

British Overseas School: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy



1. Policy Statement

The British Overseas School (BOS) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. Every child, regardless of background or circumstance, has the right to a safe and supportive learning environment.

BOS aims to ensure that all students are protected from maltreatment, enabled to achieve the best possible outcomes, and supported in their personal development. Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone working in or associated with the school.

This policy is informed by *Keeping Children Safe in Education (UK, 2025)* and best international safeguarding practices, adapted to the context of Pakistan where external child protection systems are limited.

2. Aims

BOS will:

- Provide a secure and inclusive environment where students feel respected and valued.
- Identify and respond swiftly to any concerns about a child's welfare.
- Maintain robust procedures for recording, reporting, and monitoring concerns.
- Ensure all staff are trained annually to recognise and respond to safeguarding issues.
- Promote strong partnerships with parents and, where relevant, external specialists.

3. Definition and Core Principles

Safeguarding: Protecting children from abuse, neglect, and exploitation; preventing harm to health or development; and ensuring safe and effective care.

Child Protection: The procedures and actions taken to protect specific children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Key Principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount.

- All concerns are taken seriously and acted upon.
- Confidentiality is respected, but never at the expense of a child's safety.
- Safeguarding is a shared responsibility across the entire school community.
- Equality and anti-discriminatory practice guide all decisions and actions.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff

- Must read, understand, and follow this policy.
- Must recognise signs of abuse and report concerns immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL.
- Must record factual information using **CPOMS**.
- Must reassure any student who discloses a concern that they will be supported and kept safe.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Holds overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.
- Ensures implementation of this policy and maintenance of records.
- Coordinates with Deputy DSLs to cover Primary and Secondary sections.
- Leads case management, liaises with parents, and ensures student support.

Deputy DSLs

- Support the DSL in managing concerns and ensure safeguarding coverage across all phases.

Safeguarding Committee

- Comprises DSL, Deputy DSLs, and representatives from Primary and Secondary staff.
- Meets weekly to review active cases, monitor emerging patterns, and ensure compliance.

Principal

- Ensures policy implementation, staff awareness, and resourcing.
- Oversees the work of the DSL and approves all safeguarding procedures.

Governing Board

- Monitors safeguarding effectiveness and provides strategic oversight.
- Reviews and approves the policy annually.

- Holds the Principal and DSL accountable for safeguarding performance and compliance.

5. Recognising Abuse

All staff are trained to recognise and respond to the four main categories of abuse:

- **Physical abuse** – causing physical harm to a child.
- **Emotional abuse** – persistent emotional maltreatment causing adverse effects on wellbeing.
- **Sexual abuse** – involving a child in sexual activity, whether by contact or exploitation.
- **Neglect** – persistent failure to meet a child's basic needs.

Additional risks such as **cyberbullying**, **grooming**, and **exposure to harmful content** are included in annual staff training. Additional vigilance is applied to pupils with special educational needs, disabilities, or health conditions who may face increased risk.

6. Procedures for Reporting and Responding

1. **Recognise** – Identify possible signs of abuse or neglect.
2. **Record** – Log concerns factually and promptly on **CPOMS**, the school's secure safeguarding system.
3. **Report** – Inform the **DSL or Deputy DSL** without delay.
4. **Review** – DSL assesses risk, determines next steps, and liaises with parents or external professionals.
5. **Respond** – The school provides pastoral or counselling support and continues to monitor the child's wellbeing.

In all cases, the child's safety takes precedence.

7. Confidentiality and Record-Keeping

- Information is shared strictly on a need-to-know basis.
- All safeguarding records are securely maintained in CPOMS.
- Staff must never promise confidentiality to a child.
- Records are retained and transferred securely when a student leaves BOS.

8. Safer Recruitment

BOS ensures that all adults working with children are suitable and appropriately vetted.

This includes:

- Verified identity and references.
- Qualification and employment checks.
- Criminal background checks (DBS or local equivalent).
- Maintenance of a **Single Central Record (SCR)**.
- Mandatory safeguarding induction and annual refresher training for all staff, coaches, and contractors.

9. Training and Awareness

- Annual safeguarding and child protection training for all staff.
- Induction training for new staff before they begin work.
- Advanced safeguarding training for DSLs and Deputy DSLs every two years.
- External enrichment providers, visiting coaches, and volunteers must attend school safeguarding sessions.

10. Online Safety

BOS maintains a secure digital environment with appropriate firewalls. Monitoring and filtering. Use of AI and emerging technologies is monitored to mitigate risk.

- School systems are monitored, filtered, and secure.
- Students are educated on responsible digital behaviour through PSHE and ICT lessons.
- Staff and students must follow the **Acceptable Use Policy**.
- All incidents of online harm or bullying are treated as safeguarding matters.

11. Supporting Students' Voices

BOS ensures students know who they can speak to if they are worried or uncomfortable.

Through assemblies, PSHE lessons, and pastoral guidance, children are encouraged to share their concerns confidently and safely.

12. Working with Parents

BOS values partnership with parents in promoting the wellbeing and safety of every child.

The school maintains transparent, supportive communication and involves parents at appropriate stages in any safeguarding process.

Where external professionals are involved (e.g. therapists, doctors), collaboration is managed through the DSL.

13. Complaints

Complaints relating to safeguarding are managed in line with the school's **Complaints Policy** and escalated directly to the Principal or Governing Board when required.

14. Links to Other Policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- E-Safety and ICT Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid and Medical Policy
- Staff and Student Codes of Conduct

15. Review and Evaluation

This policy is reviewed annually by the **Safeguarding Committee** and approved by the **Governing Board**.

Interim updates may be made in response to new legislation, inspection feedback, or emerging safeguarding needs.

16. Conclusion

BOS is deeply committed to ensuring that all children are safe, respected, and supported.

While Pakistan has limited formal child protection systems, the school has built strong internal structures, a proactive safeguarding culture, and an ethos of vigilance and care.

At BOS, every adult is responsible for ensuring that **no child is ever left unheard, unseen, or unprotected**.

Appendix: Types of Abuse

Category	Definition	Possible Indicators
Physical Abuse	Deliberate physical harm such as hitting, shaking, or poisoning.	Unexplained bruises, frequent injuries, fear of adults.
Neglect	Persistent failure to meet physical or emotional needs.	Poor hygiene, hunger, tiredness, unattended medical needs.

Category	Definition	Possible Indicators
Sexual Abuse	Forcing or enticing a child into sexual activity.	Knowledge inappropriate for age, physical discomfort, fear of specific people.
Online Abuse	Exploitation, bullying, or grooming through digital means.	Secretive online behaviour, distress after using devices.
Peer-on-Peer Abuse	Harm caused by another child, including bullying or harassment.	Injuries, fear of peers, avoidance of social settings.

Review Date: October 2025

Next Review Due : October 2026