.'*

ii. 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 and MUST complete and sign an 'Information and Declaration Form'
- 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 and other professional regulatory bodies (advice of this kind is given in 'Guidelines for making applications'). Applicants sign a Declaration Form to this effect on submission of their application.
- Where possible, references will be taken up before the selection stage, so that any discrepancies can be probed during the selection stage. The only exception to this is where candidates have indicated on their application forms that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted. In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after interview and prior to any offer of employment being made.
- References will be sought directly from the referee one of whom must be the Principal of the current or last school.
- References or testimonials provided by the candidate will not be accepted. The school 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 telephone or e-mail in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges.
- 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.

iii. 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 vetting – a complete and full vetting procedure on all teaching staff if required (where possible), which includes criminal/police or equivalent background checks for all countries inhabited.
- Verification of the candidate’s medical fitness/health
- Verification of academic qualifications

iv. Induction and Training

All staff who are new to the school will receive induction training that will include 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 refresher training on Child Protection every year.

## 10. Sharing a concern about Staff (Whistleblowing)

Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant agencies. Although this can be difficult this is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

Staff may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express their concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues, or may fear subsequent harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or young person continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember it is often the most vulnerable children or young person who are targeted. These children need staff to safeguard their welfare in good faith.

*‘Don’t think what if I’m wrong - think what if I’m right’*

a) Reasons for sharing a concern

- Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behavior.
- To prevent the problem worsening or widening.
- To protect or reduce risks to others.

- To prevent becoming implicated yourself.

b) What stops people from sharing a concern

- Fear of starting a chain of events which spirals out of control.
- Disrupting the work or project.
- Fear of getting it wrong.
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers.
- Fear of not being believed.

c) How to raise a concern

Staff should:

- Voice concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as they can. The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner action can be taken.
- Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning and why, ensuring they are acting in good faith and not with malicious intent.
- Approach their immediate manager, Designated Safeguarding Team (Richard Sellers, Renato Rainone, Gary Crumbie, Laura Heyworth), Principal or CEO.
- Inform the Senior Leadership team (Usually Principal or the DST) if an allegation of improper conduct is made to them.
- Make sure they get a satisfactory response from those who they have reported it to.
- Ideally, put their concerns in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places wherever they can.
- A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern.

d) What happens next? (See also section 5.2)

- Staff should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries
- The school has a responsibility to protect staff from subsequent harassment or victimisation.
- No action will be taken against staff if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith
- Malicious allegations may be considered as a disciplinary offence

e) Self-reporting

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 their line manager so professional 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.



## 11. Resources/Further Information

### Singapore Authority/Contacts

Child Protection and Welfare Service  
SLF Podium #01-01 to #01-09 512A  
Thomson Road Singapore 298137

Child Protection and Welfare Helpline: 1800-777 0000 (wef from 1 August 2009) (Monday to Friday, 8.30am-5pm and Saturday, 8.30am-1pm)

Or the Police Divisional HQ or the nearest Neighbourhood Police Post

### Singapore Resources

- **Protecting Children in Singapore** - published by the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) (2005).
- Amendments to the **Children and Young Persons Act** (2011)
- **National Standards for Protection of Children** – Ministry of Community and Sports Child Protection and Welfare Services (2014)
- **Love our Children: Prevent Child Abuse** - Child Protection and Welfare Service (2002)
- The **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** | UNICEF UK  
[www.unicef.org.uk/UNICEFs-Work/Our-mission/UN-Convention/](http://www.unicef.org.uk/UNICEFs-Work/Our-mission/UN-Convention/)

### International

- **UNICEF CEE/CIS** - Child protection – Reference **Guide on ...**  
[www.unicef.org/ceecis/protection\\_4440.html](http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/protection_4440.html)
- **The child protection system in England | NSPCC**  
[www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/.../england/cps-england\\_wda91441.html](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/.../england/cps-england_wda91441.html)
- **Australian child protection legislation** - Child Family ...  
[www.aifs.gov.au/cfca/pubs/factsheets/a145620/index.html](http://www.aifs.gov.au/cfca/pubs/factsheets/a145620/index.html)
- **Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education**  
<https://www.education.gov.uk/.../Final%206836-Safeguard.Chd%20bkm>