



Stafford International School

Child Protection Policy and Procedures

Section 1: Purpose of the policy

1. To reinforce the commitment of the school in safeguarding its students.
2. To ensure that the safety, care, protection and welfare of the child are imperative to practice and adopt in whatever we do.
3. To provide a protection mechanism to all children covered through the development initiatives of SIS.
4. To establish a standard code of conduct and standard procedures for all staff members at SIS to ensure that no harm or abuse is caused to any child.
5. To provide a mechanism to ensure all staff members of SIS are informed, empowered and self-equipped to ensure safety and protection of children.

Section 2: Key definitions

1. **Child:** The child is defined as a person up to the age of 18 years.
2. **Child Abuse:** Child abuse is defined as all forms of **physical abuse, emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect or negligent treatment, commercial or other exploitation of a child and includes any action that result in actual or potential harm to a child.** Child abuse may be a deliberate act or it may be failing to act to prevent harm. Child abuse consists of anything which individuals, institutions or processes do or fail to do, intentionally or unintentionally, which harms a child or damages their prospect of safe and healthy development.

Types of child abuse: Physical abuse, emotional/verbal abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, domestic abuse, peer on peer abuse.

That said, in 2019, NCPA published a Handbook on Child Protection in Sinhala and Tamil that contained a concise definition of child abuse drawn from the following WHO definitions in English:

“Child maltreatment is the abuse and neglect that occurs to children under 18 years of age. It includes all types of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligence and commercial or other exploitation, which results in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. Exposure to intimate partner violence is also sometimes included as a form of child maltreatment.

Maltreatment (including violent punishment) involves physical, sexual and psychological/emotional violence; and neglect of infants, children and adolescents by parents, caregivers and other authority figures, most often in the home but also in settings such as schools and orphanages”.

3. **Disclosure:** The process by which young people start to share their experience of abuse with others.
 - *Direct disclosure* - make specific verbal statements about what has happened to them.
 - *Indirect disclosure* – make ambiguous verbal statements which suggest something is wrong
 - *Behaviour* – displaying behaviour that signals something is wrong (may or may not be deliberate)
 - *Non verbally* – writing letters, drawing pictures, or trying to communicate their experiences in different ways
4. **Child Protection:** Child protection is the protection of children from any violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. Within the ambit of this policy, it would mean the measures, activities and safeguards that the Child Protection Team (CPT) would be taking to protect children from both intentional and unintentional harm.
5. **Staff Member:** The Staff members of CPT would include all employees on the pay-roll, part time or contractual duty within the school premises or on field duty / project visit or elsewhere.
6. **Child Protection Team (CPT):** A committee formed by the management to implement the policy and provide support in the awareness and monitoring process of the policy.

Section 3: Guiding principles

1. Non-discrimination, valuing and listening to children and treating all children with respect and dignity.
2. Best interests of the child are of prime importance and should guide all decisions made by SIS; commitment to protecting children with and for whom we work. However, Confidentiality in certain situations, cannot be guaranteed.
3. Meaningful participation of children to encourage them to share their views. CPT seeks to create an environment where children feel free to express themselves and participate in the classroom and other educational environments and opportunities as well as in decisions that affect their lives.
4. Any form of child abuse should not be taken lightly or tolerated.

Section 4: Code of conduct

Please refer to the SIS Staff Code of Conduct.

Section 5: Key responsibilities under the policy

Awareness → Recognise → Respond

- **Awareness:** ensure that you read and understand the child protection policy and are aware of all procedures and responsibilities on your part if an instance of abuse has been disclosed to you.
- **Recognise:** understand the different types of disclosure and be able to identify the problem be it through direct or indirect disclosure.
- **Respond:** Report to member of child protection team who will gather all information using the standard form for recording issues relating to child protection. Reporting must be immediate.

Section 6: Response of member of staff when issues are disclosed:

1. Be approachable

- Listen carefully, uncritically and at the child's pace
- Take what is said seriously
- Clarify essential information and note down verbatim, the child's account of incident in a non-judgemental manner.
- Do not ask any leading questions during the disclosure process.

2. Reassure

- Tell the child what will happen next
- Inform a member of CPT without delay

Section 7: Response of member of the CPT when issues are disclosed:

1. Child's name and date of birth
2. Date and time of the concern and the disclosure
3. Factual account of what happened, where and who was present using the child's own words
4. Any opinion / interpretation needs to be explained
5. Your response
6. Printed name and signature of person making the record and Job title of person making the record
7. Date and time of the record (Must be done IMMEDIATELY)

**Safeguarding form will be provided to all members of the CPT.*

Section 8: Allegation about staff/volunteers

If staff/volunteers have safeguarding concerns, or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including volunteers) posing a risk of harm to children, then: this should be referred to the head of section or principal. Where there are concerns/allegations about the head of section or principal then this should be referred to the board of directors.

