

Victorious International British School

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Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy

Victorious School will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children, young people and adults. Our Safeguarding policy is based on three key commitments.

Procedures

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet the three key commitments:

Key commitment 1

We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service delivery.

Our designated safeguarding lead who co-ordinates child protection issues is:

Victoria Gomez-Middleton, Director

In Victoria's absence:

Alwyn Middleton, Deputy

Designated Safeguarding Lead

- We ensure our designated safeguarding lead (or the relevant alternative designated person as named above) is always available to discuss safeguarding concerns whilst the school is open.
- We ensure our designated safeguarding persons are formally trained at least every two years and their skills and knowledge refreshed annually.
- We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures with formal training every two years and that their knowledge and skills are refreshed annually.

Staff

- All staff understand that safeguarding is their responsibility.
- All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, are alert to the signs and symptoms of abuse, and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding

concerns are reported to the designated safeguarding lead. They receive updates on safeguarding at least annually.

- All staff are confident to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and know not to just take things at face value but can be **respectfully sceptical**.
- All staff understand the principles of early help (as defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, 2019) and are able to identify those children and families who may be in need of early help and enable them to access it.
- All staff understand their responsibilities and comply with relevant UK and international laws and standards and ensure local legal compliance.
- All staff understand their responsibility to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018, and understand relevant safeguarding legislation, statutory requirements and local safeguarding partner requirements and ensure that any information they may share about parents and their children with other agencies is shared appropriately and lawfully.
- We will support families to receive appropriate early help by sharing information with other agencies in accordance with statutory requirements and legislation.
- We will share information lawfully with safeguarding partners and other agencies where there are safeguarding concerns.
- We will be transparent about how we lawfully process data.
- All staff understand how to escalate their concerns, in the event that they feel either the local authority and/or their own organisation has not acted adequately to safeguard and know how to follow local safeguarding procedures to resolve professional disputes between staff and organisations.
- All staff understand what the organisation expects of them in terms of their required behaviour and conduct, and follow our policies and procedures on positive behaviour, online safety (including use of cameras and mobile phones), whistleblowing and our code of conduct.
- Staff receive regular supervision, which includes discussion of any safeguarding issues, and their performance and learning needs are reviewed regularly.
- Adequate and appropriate staffing resources are provided to meet the needs of children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.

Recruitment

- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

- Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks and other suitability checks are carried out for staff and volunteers prior to their post being confirmed, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Where applications are rejected based on information disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks are carried out on anyone living or working on the premises.
- Information is recorded about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
 - the criminal records disclosure reference number;
 - the date the disclosure was obtained; and
 - details of who obtained it.
- All staff and volunteers are informed that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).
- We notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of any person who is dismissed from our employment or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.

Volunteers

- Volunteers must:
 - be aged 17 or over;
 - be considered competent and responsible;
 - receive a robust induction and regular supervisory meetings;
 - be familiar with all the settings policies and procedures;
 - be fully checked for suitability if they are to have unsupervised access to the children at any time.

Visitors

- Procedures are in place to record the details of visitors to the setting.
- Security steps are taken to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

Practice

- We ensure that parents are made aware of our safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures.

- Steps are taken to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child.
- Staff do not use personal cameras or filming equipment to record images.
- Personal mobile phones are not used where children are present.
- The designated person in the setting has responsibility for ensuring that there is an adequate online safety policy in place.
- We keep a written record of all complaints and concerns including details of how they were responded to.
- We ensure that robust risk assessments are completed, that they are seen and signed by all relevant staff and that they are regularly reviewed and updated, in line with our health and safety policy.
- The designated safeguarding lead will inform the relevant organisations at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern.

Key commitment 2

We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents, allegations or concerns of abuse that may occur, whether they concern children attending our setting or not, and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2015) and the Care Act 2014.

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- We ensure that all staff have an understanding of the additional vulnerabilities that arise from special educational needs and/or disabilities, plus inequalities of race, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation or culture, and that these receive full consideration in relation to child, young person or vulnerable adult protection.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:
 - significant changes in their behaviour;
 - deterioration in their general well-being;
 - their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure);
 - changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play;

- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; and
- any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.
- We understand how to identify children who may be in need of support and how to access services for them.
- We consider factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- We are aware that children's vulnerability is potentially increased when they are privately fostered and when we know that a child is being cared for under a private fostering arrangement, we inform the relevant organisation.
- We are prepared to take action if we have concerns about the welfare of a child who fails to arrive at a session when expected. The designated safeguarding lead will take immediate action to contact the child's parent to seek an explanation for the child's absence and be assured that the child is safe and well. If no contact is made with the child's parents and the designated safeguarding lead has reason to believe that the child is at risk of significant harm, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as, abuse of disabled children and children with special educational needs; fabricated or induced illness; child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession; sexual exploitation of children, such as through internet abuse; and Female Genital Mutilation and radicalisation and extremism; that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision.
- We are committed to the mandatory reporting of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and understand our duty to report any incidents of FGM to the police.
- We ensure all staff understand their role and responsibility to implement the 'Prevent Duty' to keep children safe from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.
- In relation to radicalisation and extremism, we follow the Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales published by the Home Office.
- We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour-based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our setting, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.
- If we become concerned that a child may be a victim of modern slavery or human trafficking we will refer to the National Referral Mechanism, as soon as possible and refer to local law.

- We will be alert to the threats children may face from outside their families, such as that posed by organised crime groups such as child sexual exploitation, online use and from within peer groups and the wider community.
 - Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection and child in need concerns and follow local law.
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- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's teacher makes a dated record of the details of the concern on the 'Safeguarding Concerns form' (see example attached) and discusses what to do with the member of staff who is acting as the 'designated safeguarding lead'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
 - We refer concerns about children's welfare to the necessary local authorities.
 - We respond to any disclosures sensitively and appropriately and take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children (although we may check out/clarify the details of what we think they have told us with them).
 - We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse or neglect is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account in an age-appropriate way, but the setting may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. **Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.**
 - All staff are also aware that adults can also be vulnerable and know how to refer adults who are in need of community care services.
 - We have a whistleblowing policy in place.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; that member of staff:

- listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
- does not question the child, although it is OK to ask questions for the purposes of clarification;
- makes a written record (using our 'Safeguarding concerns form' – see attached sheet) that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes: the date and time of the observation or the disclosure; the context of what was said by the child; the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible; the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with the date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file, which is kept securely and confidentially.
- The member of staff acting as the 'designated safeguarding lead' is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity, and always within 1 working day.

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. Concerns are normally discussed with parents to gain their view of events, unless it is felt that this may put the child or other person at risk or may interfere with the course of a police investigation, or unless it is otherwise unreasonable to seek consent. Advice will be sought from relevant authorities, or in some circumstances police, where necessary.
- Parents are informed when we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to the local authority, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser or where sexual abuse may have occurred.
- If there is a possibility that advising a parent beforehand may place a child at greater risk, (or interfere with a police response), the designated safeguarding lead should consider seeking advice from local law.

Allegations against staff and persons in positions of trust

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.

- We ensure that all staff volunteers and anyone else working in the setting knows how to raise concerns that they may have about the conduct or behaviour of other people including staff/colleagues.
- We differentiate between allegations, and concerns about the quality of care, teaching or practice and complaints and have a separate process for responding to complaints.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, volunteer or any other person living or working on the premises, which includes:
 - inappropriate sexual comments
 - excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or inappropriate sharing of images.
- We will recognise and respond to allegations that a person who works with children has:
 - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- We ensure that all staff or volunteers know how to raise concerns about a member of staff or volunteer within the setting. We respond to any concerns raised by staff and volunteers who know how to escalate their concerns if they are not satisfied with our response.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by relevant organisations such as the police or local law enforcement.
- Where the management team agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the member of staff or volunteer will be suspended for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff, as well as children and families throughout the process.

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Disciplinary action

Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of relevant information, so that individuals who pose a threat to children and vulnerable groups can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

Key commitment 3

We are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout our training and learning programmes for adults. We are also committed to empowering young children, through our curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Training

- Training opportunities are sought for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.
- Training opportunities should also cover extra familial threats such as online risks, radicalisation and grooming and FGM and how to identify and respond to families who may be in need of early help, and organisational safeguarding procedures.
- Designated persons receive annual training.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about the provision.
- We ensure that all staff receive updates on safeguarding via emails, newsletters, online training and/or discussion at staff meetings and supervisions throughout the year.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and so that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- In recognition that children are capable of abusing their peers, we create within the setting a culture of value and respect for all individuals, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership and in line with the GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018, and Working Together 2018.

Support to families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, information sharing, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure.

Legal framework

Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- The Children Act (2004 s11)
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Childcare Act (2006)
- Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equality Act (2010)
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2018)
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations (2009)
- Children and Families Act (2014)
- Care Act (2014)
- Serious Crime Act (2015)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)


Further guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG, 2018)
- What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG, 2015)

- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2008)
- Hidden Harm – Responding to the Needs of Children of Problem Drug Users (ACMD, 2003)
- Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing Safeguarding Services (DFE 2018)
- Disclosure and Barring Service: www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check
- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (HMG, 2015)
- Inspecting Safeguarding (Ofsted, 2018)

*A 'young person' is defined as 16 to 19 years old – in our setting they may be a student, worker, volunteer or parent.

This policy was adopted by
 On
 Date to be reviewed
 Signed on behalf of the provider
 Name of signatory
 Role of signatory

Victorious School
1st September 2022
1st September 2023
 E Signature 
Victoria Gomez-Middleton
Director

Recording for Safeguarding Concerns

Key points:

- Feel confident and competent
- Use paraphrasing-repeat back what the child has said in their own words, as a question.
- Tell the child you are writing things down because what they are saying is very important.
- Record the context - set the scene
- Record the words they use to describe the concern and actions esp. what they point to
- Attach any evidence (child's drawing, writing, adult observation etc.)
- Ask WHO, WHAT, WHEN, HOW OR CAN YOU TELL ME MORE BUT NOT WHY OR WHAT DID YOU DO.
- Avoid feelings, stay with facts
- Respect the child: Don't pressurise – allow two or three minutes and offer alternatives.
- Praise and affirmation is essential

Date

Time of incident /disclosure:

Child's name

Time of completing the form:

Class

Child's D.O.B

Address:

Context:

What did the child say and do?

What did the adult say and do?