

The Anglo-American School of Moscow

Child Protection Handbook



Respect Love Learning Contribute

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THIS DOCUMENT IS INTENDED TO SUPPLEMENT THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND ESTABLISHED PROTOCOLS AS OUTLINED IN OUR BOARD AND DIVISIONAL HANDBOOKS. SEE CHILD PROTECTION APPENDIX.

The Child Protection Handbook is aligned to and intended to supplement the School Board Policy Manual and the divisional handbooks.

Elementary School Family Handbook

- Respecting and Protecting Myself page 8
- Respecting and Protecting Others page 9
- Digital Citizenship page 10

Middle School Handbook

- Conduct and Behavior pages 26-27
- Guardian Policy pages 23-24
- Harassment Policy pages 27-29

High School Handbook

- Core Values (students' best interests, safe environment) section 1.2
- Vision of an AAS Student (healthy lifestyle) section 1.4
- Guardianship Policy (as pertains to neglect) section 4.14
- BYOD Digital Citizenship subsection (internet safety) section 4.16
- Digital Citizenship Agreement (including reference to law enforcement agencies) section 4.17
- Harassment Policy section 4.18
- Fighting (Physical violence will not be tolerated) section 4.22

Board Policies

- Teaching about Sensitive Issues Policy section 2.43
- Guardianship Policy section 7.25
- Child Protection Policy and Procedures section 7.8

School Board Policy Manual*

7.80 Child Protection Policy and Procedures

1. The Board considers the protection and safeguarding of children in the school as its highest priority.
2. The School shall have a Child Protection Policy and procedures that address child abuse in all of its potential forms (including physical and/or emotional abuse or neglect, sexual abuse and peer-to-peer abuse) and focus on ensuring a child-safe environment, training staff, vetting potential staff members and guests, creating awareness in the community and empowering students to protect themselves.
3. The Director shall ensure that every member of staff at the school understands their responsibility for contributing to the safety and well-being of students at the school and in all school-related settings. This includes the following:
 - a) setting out procedures for suspected cases of child abuse or neglect,
 - b) creating a plan of action to assist the child and family,
 - c) reporting identified cases of abuse or neglect to relevant school authorities,
 - d) identifying services the counseling staff shall be expected to provide, and
 - e) ensuring that all stakeholders are aware of where they can access our Child Protection Policy and procedures.
4. The Director shall assure that the Child Protection Policy and procedures are followed and implemented consistently throughout the school including appropriate structures for both prevention and intervention.
5. The Child Protection Policy and procedures shall be submitted to the Board for approval annually and kept under review by the Director.
6. The Child Protection Policy and procedures shall be made available on the school's website and other efforts shall be made to ensure that all members of the community are aware of the provisions.

Adopted: May 2016
 * Revised: May 2019

Child Protection Handbook

SCHOOLS NEED TO ENSURE THAT ALL CHILDREN IN THEIR CARE ARE PROVIDED A SAFE, SECURE AND NURTURING ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH TO GROW AND DEVELOP, BOTH IN AND OUT OF SCHOOL.

Child well being is essential to realizing academic and holistic success. Child abuse and neglect are significant issues across the world. Child abuse and neglect are violations of a child's human rights and are impediments to the child's education as well as to their healthy development. The Anglo-American School of Moscow(AAS) endorses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which our host country, Russia, is a signatory.

Schools should fill an important role in society as protectors of children. Schools need to ensure that all children in their care are provided a safe, secure and nurturing environment in which to grow and develop, both in and out of school. Educators and school staff, having the opportunity to observe and interact with children over time, are in a unique position to recognize children who are in need of help and protection. As such, educators and school staff have an obligation to identify children who are in need of aid and protection and to ensure that the child and family make use of the services needed

to remedy any situation that constitutes child abuse or neglect.

All staff employed at The Anglo-American School of Moscow must report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect whenever the staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered, is suffering or might suffer abuse or neglect. Reporting and follow up of all suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect will proceed in accordance with the AAS child protection policy. Furthermore, cases of suspected child abuse or neglect may be reported to the appropriate employer, to the respective embassy in Moscow, to the appropriate child protection agency in the home country, and/or to local authorities.

AAS believes that a child's welfare is paramount. Every child has a right to be safeguarded from harm and to have their welfare safeguarded. AAS seeks to be a safe haven for students who may be experiencing abuse or neglect in any aspect of their lives. As such, AAS will distribute this policy every year to all parents and new hires, will highlight this policy annually to students, will provide regular training for all staff, and will make every effort to use appropriate diligence hiring practices to ensure the safety of children. In the case of a staff member reported as an alleged offender, AAS will conduct a full investigation following a carefully designed course of due process, keeping the safety of the child at the highest priority.



How are abuse and neglect defined?

Definitions of abuse are complex and culturally based, influencing child-rearing behaviors, gender and role responsibilities and expectations. The primary determination of abuse is that it is dependent on some form of a relationship that is used to meet the need of the more powerful person, either a member of the family, a staff member, or a friend. Research guides much of the definitions that are based in understanding the impact of certain behaviors. Neglect is failure to provide for a child's basic needs.

Physical abuse may involve...

- Hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or other wise causing physical harm to a child
- Creating a substantial risk of physical harm to a child's bodily functioning
- Committing acts that are cruel or inhumane regardless of observable injury, such as implementing extreme discipline which demonstrates a disregard of a child's pain and/or mental suffering
- Engaging in actions or omissions resulting in injury or creating a substantial risk to the physical or mental health or development of a child
- Fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child
- Failing to take reasonable steps to prevent the aforementioned occurrences.

Possible indicators of physical abuse include...

- Unexplained bruises, welts, lacerations, abrasions, or fractures on any part of the body
- Bruises of different ages (various colors)
- Injuries reflecting the specific shape of an object (electric cord, belt, buckle, table tennis paddle, hand)
- The regular appearance of injuries after absence or vacation
- Unexplained burns, especially to soles, palms, back, or buttocks
- Burns with a pattern from an electric burner, iron, or cigarette
- Rope burns to extremities
- Injuries inconsistent with information offered by the child

Emotional Abuse is...

a pattern of actions, such as inattention to a child's emotional needs, failure to provide psychological care, or permitting the child to use alcohol or other drugs

Specific examples may include...

- verbal humiliation
- refusing to acknowledge presence of child
- invasion of privacy for no specific reason
- violent threats, etc.

Can include grooming for non-sexual purposes such as radicalization.

Neglect may be...

- **Physical** - failure to provide necessary food or shelter, or lack of appropriate supervision (this would include failure to provide proper adult guardianship, such as leaving children unsupervised at home for any extended period of time)
- **Medical** - failure to provide necessary medical or mental health treatment

Possible indicators of neglect include...

- Child is unwashed or hungry
- Parents are uninterested in child's academic performance
- Parents do not respond to repeated communications from the school
- Child does not want to go home
- Both parents or legal guardian are absent from Moscow for any period of 24 hours or greater without notifying school as per AAS policy
- Parents cannot be reached in the case of an emergency

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is committing or allowing any sexual offense against a child to be committed. This includes intentionally touching either directly or through clothing, the genitals, anus, or breasts of a child for reasons other than hygiene or child care purposes.

Sexual abuse has some different characteristics of child abuse that warrant special attention. While physical abuse is often the result of immediate stress and not usually planned, sexual abuse requires planning. The planning, referred to as grooming, often results in victims accepting the blame, responsibility, guilt and shame for the sexual behavior of the offender. Sexual abuse requires far more secrecy than other forms of child abuse, making it more difficult to identify and report.

Many victims, through the process of grooming, are taught that the sex is a form of love, and the children can present as happy and well-adjusted with no negative symptoms because of their perception of being loved.

Working with the sexual offender cannot be done by school counselors.

Possible indicators of sexual abuse include...

- Sexual knowledge, behavior or use of language not appropriate to age level
- Unusual interpersonal relationship patterns
- Venereal disease in a child of any age
- Evidence of physical trauma or bleeding to the oral, genital, or anus areas
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Refusing to change into physical education (PE) clothes or fear of bathrooms
- Child running away from home and not giving any specific complaints
- Not wanting to be alone with an individual
- Pregnancy, especially at a young age
- Extremely protective parenting



Peer on Peer Abuse

Children and young people may be harmful to one another in a number of ways, some of which may be classified as peer-on-peer abuse. AAS recognizes that prevention, education, awareness, early identification, and appropriate management are all important parts of a comprehensive whole-school approach to addressing harm between peers. Faculty and students will be trained to identify and report these instances. This includes training, assemblies and Health education.

First and foremost, abuse is abuse and will not be tolerated as an acceptable element in peer relationships or interactions. All allegations of peer-on-peer abuse will be taken seriously and investigated in a manner consistent with the policies and procedures of other safeguarding allegations, and existing school policies and procedures on Student Discipline, Bullying and Harassment, as per divisional handbooks. In the case of serious allegations, we may contact local authorities, embassies or parental employers depending on what is at the best interest of the child.

Peer-on-peer abuse is defined as

as any form of physical, sexual, emotional abuse or coercive control, exercised between children and within children's relationships, both intimate and non-intimate (Firmin, C. 2017).

All behavior takes place on a spectrum

(Sexual Behaviors Continuum Model, Hackett), and may or may not constitute abuse. In order to effectively manage peer-on-peer allegations, the following aspects of the behavior will be considered:

- Is the behavior a single episode or has it occurred over a period of time?
- Is the behavior problematic and concerning?
- Is the behavior deliberate and contrived?
- Does the behavior involve any overt elements of victimization or discrimination (related to race, gender, sexual orientation, physical, emotional, or intellectual vulnerability)?
- Does the behavior involve a power imbalance between the child/children involved?
- Does the behavior involve a misuse of power?

(Farrer & Co, 2017)

Peer-on-peer abuse can involve

but is not limited to, the following:

- Physical abuse
- Harmful sexual behavior (HSB) or sexual abuse
- Bullying
- Harassment
- Cyberbullying
- Initiation/Hazing

If the behavior is of a sexual nature, the Hackett Continuum of Sexual Behavior (Hackett, 2014) will be used to ascertain where the behavior lies on a continuum of normal and developmentally appropriate to highly abnormal and abusive, and inform the response process accordingly.

Normal	Inappropriate	Problematic	Abusive	Violent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmentally expected • Socially acceptable • Consensual, mutual, reciprocal • Shared decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single instances of inappropriate sexual behaviour • Socially acceptable behaviour within peer group • Context for behaviour may be inappropriate • Generally consensual and reciprocal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problematic and concerning behaviour • Developmentally unusual and socially unexpected • No overt elements of victimisation • Consent issues may be unclear • May lack reciprocity or equal power • May include levels of compulsivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victimising intent or outcome • Includes misuse of power • Coercion and force to ensure compliance • Intrusive • Informed consent lacking or not able to be freely given • May include elements of expressive violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physically violent sexual abuse • Highly intrusive • Instrumental violence which is psychologically and/or sexually arousing to the child responsible for the behaviour • Sadism

Sexual behaviours continuum model

All responses to safeguarding allegations found to have reasonable cause will:

- Include a thorough investigation of the concerns/allegations and the wider context in which they may have occurred,
- Inform parents of the investigation, unless doing so would result in significant risk to the child,
- Treat all children involved as being at potential risk, and ensure a response is in place for both the child who has allegedly experienced the abuse, and the child who has allegedly been responsible for it.

Take into account during the investigation:

- The abuse may indicate wider safeguarding concerns for any of the children involved.
- The potential complexity of peer-on-peer abuse and interplay between power, choice, and consent.
- The views of the child/children affected, including keeping them and their parents informed of developments where appropriate and safe to do so.

AAS reserves the right to become involved in student disciplinary action or a safeguarding response even if the behavior or action occurs outside of school hours or school events.

If the behavior or action does not occur within the context of the school program or activities (including trips and extracurricular activities), the school can exercise its right to respond if the off-campus student misconduct contributes to a hostile environment at school, either for an individual or group. Students often experience the continuing effects of off-campus misconduct while at school, sometimes through the use of digital media, and it is important for the school to be able to respond as warranted.

A hostile environment can include

any situation in which there is misconduct that limits, interferes with or denies educational benefits or opportunities. This can include compromised physical and emotional safety. Here are some considerations when deciding whether the threshold of a hostile environment has been met:

- The type, frequency, and duration of the misconduct;
- The identity of and relationship between the accused and the complainant(s)
- The number of individuals involved;
- The age and gender of the accused and the complainant(s);
- The location of the incident(s) and the context in which it occurred;
- The nature and severity of the misconduct;
- Whether the misconduct was physically, emotionally, or sexually threatening;
- Whether the misconduct was humiliating;
- The effect of the misconduct on the complainant's mental or emotional state;
- Whether the misconduct arose in the context of other discriminatory conduct;
- Whether the speech or misconduct deserves the protections of academic freedom;
- A single or isolated incident of sexual harassment may be severe enough to create a hostile environment.



What happens when a staff member has reasonable cause to believe?

The indicators of abuse and neglect will be used by staff as a guideline for reporting to the child protection officer or counselor, who will determine if the case needs further attention.

A report must be made when a staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse or neglect. All reports are confidential.



When suspected abuse or neglect is reported...

When there is cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, it is your responsibility to report their suspicions to the child protection officer or grade-level counselor, and the principal will be notified. It is the responsibility of the principal to inform the director of the suspected case of child abuse or neglect. All incidences of abuse or neglect should be reported as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours. We recognize that every child and every case is unique and must be dealt with appropriately.

Procedures for reporting suspected cases of child abuse or neglect

Step 1

Staff will discuss any child report or reasonable cause for suspicion of abuse or neglect with the child protection officer or grade-level counselor within 48 hours. The child protection officer or counselor will take initial steps to gather information regarding the reported incident and form a school-based response team, which will include the school nurse, child protection officer, counselor, psychologist, and other individuals as the principal sees fit. In all cases, follow-up activities will be conducted in a manner that ensures that information is documented factually and that strict confidentiality is maintained.

Designated response team members may include the following:

- Interview as necessary and document information relative to the case.
- Review the child's history in the school with school personnel.
- Report case status to the school director.
- Determine the course of follow-up actions.
- Protect confidentiality

Step 2

Based on what is learned, a plan of action will be developed to assist the child and family. We acknowledge that actions must be mindful of nationality and status in the country. This plan may include any of the following:

- In-class observations of the child by a member or members of the school response team.
- Discussions between the child and child protection officer or counselor in order to gain more information. For younger children these discussions may include drawing pictures and playing with dolls to gather more information.
- Meeting with the family to discuss the school's concerns.
- Referral of the student and family to external professional counseling.

In cases where outside authority is deemed necessary, one or more of the following may take place:

- Notification to the management of the sponsoring employer or the welfare office of the home-of-record.
- Consultation with the family's respective embassy or consulate.
- Consultation with local authorities

The Special Committee for Under-aged Children and Protection of their Rights +7(499)726-61-56
If evidence of mistreatment is sufficient, a criminal case may be initiated.

The Child Protection Service (Guardianship authorities) +7(495) 415-39-58
may also be contacted for consultation when gathering evidence of mistreatment.

If evidence of mistreatment is sufficient, a criminal case may be initiated

Step 3

After a reported and/or substantiated case of child abuse or neglect, the following will occur:

- The child protection officer or counselor will maintain contact with the child and family to provide support and guidance.
- The child protection officer or counselor will provide the child's teachers and the principal with ongoing support.
- The child protection officer or counselor will provide resource materials and strategies for teacher use.
- The child protection officer or counselor will maintain contact with the outside therapist to discuss the child's progress in school.

All case documentation will be kept in the child's school confidential records file. In addition, AAS will make every attempt to share this information to protect the child, and student records sent to schools will be flagged, letting the receiving school know there is a confidential file for the child.

Reporting

Please see flowchart on page 14.

Services Provided by the AAS Counseling Staff

School counselors are placed within a school to help provide students, parents, and school staff with short-term targeted interventions for their academic and personal/social problems. School counseling professionals will define annually the range of services to be provided by the school and the range of services to be referred to outside resources.

Typically handled by school counseling professionals:

- Student relationships with peers
- Parenting skills related to disciplining children at home
- Student-parent relationships
- Mental health issues such as depression, low self-esteem, grieving.

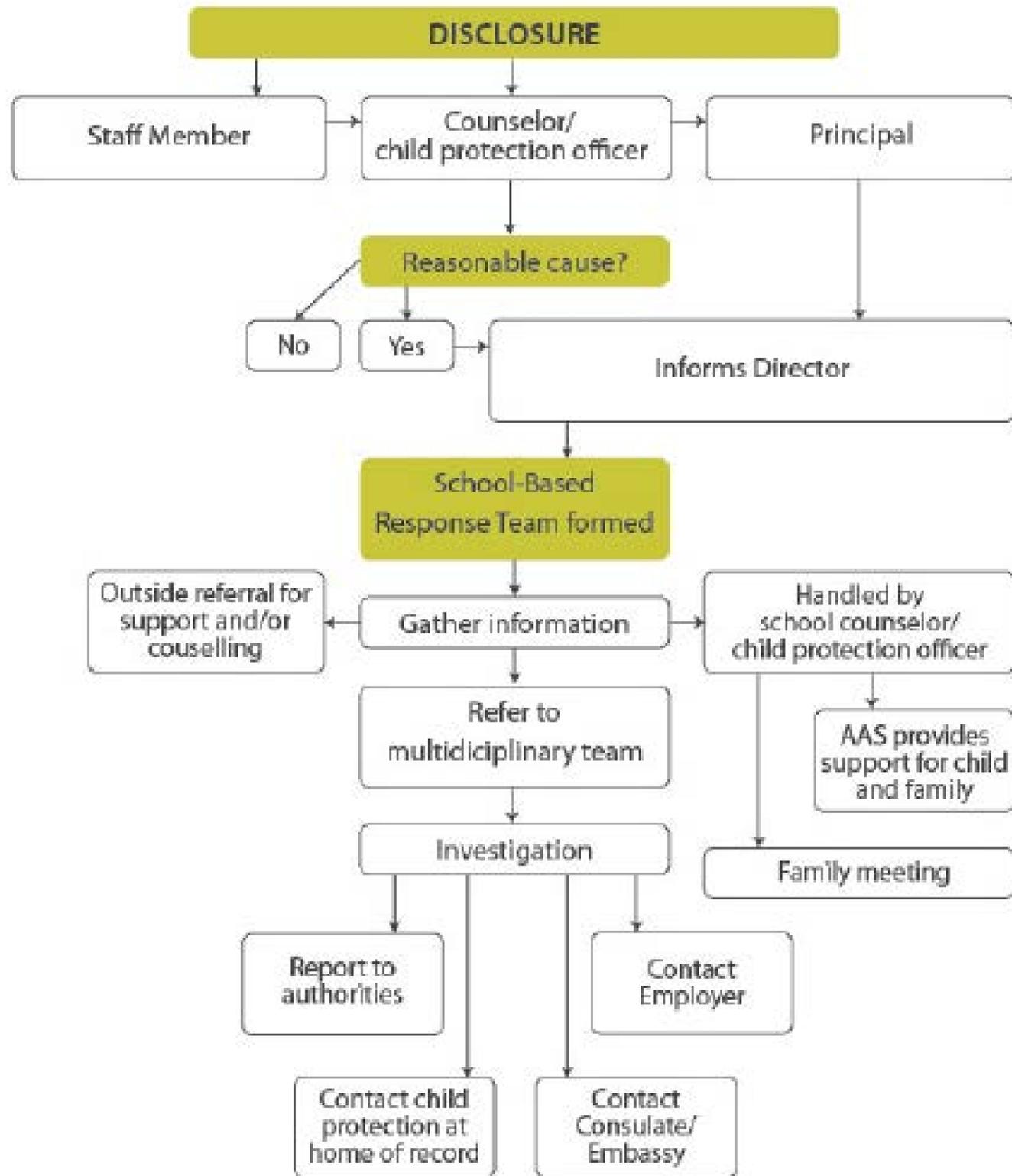
Issues referred to outside resources:

- Mental health issues such as depression, psychosis, dissociation, and suicide ideation.

Cases reported for investigation and outside resources:

- Severe and ongoing physical abuse or neglect
- Sexual abuse and incest.





For the Staff...

Guidelines

Every member of staff at the school is responsible for contributing to the safety and wellbeing of pupils at the school. All staff need to be aware of the information below and follow the guidelines contained there as part of that responsibility.

When a child reports abuse or there is reasonable cause to believe that abuse is occurring, the staff member must talk to the child's child protection officer or grade level counselor as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours. The child protection officer or counselor and reporting staff member will then meet with the division principal to take initial steps to gather information regarding the reported incident. The child protection officer or counselor and principal will form a school-based response team as needed to address the report. This response team will include the school nurse, counselor, psychologist, and other individuals as the principal sees fit. In all cases, follow-up will be conducted in a manner that ensures information is documented factually and that strict confidentiality is maintained. The following procedure will be used:

1. Interview staff members as necessary and document information relative to the case.
2. Consult with school personnel to review the child's history in the school.
3. Report status of case to school director.
4. Determine the course of follow-up actions.
5. At all steps along the way records will be taken and reporting will take place.

Recognizing when a child may be at risk

Abuse and neglect are forms of child maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

If any member of staff has significant concerns about the welfare of a child, they should immediately make them known to the child's child protection officer or grade level counselor at the school. These concerns may include:

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve a parent or care-taker:

- Hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
- Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or care-taker fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately causes illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the severe and persistent negative effects on a child's emotional development through persistent emotional maltreatment. It may involve:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or unvalued.
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

- Developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are above the child's developmental capability, as well as over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in age-appropriate social interaction.
- Seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another.
- Serious bullying (including Cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of child maltreatment, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving an act of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve:

- Physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g. rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.
- Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.



Signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect

Exhibiting these signs does not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, but they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be considered if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a highly noticeable degree.

Neglect

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation
- Untreated medical problems
- No social relationships
- Compulsive scavenging
- Destructive tendencies

Sexual Abuse

- Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age
- Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases
- Other extreme reactions, such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia
- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging
- Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Inability to concentrate
- Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a babysitter or child minder
- Starting to wet again, day or night/nightmares
- Become worried about clothing being removed
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect; overreacting to criticism

Physical Abuse

- Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns
- Improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries
- Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather
- Refusal to undress for gym
- Bald patches
- Chronic running away
- Fear of medical help or examination
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Fear of physical contact - shrinking back if touched
- Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive (such as a child being beaten every night to 'make him study')
- Fear of suspected abuser being contacted
- Emotional Abuse
- Physical, mental and emotional development lags
- Sudden speech disorders
- Continual self-deprecation ('I'm stupid, ugly, worthless, etc')
- Overreaction to mistakes
- Extreme fear of any new situation
- Inappropriate response to pain ('I deserve this')
- Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation)
- Extremes of passivity or aggression

Note: A child may be subjected to a combination of different kinds of abuse. It is also possible that a child may show no outward signs and hide what is happening from everyone.

Guidelines for listening and talking to children

If a child chooses to disclose, you SHOULD:

- Be accessible and receptive;
- Listen carefully and uncritically at the child's pace;
- Take what is said seriously;
- Reassure the child that they are right to tell;
- Tell the child that you must pass this information on;
- Make a careful record of what was said verbatim;
- Avoid leading the students with your questions;
- Use open questions "Tell me, describe to me, show me, explain to me."

You should NEVER:

- Take photographs or examine an injury;
- Investigate or probe aiming to prove or disprove possible abuse – never ask leading questions;
- Make promises to children about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets';
- Assume that someone else will take the necessary action;
- Jump to conclusions or react with shock, anger or horror;
- Speculate or accuse anybody;
- Confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved;
- Offer opinions about what is being said or about the persons allegedly involved;
- Forget to record what you have been told;
- Fail to pass the information on to the correct person;
- Ask a child to sign a written copy of the disclosure.

For children with communication difficulties or who use alternative/augmented communication systems, you will need to take extra care to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are identified and interpreted correctly, but concerns should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children.



Guidelines for record keeping

Well-kept records are essential in situations where it is suspected or believed that a child may be at risk from harm.

Records should:

- State who was present, time, date and place;
- Use the child's words wherever possible;
- Be factual/state exactly what was said;
- Differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation;
- Be written in ink and signed by the recorder;