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VISION

To create an outstanding British international school which empowers all students to embrace learning, achieve their best, and promote their intellectual, emotional, social and physical wellbeing.

PEARLING SEASON INTERNATIONAL

Safeguarding Policy

To create a community of learning within a safe, secure and happy environment where our children are motivated, challenged and supported in all they do. Our passion for learning and teaching will inspire our students, as will our warmth, humanity and transparency. Student achievement will be limitless, and they will leave with the confidence and capability that will equip them for every facet of adult life as a global citizen.

MISSION

Policy Date:	October 2021
Revised:	Mr Clive Shepherd / Ahmed Al-Talib
Review Date:	June 2022
Person Responsible:	Ahmed Al-Talib

Document Revision Page

This page is used to record information about the changes (additions, modifications and deletions) that have been made to this document.

Revision Date	Section & Title	Page No.	Summary	Authors
October 2020	All	All	Reviewed and rewritten for appropriateness. Referral forms and case evaluation flowchart added.	Mrs Rebecca Cruickshank
September 2021	All	All	Safeguarding Team modified	Clive Shepherd, Ahmed Al-Talib, Umara Ali
June 2022	All	All	Sections reviewed, procedure charts created, COVID-19 procedures added.	Ahmed Al-Talib
August 2022	Section 5 – DSLs Section 11 – Early Help	Pages 6 & 11	DSL photos added Added peer on peer abuse and FGM statements (section 11. Early Help)	Lynsey Edment

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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 mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Keeping Children Safe in Education – DfE, 2021

The term 'children, student or pupil' includes everyone under the age of 18.

1. Introduction

At Pearling Season International School (PSI), we aim to provide a safe and happy environment with a high quality of care to all pupils. We value the contribution each child makes to the life of the school and take account of an individual's needs.

Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

The policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the following key Legislation, Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance, UK and Qatari Legislation:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020;
- Qatari Family Law No. (22) of 2006.

2. Policy Statement and Purpose

This policy sets out the framework to ensure the school fulfils its duty of care towards its pupils. PSI is a community and all those directly connected (staff, parents, families and pupils) have an essential role to play in making our community safe and secure.

PSI recognises its moral and statutory responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, with their best interests at the centre of our work. We are committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment. It is the duty of **everyone** to safeguard the pupils in our care.

The purpose of the Safeguarding Policy is to ensure every child who is a registered pupil at our school is safe and protected from harm. At PSI we recognise that effective safeguarding systems are those which:

- Put the child's needs first
- Provide children with a voice
- Promote identification of early help

There are **four main elements** to our Safeguarding Policy:

- Prevention (e.g., positive, supportive, safe school culture, curriculum and pastoral opportunities for children, safer recruitment procedures);
- Protection (by following the agreed procedures, ensuring all staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding concerns);
- Support (for all students, parents and staff, and where appropriate specific intervention for those who may be at risk of harm);
- Working with parents and other agencies (to ensure appropriate communications and actions are undertaken).

3. Terminology used in this Policy

Child includes everyone under the age of 18, or older if still an PSI student.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm.

Parent includes birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

Safeguarding refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes and promoting the welfare of children.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the schools, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

PSI recognises that there are multiple types of **abuse and neglect**. PSI draws its understanding of the terminology used to describe these from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020;

4. Our Ethos

The child's welfare is of paramount importance. Our schools will establish and maintain an ethos where pupils feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and are safe. Children at our school will be able to talk freely to any member of staff at our school if they are worried or concerned about something.

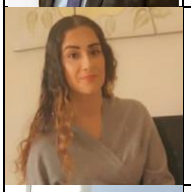
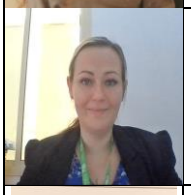
We work to build relationships with students by:

- Consulting with students
- Providing students with someone to talk to
- Providing a safe and inclusive learning environment
- Supporting learning in class
- Encouraging students to have positive relationships with peers
- Building good student/teacher relationships
- Developing knowledge and understanding of students' families and working in partnership with them to ensure the needs of our students are met

The School needs to be a safe, caring environment where we:

- Actively promote the self-esteem of the children.
- Have the child at the centre of our philosophy.
- Encourage independence, self-confidence and assertiveness in our students.
- Offer a curriculum which provides the opportunity to discuss emotions and relationships, through elements of the wider curriculum.
- Establish good links with parents and other professionals working with children in our school.
- Provide a curriculum where children can solve problems and are able to make decisions and choices.
- Respect each other regardless of gender, race, creed or colour.
- Have clear policies on health education, equal opportunities, behaviour and bullying.

5. Safeguarding and Designated Safeguarding Leads

Photo	Name	Role	Campus	DSL	Contact
	Ahmed Al-Talib	Vice Principal	Al Mansoura	Designated Safeguarding Lead	74778989
	Umara Ali	Primary Pastoral Leader	Al Mansoura	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	33871603
	Lynsey Edment	Head of Primary	Al Gharrafa	Designated Safeguarding Lead	33305680
	Zina Chekir	School Counsellor	Al Gharrafa	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	50317805

6. Safeguarding and Child Protection Core Group

The DSL will call together the Core Group, as appropriate, who will consider all, or any evidence gathered and decide on the action to be taken. The Core Group will consist of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, Principal and/or Head of School, Pastoral Leads, School Counselor.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will act as clerk to these meetings. All documentation will be held in locked central storage within the principal's office.

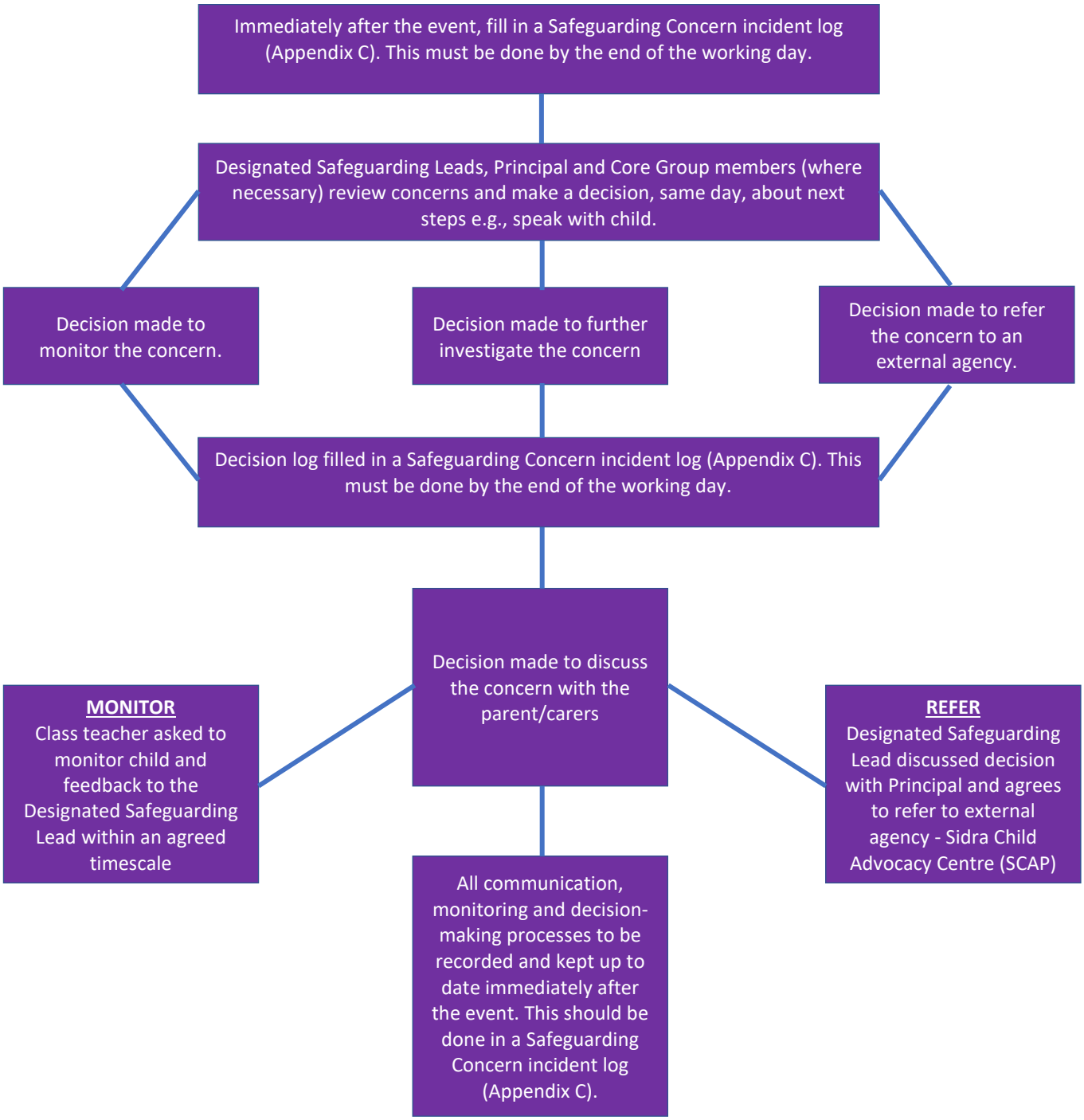
Where the Core Group decides to set up a sub-group to deal with a specific situation, this group might include Class Teacher/Subject Teacher as appropriate. Information gathered, and the agreed action plan will be shared with the relevant sub-group.

7. Reporting Procedures

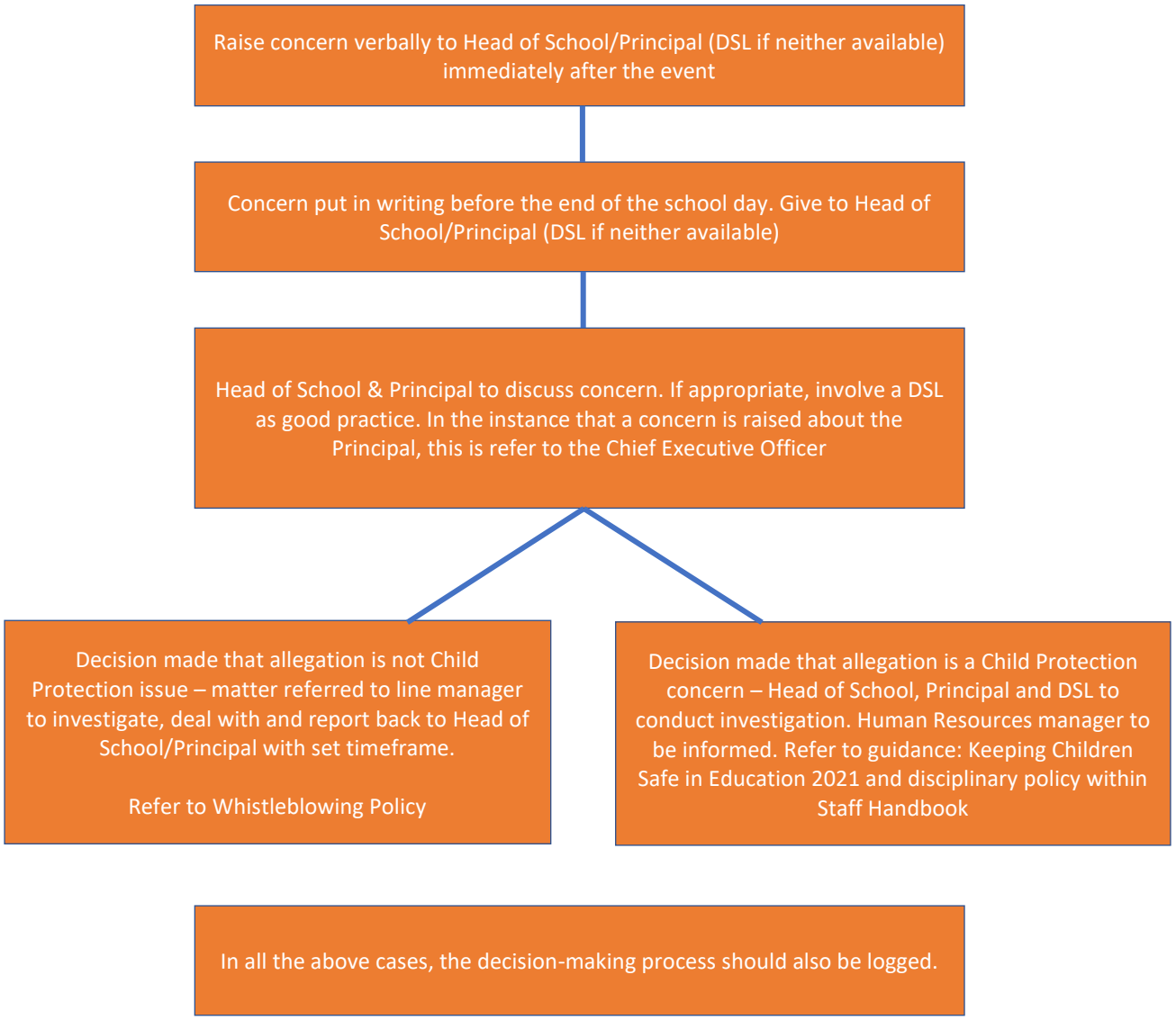
All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility and a duty of care to protect children and keep them safe, **following the 4R's will help to do this effectively**:

1 - **Recognise** unmet needs, abuse and harm	2 - **Respond** by alerting the DSL to any concerns
3 - **Record** any concerns and ensure these are kept up-to-date.	4 – **Refer** share information and refer to external agencies, as required, to safeguard and protect children

Procedure 7.1: Reporting concerns about a child



<u>Procedure 7.2:</u> Reporting concerns about a colleague



8. Confidentiality

Staff should not give undertakings of absolute secrecy.

An abused child or a person disclosing information about abuse is likely to be under severe emotional stress, and the staff member may be the only person whom the child or adult is prepared to trust. When information is offered in confidence, the member of staff will endeavour to reassure the child or adult, whilst explaining that the matter will be shared only with people who need to know about it in order to follow procedures aimed at safeguarding their welfare.

During your conversation with the pupil staff will:

- Allow them to speak freely
- Remain calm and collected – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting their listener
- Give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'this isn't your fault', 'you are doing the right thing in talking to me'
- Not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how hard this must be for the pupil
- Under no circumstances ask leading questions i.e. "Did you get that bruise because your Mum hit you?".
- Tell the pupil that in order to help them the member of staff must pass the information on.
- Do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comfort to a child that has been abused.
- Avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying such things as 'I do wish you'd told me when it all started' or 'I can't believe what I'm hearing' may be interpreted by the child that they have done something wrong.
- Tell the pupil what will happen next. The pupil may agree to go to see the DSL otherwise it is the duty of the member of staff to inform the DSL of what has been discussed. If the pupil does agree to go and see the DSL, the staff member should inform the DSL that the child will be coming to see them at some point.
- Report concern verbally to the DSL immediately after the event, even if the child has promised to do it themselves.
- Following the verbal referral to the DSL you must immediately complete a Safeguarding Concern incident log in Appendix 3.
- If you do not have access to Safeguarding Concern incident log you must make a written account which will be uploaded in the log at a later stage.
- The original written account must be handed to the DSL immediately who will keep it for reference and evidence purposes, should the referral need to be escalated.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

9.1 The Role of the Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

- To make all staff aware of the school's policy.
- To liaise with outside agencies such as counselors and psychologists.
- To liaise with other staff who offer pastoral care.
- To ensure that there is a format for the recording of incidents and that procedures are followed as well as records maintained.
- To make referrals and monitor these referrals afterwards.
- To write reports and record information as necessary.
- To attend child protection conferences.
- To raise staff awareness on an annual basis.
- To review, revise and maintain the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy within the School.

9.2 The Role of the Class/Subject/Form Teacher

During the assessment, teachers may be expected to provide information about:

- Attendance
- General manner in school – attendance, moods or mood swings, appearance, etc.
- Ability and performance in work
- Social development
- Attitudes towards adults
- Behaviour
- Self-confidence
- Physical ability
- Observations of the child at play
- Any strengths or weaknesses not mentioned above
- Known behaviour, interests or unusual routines outside school
- Parents attitudes towards school
- Engagement in the wider school community
- Any other relevant information

9.3 The Management of Suspected Abuse

The following categories form the criteria for registration with the appropriate support agencies responsible for the safeguarding of children in education.

- Neglect
- Physical injury
- Physical/Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Self-harm or abuse

The notes in Appendix A provide guidance. If a member of staff is in doubt about signs or indications of abuse, alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Staff should only ask students

open-ended questions in relation to suspected abuse. They should not “investigate” the matter.

9.4 General Points

Information, which needs to be available to all staff, will be shared at staff meetings. Information is for “professional use” and should remain absolutely confidential outside of the school.

Information might include:

- Details of actual or suspected physical abuse.
- Parental non-contact details following legal decisions.
- Mood swings, aggression and/or bad temper.
- Withdrawal by child and wanting to be on his/her own.

All staff must be aware of this policy, of the procedures outlined and where further details and guidance are stored.

Staff referrals and Child Protection records will be kept by the DSL, under lock and key. Parents do not have a right of access to these files.

10. Online Safety

At PSI, we recognise that it is more important than ever that we provide a safe environment for pupils, including online. We will continue to ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect children when they are online via our IT systems and/or recommended resources.

A policy on the use of mobile phones and technology exists to provide further guidance and protection to our school community. This is an addendum to the Behaviour Policy and must be observed by all staff and students.

11. Early help

Any child may benefit from early help, but all PSI staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (even if there is no statutory Education, Health and Care Plan in place);
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour;
- including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care;

- is a privately fostered child.
- Is experiencing peer on peer abuse (see behaviour policy and anti-bullying). We have a zero tolerance view on peer on peer abuse and all cases will be investigated fully with appropriate action/consequences that will be followed through and recorded.
- So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) including female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage

Concerns relating to students with *Additional Learning Needs* must always be referred to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (referring to the students in the first two categories above.)

Students may not always make a disclosure. Safeguarding concerns should also be raised if a member of staff overhears students engaged in a conversation where concerns are highlighted.

12. Increased vulnerabilities during COVID-19

Safeguarding children has always presented practitioners with new challenges and COVID-19 is an exceptional challenge for the majority of those working to keep children safe at this unprecedented time.

One of the biggest challenges a practitioner may be facing right now in response to COVID-19 is how to overcome the new increased risk and vulnerabilities to the child or young person.

During COVID-19, families will be under immense pressure at the moment and not every home will be a place of safety for the child. Some children will be living in a confined living space and may be witnessing or be subject to an abusive household situation.

Due to an increased strain on families both financially and emotionally, in response to COVID19, there is an increased requirement for safeguarding vigilance, reporting and monitoring.

Children who may fall into this new category of COVID-19 vulnerable could be, but not limited to:

- Children facing poverty for the first time;
- Children with ALN;
- Children living with domestic violence;
- Increased mental health;
- Children with EAL;
- Children with no communication means.

During COVID-19 PSI appreciate there are increased risks and vulnerabilities to the child. In order to continue to monitor and safeguard our pupils the DSL will ensure that any child identified as vulnerable due to COVID-19 will have welfare counselling sessions carried out weekly.

The DSL will ensure that the details of the counselling sessions are recorded on the Safeguarding Concern incident log (Appendix C) and actioned appropriately and when necessary, referred to other agencies.

If for any reason the school counselor is unable to carry out the welfare check the appropriate Year Leader will carry out the sessions. This will be recorded as above and maintained if concerns are raised and escalated through to the appropriate routes.

13. Safer Recruitment and Training of Staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. When recruiting new staff, we will:

- Ensure relevant background checks are performed in the country of origin of the employee, in countries where the employee has previously worked and locally if the employee is already in Qatar.
- Take up references related to the employee's work with children.
- Follow safer recruitment procedures when contacting and interviewing potential employees.
- Provide annual safeguarding training to our staff.

For further information please refer to the Safer Recruitment Policy.

Appendix A

Need For Protection – Some Indicators

Physical Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
Unexpected bruises (in various stages of healing	Self-destructive
Welts, human bites marks, bald spots	Withdrawn or aggressive behaviour
Unexplained burns, especially cigarette or immersion burns	Uncomfortable with physical contact
Unexplained lacerations, fractures or abrasions	Arrives at school early or stays late as if afraid to be at home
	Chronic runaway
	Complaints of soreness
	Wears clothing inappropriate for the weather to cover the body

Neglect

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
Abandonment	Tired or listless, falls asleep in class
Consistently unattended medical needs	Steals food, begs for food from classmates
Regular hunger	Reports that there is not caretaker at home
Inappropriate dress, poor hygiene	Frequently absent or late
Lice, distended stomach, emaciated	Self-destructive

Sexual Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
Torn, stained or bloody underclothes	Withdrawal, chronic depression
Pain or itching of the genital area	Poor self-esteem, self-devaluation
Difficulty with walking or sitting	Lack of confidence
Bruising or bleeding	Poor peer relationships, lack of involvement
Avoidance of lessons, especially PE	Massive weight change
Frequent urinary or yeast infections	Threatened by physical contact
	Hysterical, lack of emotional control
	Sudden difficulties in school

Common Sites for Injuries	
Accidental	**Non-Accidental**
Forehead	Eyes – bruising, black (particularly both eyes)
Nose	Skull – fracture, bruising or bleeding under skull (from shaking)
Chin	Cheeks – bruising, finger marks
Mouth	Mouth – torn frenulum
Spine	Neck – bruising, grasp marks
Elbows	Shoulders – bruising, grasp marks
Forearm	Upper and inner arms – bruising, grasp marks
Hips	Knees – grasp marks
Knees	Thighs – grasp marks

Commonest Forms of Physical Abuse – Indicators for Referral
Fingertip bruising or hand marks caused by the child being grabbed or slapped
Bruising to the face or head
Thumb marks under the clavicles
Bilateral mouth injuries; torn lips, gums or
frenulum Bilateral black eyes
Abdominal injuries and ear injuries
Burns

Common Indicators of Non-Accidental Injury – Circumstances Causing Suspicion
Child brought late for medical examination and treatment
Medical neglect and/or inappropriate parental reaction – abnormal affect
Child's appearance and interaction with the parents is abnormal, guarded or over
defensive Complicated or convoluted history
What the child says does not tally with presentation

Commonest Indicators of Physical Abuse
Mood changes, tantrums and aggression or
Sleep and eating disorders
Anxiety, depression and despair
School failure, truancy, disruptive to others
Lying, stealing, unexplained money
Withdrawal and secretiveness; poor peer relations
Running away from home

Commonest Indicators of Emotional Abuse
Lack of parent/child bonding – pushes child away, child clings then gives
up Sanctions of self-esteem – endless criticism, negative all the time
Lack of special/quality time – parents' lack of time, inability to play
Sanctions of interpersonal skills – lack of befriending
Discipline and control – a big issue

Appendix B

Making a Start

Think of a child of whom you have concerns. Can you answer the following questions?

- Is the child average weight/height?
- Is the child clean and well kept?
- Does the child glow with health - do you know of any health problems?
- Is attendance regular, are absences straightforward?
- Does the child concentrate well?
- Is the child achieving satisfactorily?
- Is the child withdrawn, aggressive, and moody?
- Does the child understand "taking turns"?
- Can the child use personal experiences for creative work?
- How does the child respond to adults?
- Who are the child's friends?
- Are those relationships equal?
- Does the child have irritating habits?
- What do you know about the child's home life?

If you have concerns about a student, you should complete the form in Appendix C and Appendix D if there are visible signs of concern. Both forms should then be passed on to the DSL.

Remember:

- Ask open-ended questions
- Do not investigate
- Record, date and sign observations
- Try to identify patterns

Never make assumptions about a disclosure that a child has made. Nor should any member of staff discuss their opinion of the disclosure with the child or any member of staff. Disclosures should be recorded using facts and not opinions. When dealing with safeguarding and child protection, all members of staff and parties involved must adhere to professionalism at all times.

Appendix C

Recording and Referral Form

Student Name: ---------- **Date:** ----------

Year Level: ---------- **Time:** ----------

- Please ensure that the information mentioned below is passed to the DSL
- All concerns regarding student safeguarding matters must be recorded and passed on
- Staff must not make any undertakings to absolute confidentiality
- Staff should not investigate a situation

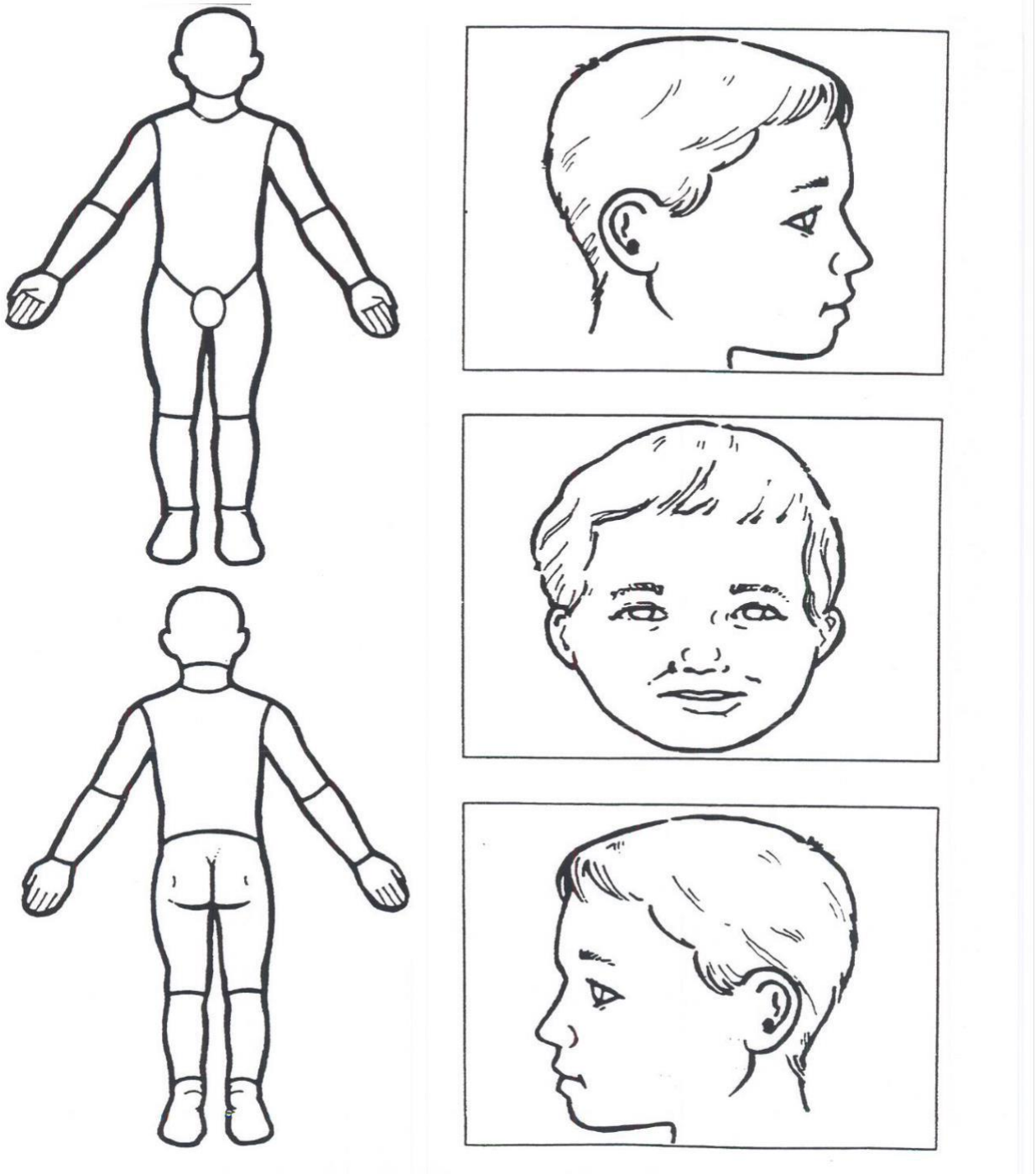
Suspected Emotional Abuse	Suspected Physical Abuse	Suspected Self-Harm	Suspected Sexual Abuse	Suspected Neglect Case

Details of Concern (please give full factual details including dates and times):

Date Opened: Time Opened:	Person Reporting:	Signed:
To Whom Reported:	DSL:	Date Closed:

Appendix D

Marks On a Child That Raise Suspicion.



Indicate clearly where the injury was seen and attach this to the Recording Form

Appendix E

Action Taken (to be completed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy):

By Whom:	Date:	Signed: