



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

VIS aims to provide our students with a first-class, well-rounded education while being immersed in a beautiful and safe mountain environment. Critical thinking, creativity and open-mindedness to the cultures and beliefs of others inspire learning at our school. With a strong emphasis on sports and the arts, we believe in developing the personality of each student and helping them to become principled global citizens.

Safeguarding Policy 2021

(Reviewed by all staff of VIS on 14 September 2021)

Key personnel: Julia Pickard (Designated Safeguarding Lead)

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1. POLICY AIMS

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Identify the names of responsible persons in the school and explain the purpose of their role;
- Describe what should be done if anyone in the school has a concern about the safety and welfare of a child who attends the school;
- Identify the particular attention that should be paid to those children who fall into a category that might be deemed “vulnerable”;
- Set out expectations in respect of training;
- Ensure that those responsible for recruitment are aware of how to apply safeguarding principles in employing staff;
- Set out expectations of how to ensure children are safeguarded when there is potential to come into contact with non-school staff, e.g. volunteers, contractors etc.;
- Outline how complaints against staff will be handled;
- Set out expectations regarding record keeping;
- Clarify how children will be kept safe through everyday life at VIS.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Safeguarding

is defined 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 (KCSIE) 2016.

2.2 Child Protection

refers to the action required to protect a child from a situation that is causing significant harm, or that is likely to do so.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES AND IMMEDIATE ACTION

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in our school is the responsibility of the whole school community.

All adults working in this School (including visiting staff, supply teachers, volunteers and students on placement) are required to report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** who is a member of the school’s leadership team.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: **Miss Julia Pickard, Head of Primary**

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: **Guaya Esteves, Class E Class Teacher**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety), provides advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, and takes part in strategy discussions and internal meetings.

DSL is the first point of contact for external agencies that are pursuing Child Protection investigations, and co-ordinates the school's representation at Child Protection conferences and VIS Senior Management Team Meetings (including the submission of written reports for conferences).

When an individual concern/incident is brought to the notice of the DSL, they will be responsible for deciding upon whether or not this should be reported to other agencies as a safeguarding issue.

Where there is any doubt as to the seriousness of this concern, or disagreement between the DSL and the member of staff reporting the concern, advice will be sought from the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL).

If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to the APEA (Autorité de Protection de l'Enfant et de l'Adulte à Sembrancher) and/or the Police immediately.

Although all staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments, the DDSL is most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.

The DSL or the Deputy DSL will always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If, in exceptional circumstances, the DSL (DDSL) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the Senior Management Team and/or take advice from local children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL (or DDSL) as soon as is practically possible.

4. TYPES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

4.1 Physical abuse:

- A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
- Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

4.2 Emotional abuse:

- The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development.
- It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- It may feature age or developmentally-inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.
- It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

4.3. Sexual abuse:

- Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.
- They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).
- Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

4.4. Neglect:

- the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.
- Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:
 - provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
 - protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
 - ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
 - ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

4.5. Peer-on-peer Abuse:

- Children are capable of abusing their peers. This can take different forms, such as bullying (including cyberbullying), physical abuse (such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; violence, particularly pre-planned, forcing other children to use drugs or alcohol, initiation/hazing-type violence and rituals), emotional abuse (blackmail or extortion, threats and intimidation), sexual violence, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, sexting, sexual abuse (indecent exposure, indecent touching, forcing other children to watch pornography or take part in sexting) and sexual exploitation (encouraging other children to engage in inappropriate sexual behaviour, having an older boyfriend/girlfriend, associating with unknown adults or other sexually-exploited children, staying out overnight, photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts) and upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Upskirting is now a criminal offence. Although it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators, all peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.
- We do not tolerate these or pass them off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up". The school has a strong commitment to an anti-bullying policy, and will consider all coercive acts and peer-on-peer abuse within a Child Protection context.
- We recognise that some pupils will sometimes negatively affect the learning and well-being of other pupils, and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's behaviour policy. As a school, VIS will minimise the risk of allegations against other pupils by providing:

- a developmentally-appropriate PSHE syllabus which develops pupils' understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe;
 - systems in place for any pupil to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, believed and valued;
 - targeted work on assertiveness
 - robust risk assessments;
 - targeted work for pupils identified as being a potential risk to other pupils.
- Any possible peer on-peer abuse case will be shared with the DSL with a view to referring to appropriate agencies following the referral procedures.

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments.

All staff, but especially the DSL and DDSLs will be considering whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence. This is known as **Contextual Safeguarding**, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

5. REFERRALS

Where there is a safeguarding concern, we take into account the child's wishes and feelings when determining what action to take and what services to provide. We have systems in place for children to express their views and give feedback. We acknowledge that children who are affected by abuse or neglect may demonstrate their needs and distress through their words, actions, behaviour, demeanour, school work or other children. Ultimately, all our systems and processes operate with the best interests of the child at heart.

6. TRAINING

- All staff members will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety), which is regularly updated.
- In addition, all staff members will receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- All newly-recruited staff (teaching and non-teaching) will be apprised of this policy and will be required to attend relevant training. In addition, all new staff

and temporary staff will be required to attend an induction session with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy on their first day in the school.

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and their Deputy) will refresh their training at least every two years.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy DSL will also undertake **Prevent** awareness training, and will be able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety.
- In addition to this formal training, their knowledge and skills will be refreshed (for example, via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

7. RECRUITMENT

- VIS is committed to the principles of safer recruitment and, as part of that, adopts recruitment procedures that help deter, reject and/or identify people who might abuse children.
- Safe recruitment processes are followed and all staff recruited to the school will be subject to appropriate identity, qualification and health checks.
- References will be verified and appropriate criminal record checks [Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks], barred list checks and prohibition checks will be undertaken.
- Relevant members of staff who are involved in recruitment will undertake safer recruitment training.
- The school will ensure that at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training in line with staffing regulations.
- The School will only use employment agencies which can demonstrate that they positively vet their supply staff.
- Staff joining VIS on a permanent or temporary basis will be given a copy of this policy. Additionally, the Staff Code of Conduct below confirms Child Protection Procedures within the School.

8. STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

- All staff (paid and voluntary) are expected to adhere to a code of conduct in respect of their contact with pupils and their families:

Children will be treated with respect and dignity, and no punishment, detention, restraint, sanctions or rewards are allowed outside of those detailed in the school's **Behaviour Management Policy**.

- Whilst it would be unrealistic and undesirable to preclude all physical contact between adults and children, staff are expected to exercise caution and avoid

placing themselves in a position where their actions might be open to criticism or misinterpretation.

- Where incidents occur, which might otherwise be misconstrued, or in the exceptional circumstances where it becomes necessary to physically restrain a pupil for their own protection or others' safety, this will be appropriately recorded and reported to the Headmaster and parents. Any physical restraint used will comply with the UK's Department for Education guidance "Use of reasonable force in schools".
- Except in cases of emergency, first aid will only be administered by qualified First Aiders. If it is necessary for the child to remove clothing for first aid treatment, there will, wherever possible, be another adult present. If a child needs help with toileting, nappy changing or washing after soiling themselves, another adult should be present or within earshot. All first aid treatment and non-routine changing or personal care will be recorded and shared with parents/carers at the earliest opportunity.
- Children requiring regular medication or therapies for long-term medical conditions will be made the subject of a Medical Plan that has been agreed with the parents and health authority.
- For their own safety and protection, staff should exercise caution in situations where they are alone with pupils. Other than in formal teaching situations; for example during musical instrument tuition, the door to the room in which the 1:1 coaching, counselling or meeting is taking place should be left open. Where this is not practicable because of the need for confidentiality, another member of staff will be asked to maintain a presence nearby and a record will be kept of the circumstances of the meeting.
- School staff should also be alert to the possible risks that might arise from social contact with pupils outside of the school. Home visits to pupils or private tuition of pupils should only take place with the knowledge and approval of the Headmaster.
- Visits/telephone calls by pupils to the homes of staff members should only occur in exceptional circumstances, and with the prior knowledge and approval of the Headmaster.
- Any unplanned contact of this nature or suspected infatuations or "crushes" will be reported to the Headmaster.
- Staff supervising off-site activities or school journeys will be provided with a school mobile phone as a point of contact for parents and carers. Staff will only use the school's digital technology resources and systems for professional purposes or for uses deemed 'reasonable' by the Headmaster.
- Staff will only use the approved school email, school learning platform or other school approved communication systems with pupils or parents/carers, only communicate with them on appropriate school business, and will not disclose their personal telephone numbers and email addresses to pupils or parents/carers.

- Staff will not use personal cameras (digital or otherwise) or camera phones for taking and transferring images of pupils or staff without permission, and will not store images at home.
- Staff should be aware of the school's whistle-blowing procedures and share immediately any disclosure or concern that relates to a member of staff with the Headmaster or one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads if the Headmaster is not available, and nothing should be said to the colleague involved.

9. COMPLAINTS/ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST STAFF

- VIS takes seriously all complaints made against members of staff.
- Procedures are in place for pupils, parents and staff to share any concern that they may have about the actions of any member staff, including supply teachers and volunteers.
- All such complaints will be brought immediately to the attention of the Headmaster or one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads if the Headmaster is not available, and nothing should be said to the colleague involved.
- In cases where the Headmaster is the subject of the allegation or concern, they will be reported to the Board, in order that they may activate the appropriate procedures.
- The procedures for dealing with allegations need to be applied with common sense and judgement. Many cases may well either not meet the criteria set out above, or may do so without warranting consideration of either a police investigation or enquiries by local authority children's social care services. In these cases, local arrangements will be followed to resolve cases without delay.
- Some rare allegations will be so serious they will require immediate intervention by children's social care services and/or police. In such cases, these referrals will lead to a **Strategy Meeting** or being held. This process will agree upon the appropriate course of action and the time-scale for investigations.

10. SAFETY IN THE SCHOOL

- No internal doors to classrooms will be locked whilst pupils are present in these areas.
- Entry to school premises will be controlled by doors that are secured physically or by constant staff supervision.
- Authorised visitors to the school will be logged into and out of the premises, and will be asked to wear their identity badges or be issued with school-visitor badges.

- Unidentified visitors will be challenged by staff and reported to the Headmaster and/or school office.
- Carelessness in closing any controlled entrance will be challenged.
- The presence of intruders and suspicious strangers seen loitering near the school or approaching pupils will be reported to the Verbier Police depending on the circumstances and the urgency of the case, so that if the Verbier Police stops these individuals, they can be spoken to about what they were doing and dealt with accordingly.
- Parents, carers or relatives may only take still or video photographic images of pupils in school or on school-organised activities with the prior consent of the school, and then only in designated areas.
- Images taken must be for private use only.
- Recording and/or photographing other than for private use would require the consent of the other parents whose children may be captured on film. Without this consent, the Data Protection Legislation would be breached. If parents do not wish their children to be photographed or filmed, and express this view in writing, their rights will be respected. VIS parents are asked to complete the VIS Consent form for the Distribution of Images.

11. CURRICULUM

- VIS acknowledges the important role that the curriculum can play in the prevention of abuse and in the preparation of our pupils for the responsibilities of adult life and citizenship.
- We will ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, and will consider this as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- As appropriate, the curriculum will be used to build resilience, help pupils to keep safe and to know how to ask for help if their safety is threatened.
- As part of developing a healthy, safer lifestyle, pupils will be taught, for example:
 - to recognise and manage risks in different situations and then decide how to behave responsibly;
 - to judge what kinds of physical contact are acceptable and unacceptable;
 - to recognise when pressure from others (including people they know) threatens their personal safety and well-being—including knowing when and where to get help;
 - to use assertiveness techniques to resist unhelpful pressure;
 - to be aware of and to develop emotional literacy;
- All computer equipment and internet access within the School will be subject to appropriate “parental controls” and internet safety rules in line with our Online Safety Policy. We will be careful that “over-blocking” does not lead to

unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regard to online teaching and safeguarding.