

UWCSEA CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY CONTENTS PAGE

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Policy Statement

United World College South East Asia (UWCSEA) is committed to safeguarding and protecting students from harm. We believe that every child and young person, regardless of age, has at all times and in all situations a right to feel safe and protected.

UWCSEA's policy is designed to create and maintain a culture of safeguarding, which deters, prevents, detects and responds to any suspicion or evidence of harm and abuse of children or young people in our care.

UWCSEA strives to ensure whole-community awareness and alertness, good practice, timely assessment and positive intervention with concerns, to prevent or minimise harm or risk of harm to children and young people.

Policy Rationale

The United World College of South East Asia's Child Safeguarding Policy is aligned with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Singapore's Children and Young Persons Act (2011).

This policy is based on guidance and best practice drawn from a range of international sources such as;

- Keeping Children Safe International Child Safeguarding Standards 2024
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
- TES International Safeguarding Report 2025
- The International Task Force on Child Protection Safeguarding Governance Briefing 2025
- NQF Child Safe Culture Guide 2025

UWCSEA recognises that the welfare of the child is paramount and all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

UWCSEA expects all individuals and groups affiliated with the College community to act with integrity and to take responsibility for keeping students safe. This policy is applicable to all who have contact with the College community including staff, service and activity partners, volunteers, associated agencies, interns, contractors, parents, and visitors.

Definitions and Clarifications

Child or Young Person: Where the terms "child" or "young person" are used in this policy, they refer to all students under the College's care, regardless of age and inclusive of students aged over 18.

Where the reference to “child” or “young person” is made in the context of reports to, or consultations with, the National Anti-Violence Hotline or Singapore Child Protective Service (Ministry of Social and Family Development), the Singapore Children and Young Persons Act (2001) definitions apply, where a child is defined as below 14 years old and a young person is defined as between the ages of 14 years and 18 years.

Safeguarding: Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children’s health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes (Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2024).

Child Protection: Child Protection describes the policies and procedures specifically for those young people who are at risk of serious harm or have been seriously harmed. Child protection refers to the reactive measures we take to keep a student safe from serious abuse or neglect, including engaging with government or statutory agencies such as Police, National Anti-Violence Hotline, Child Protective Services.

Welfare/wellbeing: Welfare/wellbeing aims to ensure the physical and emotional wellbeing of all children and young people, providing an environment where all students can feel happy, involved and able to flourish and explore their potential. Welfare or wellbeing concerns involve any concern about a child or young person’s wellbeing, and may overlap or progress into safeguarding concerns. Welfare or wellbeing concerns are managed through the Vice Principals, Heads of Grades, Mentors, Advisors, Trusted Adults, with input from Counsellors, Designated DEIJ leads, Learning Support, EAL etc as necessary.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): A senior staff member trained in child protection and responsible for receiving, investigating, and responding to safeguarding concerns within UWCSEA. The responsibilities of the DSL are listed in Appendix 1.

Senior Safeguarding Lead (SSL): The Senior Safeguarding Lead is the person appointed to take lead responsibility for child protection and safeguarding issues at UWCSEA. The responsibilities of the SSL are linked in the Job Description in Appendix 1.

Safeguarding Governor (SG): The Safeguarding Governor is the Board-appointed person who liaises closely with College Management to ensure adequate oversight of this area. The responsibilities of the SG are listed in Appendix 1.

Categories of Abuse

Child abuse is a serious and complex problem that may occur in the lives of children and young people. In its most serious forms, abuse can result in developmental harm, injury or death to a child or young person.

We recognise the complex nature of abuse dynamics, harm, and risk of harm, and acknowledge that particular expertise is required to manage these issues. We have appointed Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) to manage concerns about harm and risk of harm to children and young people. DSLs work alongside key wellbeing staff such as counsellors, Heads of Grade, Learning Support Teams, Designated DEIJ Leads (DDSL) to case manage and support students.

For definitions of Abuse and Safeguarding Concerns, please refer to Appendix 2

The College encourages all staff to be able to recognise when a child or young person may need protection, to use professional curiosity to explore any concerns, and to report any concern to the College's Designated Safeguarding Leads who possess the knowledge and skills to appropriately investigate, assess and manage concerns.

Children and young people who have been subjected to harm or risk of harm exhibit a broad range of responses. The type and extent of harm may not always be obvious or predictable.

See Appendix 2 for the definition and possible indicators of the following types of harm and risk of harm, including:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect
- Child on child abuse / Peer-on-peer abuse
- Radicalisation and Extremism
- Online Abuse
- Self Harm
- Risk-taking Behaviours
- Mental Health and Emotional Issues
- Other General Risk Factors

The explanations of harm and risk of harm outlined in Appendix 2 are guidelines only and are provided to assist general understanding. They are not specific to a particular jurisdiction or legislation.

We recognise that certain children may be more vulnerable to harm and are alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Has Special Educational Needs or Disabilities, mental health needs, physical health conditions, or other additional needs.
- Is showing signs of being drawn into risk-taking, anti-social, or criminal behaviour such as using alcohol or drugs, or going missing, or at risk of radicalisation.
- Is at risk of trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation, modern slavery or forced marriage.
- Has challenging family circumstances, e.g. adult mental health issues, domestic violence, drug and alcohol misuse, parental offending/has a family member in prison, or where the child or young person is a young carer.

- Is persistently absent from education, or parts of the College day.
- Has had experience of statutory care or private fostering.
- Is LGBTQIA+

UWCSEA Safeguarding Principles

The primary goal of any safeguarding procedure is to prevent and respond to children experiencing, or at risk of, abuse, neglect, violence, and exploitation. Safeguarding procedures focus on supporting the most vulnerable and high-risk children as well as other vulnerable children within the community, and are not intended to support all children with problems or to address systemic societal issues. The following principles underlie all safeguarding processes at UWCSEA.

Best Interests of the Child: The term “best interests of the child” refers to a student’s physical and emotional safety, as well as their right to positive development. At UWCSEA, the best interests of the child provide the basis for all decisions and actions taken with regard to safeguarding and pastoral care. We act consistently with Article 3 of the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child which states; “When adults who know a child or young person think about that person’s best interests, they should: think about what’s best for them in their day to day lives and make sure they are protected and cared for”.

Creating a safe and caring environment for children to thrive: UWCSEA recognises that safeguarding children and young people is the responsibility of all members of our community including staff, parents, students, volunteers, visitors, and partner organisations. Through this shared commitment, UWCSEA aims to create an environment where everyone feels safe and is able to share concerns related to issues within or outside of the College.

The College proactively works to prevent child abuse and neglect through building a culture of safeguarding where every member of our community plays a part in keeping children and young people safe. Examples (non-exhaustive) of the different ways we do this are:

- Students are supported to develop resilience, awareness and self-advocacy through our wellbeing programs, pastoral care, PSHCE, Digital Safety and Child Safe lessons.
- Staff are recruited using safer recruitment practices (e.g. background checks, references, safeguarding interview questions), regularly trained (annual refreshers and updates), reminded/updated on process, key topics and emerging issues of concern, and given clear reporting routes and methods. The *UWCSEA Staff Safeguarding Code of Conduct* clearly details College’ expectations of how adults should behave in their interactions with children and young people.
- DSLs are given additional training and supervision to support them in managing complex cases.
- There is close collaboration between DSLs, and key teams across the school to ensure holistic support for students. DSLs coordinate and direct communication with these teams through regular Welfare meetings (with Heads of Grade, Counsellors, Lead Nurse, Learning Support, Boarding, UAC as appropriate).

POL-086 Child Safeguarding Policy

Policy Owner|Contributor/s: Senior Safeguarding Lead

Approval Authority: Audit & Risk Management Committee, Education & Talent Committee & Board of Governors

Last reviewed on: 2 October 2025 **Effective from:** 2 October 2025 **Next Review:** 31 August 2026

- All entries to CPOMS automatically alert the relevant DSLs and counsellors for the student's grade level so that concerns can be logged and addressed promptly.
- For students in Boarding, both school DSLs and Boarding DSLs are alerted to all CPOMS updates to ensure continuity of care.
- Parents are informed about safeguarding through a variety of routes, e.g. in Admissions paperwork, meet the teacher nights, parent workshops and reminders through school communication channels about key topics or emerging areas of concern.
- Volunteers complete a safeguarding training briefing and agree to uphold safeguarding standards.
- Service providers share safeguarding documentation with the College and agree to our safeguarding parameters, designed to keep students safe.
- Visitors adhere to our visitor agreement and are briefed on our expectations.
- Students are educated through a K-12 Personal and Social Education (PSE) programme which integrates aspects of Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), and Safeguarding, to offer a comprehensive approach. PSE is also closely aligned with the Digital & Information Literacy Curriculum (DIL), which contains Digital Safety and Digital Wellbeing strands that acknowledge the ways in which relationships and protective behaviours extend to technology.

Confidentiality: We respect families' privacy and are committed to managing all matters involving concerns about harm and risk of harm in a sensitive, child-focused manner that is supportive and protects confidentiality as far as possible.

There are some limits to confidentiality in relation to ensuring the wellbeing and protection of children and young people. We may share information internally or externally, including with statutory agencies, law enforcement or emergency services, or a student's new school, in the best interests of a child or young person, and in accordance with UWCSEA policy, terms and conditions and Singapore law, in circumstances where a child or young person:

- Has been harmed or is at risk of harm to themselves
- Has been harmed or is at risk of being harmed by someone else

We are committed to managing safeguarding and child protection concerns according to the following confidentiality principles:

- Only requesting information from, and providing information to, UWCSEA staff or external professionals who are familiar with, and/or can assist and support the child or young person
- Providing referrals to, and liaising with, external professionals with the permission of a child or young person's parent, and in consultation with the child or young person where appropriate and possible. There may be exceptional circumstances where the College may provide contact or referral information, without seeking parental consent, if the School assesses that this is in the student's best interests.
- Maintaining confidential, securely stored records. Only those staff who are directly involved in managing the identified risk to a child, young person or the UWCSEA community, will have access to safeguarding information.

Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities throughout the College

Child Safeguarding is integrated into all facets of College operations in order to create a culture of awareness and vigilance. Child protection measures are included in processes such as strategic planning, budgeting, recruitment, trip management, curriculum development, staff performance management, procurement, partner agreements, risk management, and communications. As such, there are key roles with specific safeguarding responsibilities throughout the organisation. Details of these key roles and their safeguarding responsibilities can be found in *Appendix 1*.

Reporting and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

UWCSEA is committed to equipping all staff, volunteers and parents with the knowledge to report safeguarding concerns such that we may take appropriate action to keep a child or young person safe. The *Staff Safeguarding Code of Conduct* contains expectations of staff with regards to timely and appropriate reporting of any concern about the safety of a student.

Any concern that a student may be experiencing (or is at risk of experiencing) abuse, neglect, violence, and/or exploitation must be reported through the UWCSEA safeguarding reporting systems:

- Through the College's Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS)
- Directly to a Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Through the childsafeguarding@uwcsea.edu.sg email address (for parents or visitors)

The College has Standard Operating Procedures and Protocols that detail procedures for reporting, investigating and responding to safeguarding concerns regarding UWCSEA students, or managing concerns involving UWCSEA employees, volunteers, or other adults working with our students.

DSLs are case managers for all safeguarding cases (including any mental health and wellbeing concerns that result in risk to the student). Case managers are responsible for:

- Assessing risk
- Coordinating care and support with other key school teams, parents and (where relevant) external agencies,
- Recording and tracking information and case progress through CPOMS.
- Ensuring cases are followed up and closed when risk has reduced

Every division of the school has more than one DSL, so should any DSL be absent or unable to pick up or case manage a particular case, another DSL from the division can do so. DSLs are supported in case management by the Senior Safeguarding Lead (SSL) who quality assures assessment, actions, and record-keeping.

UWCSEA recognises that working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

Unless there is a valid reason (e.g. contacting home may increase risk of harm), parents are always seen as partners in supporting students and will be informed of concerns about their child's wellbeing or safety. If the source of harm is from the parents themselves, DSLs will assess if contact home is in the best interests of the child, with consideration given as to which parent to contact, when, and how to share concerns, in order to maximise protective outcomes for the student.

The College assesses all statutory child protection concerns in accordance with the Child Abuse Reporting Guide that applies only to children under the age of 18 years who have been allegedly harmed or are at risk of harm by a parent/caregiver or other household member.

We may assess that a report to the Child Protective Service is required when a child or young person:

- Has, or is suspected of having, a current, significant, non-accidental physical injury that is suspected to have been caused by a parent/caregiver.
- Is suspected of being at risk of significant physical harm due to a parent/carer using a form of physical discipline that often results in harm, acting in a dangerous way toward the child (including family violence) that is likely to cause significant injury, threatened to kill or cause significant injury to the child.
- Has been harmed or is at risk of harm due to neglect of parents/carers, including lack of a stable place to live, being left without adequate supervision, failing to thrive, requiring medical attention (including mental health care).
- Makes a disclosure or the school has reasons to suspect that the child has been or is at risk of sexual abuse by a parent/carer/other household member (and the parents are not protective) and the matter does not meet joint police/child protective service referral criteria.
- Exhibits problematic sexual behaviour and the parent/carer is not responding appropriately.
- Has been, or is suspected of having been, subjected to prolonged, or minimal but extreme, parent/carer behaviour that is psychologically and emotionally abusive, including hostility, rejection, degrading, terrorising, exploitative behaviours, and exposure to family violence and parent/carer mental health or substance abuse concerns.
- Has been, or is suspected of being, exposed to parent/carer mental health or drug or alcohol abuse that is impacting on the child's safety.
- Has been, or is suspected of being, exposed to family violence that is impacting on the child's safety.
- Is pregnant and under the age of 15 years and intra-familial abuse is suspected, or the family is not protective and supportive and the pregnant child is in danger.
- Is a danger to self or others, including serious self harm, attempted, threatened or planned suicide, alcohol or drug consumption, run away from home, violently injured or threatened to injure others, and the child's parent/carer is not protective.

Referral to Child Protective Services, MSF can be done through the online National Anti-Violence and Sexual Harassment Helpline (NAVH) Reporting Form, or through telephone consultation with NAVH, on 1800-777-0000.

When sexual abuse matters are reported to the Police and Child Protective Services (based on Child Abuse Reporting Guide criteria, especially if the perpetrator is a parent, caregiver, or household member and/or the parent/carer is not protective), the College will *not* contact the child or young

person's parents and will instead seek guidance from the Police and/or Child Protective Service regarding appropriate management.

Related Procedures and Practices

Safeguarding Risk Assessments

Staff undertake safeguarding risk assessment in relation to all UWCSEA events and activities involving children. A risk assessment takes into consideration the student group profile; the hazards/risks identified; the likelihood of the risk occurring; and the consequences of the risk. This information is used to determine the level of safeguarding measures that are necessary to make the event safe.

Record Keeping

All student safeguarding files are entered and stored on the College's Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS). Designated Safeguarding Leads are responsible for case management and record-keeping, ensuring all case documents are complete and factual. When entering case notes, staff should provide clear and factual reports of their observations or concerns and be careful to distinguish between facts and professional judgement

Case files pertaining to safeguarding allegations against UWCSEA staff, volunteers, or partner organisations will be kept on the CPOMS Staff Safe module. The Principals and Senior Safeguarding Lead are responsible for case management and record keeping.

Professional And Personal Conduct Of Staff

The College has a duty to ensure that professional behaviour applies to relationships between staff and children, and that all members of staff are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries. The *UWCSEA Safeguarding Code of Conduct* details College expectations of adult behaviour around children and young people. The *Protocols for Managing Safeguarding Allegations against a UWCSEA Adult* are followed if a staff member is believed to have breached the Safeguarding Code of Conduct.

Safe Behaviours Education

UWCSEA has a comprehensive Personal and Social Education (PSE) program from K1-12 that includes formal teaching and learning opportunities related to child protection such as bullying, personal safety, physical abuse, manipulation, grooming, online safety, healthy sexual behaviour, neglect and negligent behaviour, self-harm, and disclosing abuse.

Staff Safeguarding Training

The College will ensure that staff induction, education and training programs are a vital part of our commitment to safeguarding children and young people from abuse and neglect. The College has a scheduled programme of regular, systematic professional safeguarding training for safeguarding leads, school leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, and volunteers.

All new members of staff will receive an induction to Safeguarding, which will give an overview of

child abuse as well as explaining the systems for reporting concerns. In addition, all new staff at the College (including casual, part time and full time teaching and administrative staff) will be expected to complete online safeguarding training. Advanced child protection training will be provided for DSLs and counsellors.

Failure to complete any mandatory safeguarding training within four (4) weeks of employment commencement may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Disciplinary and Appeals Policy, unless there is a valid reason for non-compliance.

Safer Recruitment

The College applies best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. All prospective staff are required to undergo appropriate background screening checks before commencing employment. The College's approach to human resources practices that ensure child safety can be found in the *UWCSEA Recruitment and Selection Policy*.

Volunteers

We understand that some people otherwise unsuitable for working with children may use volunteering to gain access to children. Where a parent or other volunteer helps on a one-off basis, he/she will only work under the direct supervision of a member of staff, and at no time have one to one contact with children. All volunteers must complete the UWCSEA Basic Safeguarding e-learning module before having contact with students.

Digital Safety/Personal Data Protection

The College is committed to creating a safe digital learning community through the curriculum, professional development, auditing of systems, working with parents, and developing detailed policies. The IT Department is responsible for monitoring IT usage by both students and staff, and reporting any safeguarding concerns immediately to College Leadership or the College Safeguarding Lead.

UWCSEA has a *Data Protection Policy* that complies with the Personal Data Protection Act 2012 (PDPA), Singapore which governs the collection, use and disclosure of personal data, in a way that recognizes both the needs of individuals and organisations. Staff and children are expected to engage in safe and responsible use of digital communications and social media as per the *UWCSEA Email Protocol*; the *UWCSEA Instant Messaging Protocol*; and the *UWCSEA Taking, Storing and Sharing Digital Media Policy*.

Policy Review

It is the responsibility of the Senior Safeguarding Lead, the Head of College, and both Heads of Campus, to ensure this policy is fully implemented. This policy, and all of the related procedures and practices, will be reviewed and updated annually. The Head of College Will share it with the Board of Governors in accordance with the Board Charter.

POL-086 Child Safeguarding Policy

Policy Owner|Contributor/s: Senior Safeguarding Lead

Approval Authority: Audit & Risk Management Committee, Education & Talent Committee & Board of Governors

Last reviewed on: 2 October 2025 **Effective from:** 2 October 2025 **Next Review:** 31 August 2026

Contact Details

Senior Safeguarding Lead

Clare Lancaster childsafeguarding@gapps.uwcsea.edu.sg /
clarelancasteruwc@gapps.uwcsea.edu.sg

Heads of Campus\

East - Cathy Jones cjo@gapps.uwcsea.edu.sg

Dover - Cameron Hunter chu@gapps.uwcsea.edu.sg

Head of College

Nick Alchin - nal@gapps.uwcsea.edu.sg

Safeguarding Governor

Yukiko Izumi yukiko.izumi@gapps.uwcsea.edu.sg

Appendix 1: Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities in the College

Roles and Responsibilities
<p>SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Receives a regular report regarding the number and types of cases, as well as regarding the safeguarding policies and procedures that are in place ii. Enquires of the management with respect to the review of significant safeguarding cases iii. Ensures safeguarding audits are examined by ARC, and that ARC enquires after progress and actions taken against the safeguarding audit iv. Ensures that major cases are reported to the Board of Governors
<p>SENIOR SAFEGUARDING LEAD (SSL) See Job Description College Safeguarding Lead</p>
<p>DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Provides advice and support for staff on child welfare and safeguarding ii. Coordinates 'support team' following allegations or disclosures of abuse iii. Responds to disclosures of abuse iv. Case manages assessment and intervention plans v. Maintains records ensuring confidential storage and transfer of information as required vi. Manages the referral and support process vii. Keeps their line manager informed of all significant safeguarding matters viii. Raises matters of safeguarding matters generally ix. Supports the implementation of Singapore policies and procedures and liaising with Singapore Child Protection Services x. Supports the implementation of the PSE curriculum around safeguarding and Child protection
<p>COUNSELLORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Member of multidisciplinary support team ii. Provide counselling support and guidance following referral from the Designated Safeguarding Lead iii. Provides updates to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for students where there are safeguarding concerns iv. Offer advice and psycho-education where needed or anticipated v. Lead or advise on mental health initiatives across the College

COLLEGE CLINIC

- vi. Member of multidisciplinary support team
- vii. Provide medical assessment, treatment and support following referral from the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- viii. Provides updates to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for students where there are safeguarding concerns
- ix. Offer advice and education on wound care where needed

HEAD OF FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS

- i. Ensure due regard is given to building and facility design, layout, designation and use to ensure best practice in child safety and protection.
- ii. Develop and adhere to a CCTV policy that includes the appropriate use of CCTV in the investigation of alleged safeguarding incidents.
- iii. Implement and maintain a registration system for visitors that ensures visitors to the Campus are authorised and supervised by UWCSEA staff.
- iv. Report any safeguarding concerns immediately to the Director of Facilities and Operations who will follow the procedures listed in the SOP for Responding to Safeguarding concerns.
- v. Oversee risk management in the areas of safeguarding and student safety for overseas trips.
- vi. Ensure the College Clinics are suitably resourced and operated to ensure a high level of child safeguarding practice according to our policies and procedures.

CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER

- i. Ensures the College adheres to best practice with regards to safer recruitment and selection processes.
- ii. Supports School Leadership to investigate safeguarding allegations against staff.
- iii. Supports leadership to take disciplinary action if appropriate.
- iv. Ensure all staff and IECs who have direct or indirect contact with UWCSEA students, are
 - suitable to work with or around children
 - agree to abide by the UWCSEA Safeguarding Code of Conduct
 - have basic safeguarding awareness

CHIEF STRATEGY & ENGAGEMENT OFFICER

- i. Promote the visibility of safeguarding through inclusion in regular College communications, signage, websites, brochures, etc;
- ii. Overseeing the College Communications Policy and accompanying protocols, including guidelines for taking, sharing and storing digital images; and
- iii. Working with the Parents Associations and other parent volunteers to ensure they are fully aware of safeguarding requirements in the College.

DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY

- i. Providing IT Systems that support the operation of the College, including the provision of a safe and appropriate online environment for students to learn.
- ii. Supporting the provision of an appropriate e-safety curriculum to students and helping to monitor its effectiveness.
- iii. Ensuring that appropriate monitoring tools are in place for the College IT Systems so that inappropriate use of systems can be prevented and/or effectively investigated.
- iv. Developing and maintaining appropriate data security policies and practices to ensure only authorised and appropriate access to sensitive data.
- v. The Director of IT is also the College Data Protection Officer.

ALL STAFF

- I. All staff are expected to be committed to the wellbeing, care and protection of all children and young people in UWCSEA.
- II. All staff must abide by the Child Safeguarding Policy, College Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Code of Conduct
- III. All staff are expected to engage in College safeguarding training to support their awareness, knowledge and skills in identifying and responding appropriately to harm and risk of harm concerns.
- IV. All staff are required to report concerns about children and young people to Designated Safeguarding Lead staff, directly or through CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System).

Appendix 2: Definition and Indicators of Types of Harm

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is any physical injury to a child or young person that is:

- Non-accidental
- Suspicious of being non-accidental
- Resultant of, or suspicious of neglect
- Reasonably foreseeable and not prevented by a parent/carer/other adult

Signs or symptoms that may indicate physical abuse:

- Bruising, marks or injuries that are unexplained or where there is an inconsistent account of how the injury was sustained
- Burns or scalds
- Imprint marks, for example cane or belt marks
- Head injuries
- Fractures
- Bleeding in the eyes of a baby or very young child, indicating the possibility of shaking
- Signs of intoxication, indicating drugs or alcohol
- Fear of going home or parents being contacted for an explanation of the injury
- Fear of medical help
- Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance
- Violence or aggression towards others including bullying
- Depression
- Withdrawn behaviour
- Signs of Fabricated or Induced Illness
- Indications of the abuse in artwork or written work

Assessing a physical injury:

The DSL will lead assessment of actions required, involving the College Clinic where appropriate.

Assessment of any physical injury should consider:

- Type, location and shape of injury
- Whether the explanation for the injury is consistent with the injury sustained and the child's age and developmental stage
- The child's medical and social history.

Discipline:

In accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the College promotes non-physical discipline of children and young people. Any matter reported to the College that involves alleged physical discipline of a child or young person (including students over the age of 18 years old) in the College's care by a parent or caregiver will be assessed by the DSL. The College is committed to a child-centred approach and will work with families, providing internal support and external referrals as appropriate.

Sexual abuse

POL-086 Child Safeguarding Policy

Policy Owner|Contributor/s: Senior Safeguarding Lead

Approval Authority: Audit & Risk Management Committee, Education & Talent Committee & Board of Governors

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Sexual abuse is serious, complicated and often involves sophisticated dynamics that make detection difficult.

Sexual abuse includes:

- Commission of a sexual act with a child or young person
- Coercing or encouraging a child or young person to engage in sexual acts with or without others for the adult's gratification, including for the production of pornographic materials
- Exposing a child or young person to sexual acts, or material of a sexual nature, including printed and electronic material
- Grooming

Signs or symptoms that may indicate sexual abuse:

- Sexually explicit play or age- inappropriate sexual behaviour, including grooming of other children
- Displays of sexual language or knowledge that is age inappropriate
- Frequent or overt masturbation
- Regressive behaviour
- Unusual compliance
- Self-harm
- Persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains
- Eating disorders
- Drug and/or alcohol abuse
- Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness, bruising or other injuries, including sexually transmitted infections
- Injuries around the lower abdomen and upper thighs
- Enuresis, soiling, bedwetting
- Torn, stained or blood stained underclothing
- Reluctance to change clothes, for example with sport or swimming activities
- Lack of trust of a familiar or particular adult
- "Secrets" the child or young person says they can't tell anyone about
- Indications of the abuse in artwork or written work

Sexual abuse dynamics and "grooming" process:

Sexual abuse of children and young people may occur within or outside a family. The abuse may involve a perpetrator exploiting a situational opportunity, or it may involve a complex dynamic referred to as "grooming" where a perpetrator systematically manipulates the child or young person, significant people in the child or young person's life and the environment, in order to:

- gain access to the child or young person.
- gain the child or young person's compliance.
- prevent the child or young person disclosing the abuse and limit the possibility that any disclosure will be believed and acted on.

A perpetrator of sexual abuse may exhibit the following behaviours:

- Singling out a child or young person and/or their parents/caregivers/family for "special" attention, including giving gifts, providing favours, ingratiating themselves

- Persuading a child or young person that a special relationship exists
- Isolating a child or young person for the purposes of favouritism
- Allowing a child or young person to overstep rules
- Testing of physical boundaries – “accidental” touching, particularly in the course of play with young children.
- Using social media, gaming or other electronic platforms to form a relationship with a child or young person
- Attempting to convince the child or young person that their parents know about the sexual abuse and condone it
- Attempting to convince the child or young person that they (the perpetrator) are educating them in sexual matters and that the abuse is “normal”
- Attempting to convince the child that if they tell anyone about the abuse they will be taken away from their parents, that their parents/nobody will believe them, that their parents/family will abandon them, or that they (the child/young person) will get into trouble as the abuse will be seen as their fault
- Child sexual exploitation

Signs that a child or young person may be involved in a grooming process include:

- Being secretive, especially about their online activities
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Going to unusual places to meet friends
- Suddenly having new things such as phones, clothes or other “gifts” that they cannot or will not explain
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- Having access to drugs and alcohol

Harmful or Problematic Sexual Behaviours

Children and young people can display a range of sexual behaviours as they grow and develop. Sexual behaviours are considered potentially problematic if they indicate knowledge or experience that is not age appropriate. The primary concern with children and young people who exhibit problematic sexual behaviour is that they may have been exposed to sexual abuse. The College recognises the importance of identification and prompt assessment of any potential problematic sexual behaviours for the protection of all children and young people. Any concerns raised will be assessed by the College’s Designated Safeguarding Leads and referred to Singapore authorities as required.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse (also referred to as psychological abuse) is ill-treatment of a child or young person that diminishes their sense of self-worth. Emotional abuse is usually present with the other forms of abuse and it may also exist in isolation. It can be difficult to detect and the cumulative effect of persistent and severe emotional abuse may have a significant impact on a child or young person’s cognitive, social and emotional development.

Emotional abuse includes behaviour towards a child or young person that is:

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- Hostile, rejecting or degrading (for example, taunts)
- Terrorising (for example, threats or acts that induce fear)
- Actively isolating (for example, locking a child in a room for extended periods of time)
- Exploitative or corrupting (for example, teaching a child to steal)
- Denying emotional support, including withholding affection
- Involving subjection to family violence

Signs or symptoms that may indicate emotional abuse:

- Regression or delay in relation to developmental milestones
- Unresponsiveness to interaction with others
- Play that imitates violence and/or abusive language the child or young person has been subjected to
- Head banging or other self-injurious behaviours
- Bed wetting
- Sudden speech disorders, including selective mutism
- Fear of making mistakes
- Desensitisation to violence
- Engaging in drug or alcohol abuse
- Eating disorders
- Extreme anxiety and feelings of insecurity
- Feelings of hopelessness, misery and despair
- Indications of the abusive relationship in artwork or written work

Neglect

Neglect is ill-treatment of a child or young person that involves a failure to provide basic care to ensure the child or young person's wellbeing. Neglect can be difficult to detect and the cumulative effect of persistent and severe neglect may have significant impact on a child or young person's cognitive, social and emotional development.

Neglect of a child or young person includes:

- Inadequate supervision, considering age and development of the child or young person
- Inadequate physical shelter or a stable, safe place to stay
- Inadequate food, withholding of food, or nutritional needs not being met
- Inadequate hygiene
- Inadequate medical care, including mental health care

Signs or symptoms that may indicate neglect:

- Hunger
- Malnutrition
- Stealing food
- Underweight
- Poor hygiene
- Persistent fatigue
- Persistent illness

- Poor concentration
- Poor school attendance
- Demanding or attention-needing behaviour
- Failure to achieve developmental milestones
- Disclosures of being left unsupervised

Parental Absence/Temporary Guardianship

As a College, we expect parents to be physically present and available for their children, and in situations where parents are travelling out of Singapore, we require parents to nominate an adult temporary guardian for their children.

On occasions, parents forget or otherwise neglect to inform the College that they are travelling out of Singapore and will not be available to their child/ren. Sometimes the College becomes aware of these situations via a student directly, via a student's friends, another parent, or another school. We consider situations where children do not have physical access to their parents to present safeguarding risks. When we become aware of such situations, we attempt to contact parents to request that they complete the temporary guardianship form to inform us of the dates of travel, the temporary guardian and contact details, and the care circumstances for the child(ren) while the parents are away.

Persistent parental absence without informing the College may be considered an indicator of Neglect.

Child on Child Abuse

The College acknowledges the importance of recognising problematic peer dynamics and the value of prompt responses to concerns. The College acknowledges that concerning or problematic behaviour occurs along a spectrum and that different levels of behaviour require different management strategies. Behavioural concerns and bullying are addressed in the [Responding to Student Behaviours Protocol](#).

“Child-on-child abuse” (also known as “peer-on-peer abuse”) are terms that are used to describe behaviour that is more serious and requires safeguarding investigation and intervention. The College provides students with methods to report concerns including a semi-anonymous QR code.

Child-on-child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control exercised between children and young people and within their relationships, including intimate and non-intimate contexts.

This includes:

- Serious bullying (including bullying occurring online)
- Abuse in personal relationships between children
- Sexual harassment, sexual violence or sexual exploitation
- Physical abuse / violence
- Harmful sexual behaviour including sexting and youth-produced sexual imagery
- Initiation / hazing violence and rituals

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All children and young people involved in child-on-child abuse dynamics are considered to be at risk of harm.

We acknowledge the Contextual Safeguarding approach that recognises that children and young people are vulnerable to abuse in a range of social contexts, including neighbourhoods, schools and online environments. Consideration of these contexts can assist in prevention, identification, assessment and effective intervention to protect children and young people.

We also recognise that peer behaviour outside school is likely to impact peer behaviour inside school and more importantly, influence what behaviour is perceived to be acceptable across social contexts. We will consider intervening in any child-on-child abuse matter that is impacting, or has the potential to significantly impact, the College community, recognising that the peer relationship most often exists as a direct result of the College context.

Assessing child on child/ peer abuse concerns

Child-on-child abuse often indicates wider safeguarding concerns for a child or young person that may be linked to other things happening in their lives and in the spaces where they spend their time.

An assessment of these concerns should consider whether the behaviour:

- is socially acceptable/should be socially acceptable within the peer group.
- involves a single incident or has occurred over a period of time.
- involves elements of victimisation or discrimination (for example, in relation to race, gender, sexual orientation, neurodiversity, physical, emotional or intellectual vulnerability).
- involves elements of coercion and planning.
- involves a power imbalance.

The College recognises that the same behaviour exhibited by different children may be understood at different points on a spectrum, depending on the context. For example, an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery may be inappropriate in one situation and abusive in another, when produced as a result of coercion or used to manipulate the young person.

Some factors can increase a child or young person's vulnerability to child-on-child abuse. For example, a young person could become more vulnerable to abuse following the sharing of an inappropriate image, based on how peers perceived that young person following the incident. Peer group factors and dynamics also influence levels of vulnerability. For example, children who are socially isolated may be more vulnerable to child-on-child abuse.

Signs or symptoms that may indicate child on child abuse:

- Poor school attendance or decline in attendance
- Physical injuries
- Emotional and mental health issues
- Alcohol or substance use
- Behaviour that is not age appropriate
- Abusive behaviour towards others

Radicalisation and Extremism

The College practices a culture of care in which students learn and work in a safe environment, free from discrimination, prejudice and harm. It is important that all staff know how to recognise when a child or young person may be vulnerable to being, or start to become, radicalised.

We aim to provide a safe space in which to build students' resilience to extremist narratives by equipping them with the skills and knowledge to critically analyse political and social issues, weigh evidence, debate and make reasoned arguments.

Radicalisation is a process by which an individual or group adopts increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals and aspirations that reject or undermine the status quo or reject and/or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom of choice.

Anyone can be vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation, but children and young people are particularly vulnerable. As they grow and become more independent, it is not unusual for them to take risks, explore new things and push boundaries. The teenage years are often a time when young people will be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging, as well as looking for adventure and excitement. Extremist groups exploit this vulnerability and may claim to offer answers, identity and a sense of belonging.

Radicalisation may happen over a long period of time or may be triggered by a specific incident or news item and happen rapidly. Sometimes there are clear warning signs of radicalisation. In other cases the changes are less obvious.

Factors that may increase vulnerability to being recruited into an extremist cause include:

- Social exclusion or rejection by peers, family, social groups or faith
- Feeling persecuted
- Exposure to traumatic events, including as a victim or witness to race or hate crimes
- Exposure to extremist influences
- Underachievement
- Low self-esteem
- Poverty
- Conflict with family over lifestyle
- Confusion about cultural identity

Signs that may indicate radicalisation of a child or young person include:

- Expressing sympathy for extremist causes
- Glorifying violence, especially involving other faiths or cultures
- Making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies
- Possessing and/or sharing extremist literature
- Advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- Out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships
- Secretive behaviour
- Online searches for, or sharing of, extremist messages or social profiles
- Adopting/changing/displaying an online identity associated with an extremist cause

- Intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- Graffiti, art work or writing that displays a personal identification with extremist themes
- Joining, or attempting to join, an extremist organisation
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- Advocating violence towards others

Online abuse

The College acknowledges the significance and utility of digital technology in the lives of children and young people. Phones, computers and other devices are important tools for learning, communication and recreation.

We also recognise the potential for harm associated with digital technology and the ability for harm to be perpetrated across locations and jurisdictions. The source of such harm may be other children or young people or adults. Online platforms provide significant opportunities for predatory behaviour by people seeking to “groom” children and young people for the purposes of sexual and other exploitation.

Concerns involving online behaviour will be managed by the College in accordance with the ([Responding to Student Behaviours Protocol](#)), and guided by this policy. The E-safety Committees, chaired by the Heads of Digital Learning and attended by Designated Safeguarding Leads support with maintaining up to date knowledge of trends, risks and investigation options. The College’s Information Technology Staff support with filtering, monitoring and investigating concerns where appropriate.

The College recognises the four C’s of online risk:

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, and extremism.
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
- Conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and nonconsensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying, and
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

Particular forums for risk include online gaming platforms, social media platforms, online chat rooms, any app or web-based activity that permits direct communication between/among participants. The College acknowledges a growing risk posed from generative AI, for example in relation to deepfakes and chatbots.

Online abuse includes:

- Sending threatening or abusive text messages

- Creating and/or sharing embarrassing, intimate or abusive images or video recordings, including those created by artificial intelligence (AI)
- “Trolling” – sending menacing or upsetting messages on platforms such as social media networks, chat rooms or online gaming platforms
- Targeting a child or young person for exclusion from an online peer activity or friendship group.
- Shaming a child or young person online
- Setting up hate sites about a particular child or young person or group of children or young people
- Encouraging children or young people to self harm or suicide
- Creating, hijacking or stealing online identities and/or manipulating content to embarrass a child or young person or cause trouble using their identity
- “Sexting” – sending explicit messages
- Pressuring a child or young person to send sexual images or engage in sexual conversations
- Grooming for the purpose of preparing a child for in-person abuse
- Child sexual abuse online
- Online sexual abuse involves children and young people being persuaded or coerced to:
 - send or post sexually explicit images of themselves.
 - participate in sexual activities using a webcam or smartphone.
 - have sexual conversations by text or online.
 - Sextortion – pressuring a child using threats of releasing real or AI-generated images or video to extort money, further images, or to coerce the child into criminal behaviour

Vulnerability factors

Child/young person characteristics that may increase risk to online abuse include:

- Social isolation or marginalisation
 - Susceptibility to being manipulated
 - Feeling unsupported at home
 - Previous experience of victimisation or abuse
 - Naivety about the capabilities for manipulation inherent in online environments
- Other factors that may increase vulnerability to online abuse include:
- Inadequate supervision of children and young peoples’ interaction with digital platforms
 - Anonymity and a predator’s ability to manipulate online identities for the purposes of deceiving a child or young person and luring them into an abusive interaction
 - Any community or peer culture that encourages the disintegration of personal boundaries and encourages risk taking behaviours
 - Perceived safety from physical harm and lowered inhibitions associated with online recreational activity which increase the risk of disclosing personal information

Signs that a child or young person may be exposed to online abuse include:

- Feeling nervous or frightened about going to school or having contact with a peer group
- Anxiety when using devices or using social media
- Distress following online activities
- Unwillingness to discuss or share information about their online activity
- Extreme resistance to being separate from devices or online access

- Unexplained physical ailments such as headaches, stomach complaints or other anxiety related symptoms
- Withdrawal from peers and/or family
- Secrecy about online friends and contacts
- Difficulty sleeping
- Expression of suicidal ideation
- Self harming

Self harm

Self harm is harm that a child or young person inflicts on themselves and may include:

- Cutting
- Burning
- Bruising
- Biting
- Scratching
- Hair pulling
- Overdosing

The reasons that a child or young person may hurt themselves are not always easy to work out. Some children and young people will be able to articulate the reasons they self harm and others may have very limited insight into their actions.

Self harm can represent:

- A coping mechanism to manage emotional pain, anxiety or distress. For some children and young people, the physical pain of self harm can seem easier for them to deal with than confronting the emotional pain that is behind it.
- A way for a child or young person to punish themselves for something.
- A way for a child or young person to feel in control of some part of their life.
- When a child or young person self harms, they may experience relief from the emotions that underlie the self harming action. This relief is usually short lived and feelings of guilt and shame about the act of self harming often arise. In this way, the cycle of self harm is perpetuated.

While self harm is not often directly linked to suicidal ideation, the two can overlap. Recognising and promptly intervening at the first signs of self harm to assist the child or young person to develop insight into their behaviour and implement healthy, alternative coping strategies is therefore a priority.

A range of emotional states can be associated with self harm, including:

- Low self-confidence
- Loneliness
- Depression
- Sadness
- Anger
- Feeling a lack of control over one's life/specific areas of life

- Becoming withdrawn or isolated; spending increased time alone

Physical, emotional and behavioural indicators that may be present:

- Cuts, most commonly, serial cuts on arms, wrists, thighs
- Scratches
- Bald patches from pulling out hair or eyebrows
- Burns, scalds or friction burns
- Bruises
- Wearing clothing that uncharacteristically covers parts of the child/young person's body that they would not normally cover, e.g. long sleeves or long pants in the heat, in attempts to hide self harm marks.

Risk taking behaviours

The College acknowledges that as children and young people develop their understanding of the world and their place in it, they will often experiment with limits and boundaries that reflect a desire for independence and/or acceptance in a peer group. Some of these behaviours will entail risk, are often indicative of poor decision making and impulse control, and reflect the predictable challenges of growing up in an ever-changing world. We also acknowledge that risk taking behaviour may be an indication of underlying emotional or other difficulties a child or young person may be experiencing.

Examples of risk taking behaviours

- Alcohol use
- Vaping
- Drug use
- Promiscuity
- Sexting
- Dangerous social situations, for example, keeping company (including online) with adults or other young people involved in a risk taking culture
- Engaging in criminal behaviours, for example vandalism, theft, trespassing, breaking into private property.
- Engaging in other physically dangerous behaviour, for example, playing games with traffic or taking part in dangerous challenges (often circulated online) e.g. challenges involving fire, consumption of non-edible or dangerous substances, or physical risk such as hanging by the neck or jumping from height.

Addressing risk taking behaviours

We recognise the importance of identifying risk taking behaviours and working with parents to address them. Effective, early intervention and a consistent approach between the College and parents is essential to minimise risk of an isolated behaviour escalating into a problematic pattern of behaviour that represents higher risk to the child or young person.

Instances involving collective peer risk taking behaviours (for example, drinking alcohol or using drugs or other substances at parties) can be challenging to manage, particularly as they often occur outside of school. The Singapore jurisdiction views some risk taking behaviours seriously, and the

College is required to report certain matters to Singapore authorities.

We are committed to a child-centred approach and will work with families, providing internal support and external referrals as appropriate.

To effectively address and manage risk taking behaviours and protect all children and young people involved with the College, we expect parents to:

- Co-operate with the College in ensuring the protection and wellbeing of their children in accordance with the College's values, including not providing or allowing children and/or young people in their care to use vapes or drugs, or consume alcohol underage.
- Understand that risk taking behaviours that may occur outside of school almost always have an impact at school and/or within the College community.

Mental health and emotional issues

The College acknowledges that children and young people experience the world in their own unique way and cope with adversity, stress and the challenges of growing up differently. We are committed to our role in building community awareness of mental and emotional health issues affecting children and young people, with a view to early identification and intervention to effect best possible outcomes.

Mental and emotional health issues in children and young people may be triggered by situational stress or may be indicative of a more broad, underlying issue. There are many types of mental and emotional difficulties. Some of the more common issues that may arise for children and young people are:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Disordered eating/Eating disorders
- Self harm
- Thoughts of suicide
- Suicide behaviours
- Post traumatic stress responses

While each child or young person's experience of, and response to, situations is different, some children and young people are at increased risk of experiencing mental or emotional difficulties.

Factors that may increase vulnerability include:

- Familial history of mental health issues
- Drug or alcohol use
- Social isolation and/or exposure to child on child / peer abuse
- Exposure to abuse, violence or trauma
- Unstable or unsupportive family environment
- Low sense of self-worth
- Feeling pressure in relation to academic achievement
- Bereavement

All children and young people are different and it can be difficult to identify emotional pain as they

may keep things to themselves.

Some signs that a child or young person may be experiencing mental or emotional health issues are:

- Becoming withdrawn from family and friends
- Persistent low mood and unhappiness
- Tearfulness and irritability
- Worries that obstruct day-to-day functioning
- Loss of interest in activities they usually enjoy
- Difficulties with eating or sleeping
- Self harm

We recognise the importance of early identification and intervention in mental health or emotional issues. Communication and cooperation between school, parents and external professionals is key in supporting students with these issues. We are committed to a child-centred approach and will work with families, providing internal support and external referrals as appropriate.

The College welfare & wellbeing teams closely monitors students with mental health or emotional concerns, and support is provided in school through the Counselling teams on each campus.

The College offers a rolling programme of ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) and safeTALK (suicide alertness for everyone) to staff, parents and students (safeTALK only) to skill up the community in spotting the signs of, and intervening in, situations where thoughts of suicide are present.

Other general risk factors

Factors that may increase a child or young person's vulnerability to harm or risk of harm include:

- Previous exposure to physical, sexual, emotional abuse and/or neglect
- Exposure to domestic violence
- Drug and/or alcohol abuse in the home
- Mental illness in the home
- Parental separation/divorce
- Neurodiversity/Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Previous exposure to trauma
- Gender identity factors
- Social isolation or problematic peer relationships
- Other situational stress
- Cultural patterns, for example the use physical discipline, or young people consuming alcohol or engaging in risk taking behaviours

We recognise that children and young people who are experiencing, or have previously experienced any of these factors, and in particular, children who have neurodiversities or Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) may also:

- experience difficulty in discerning whether what they are experiencing is abusive or "normal".
- experience difficulty in communicating that they have been hurt or their fear of being hurt.

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- exhibit challenging behaviours that may inhibit communication and/or influence others' perceptions about any disclosure of harm and subsequent decisions about protective action.

Additionally, abuse dynamics usually involve some attempt by the perpetrator to prevent the child or young person from telling anyone about the abuse or seeking help including:

- Instilling fear in the child or young person that the abuse will get worse if they tell someone
- Instilling fear in the child or young person that they will not be believed, that the abuse is their fault and/or that the child or young person "deserved it"
- Instilling shame
- Instilling a belief that no one can help
- Instilling a belief in the child or young person that the abuse they are experiencing is "normal" and/or that others know about it and condone it