Suratthani International School
Safeguarding Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. A note on nomenclature

In many schools 'safeguarding' and 'child protection' are terms that are used interchangeably; in still other schools, they are used side by side, as though they are inseparable.

We regard this latter use tautologous and so have opted to use only the term 'safeguarding' for all matters relating to ensuring that the children in our school are safe and well cared for. We prefer the term 'safeguarding' over 'child protection' because there is less scope for anyone in our school, or outside it, to adopt the lazy assumption that ensuring the welfare of children simply means preventing them from coming into harm.

1.2. Scope of this policy

This policy covers any child who had not reached their 18th birthday. At STIS, some students are above this age, so we take this legislation to refer to any student in the school. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in

Working Together to Safeguard Children as:

● protecting children from maltreatment;
● preventing impairment of children's health or development;
  - ● ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with theprovision of safe and effective care;
  - ● undertaking that role to enable those children to have optimum lifechances and to enter adulthood successfully.

This policy applies but is not limited to, all staff, students, guests and visitors or anyone working on behalf of STIS

1.3 Purpose of this policy

Suratthani International School fully recognizes its responsibilities for child safeguarding. To this end, it is the aim of this policy to document how we:

● protect all children and young people who attend Suratthani International school and use our services

● provide all staff and visitors with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding

At STIS, we are committed to working to ensure that children and young people never experience abuse of any kind. We recognize that we all have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and tokeep them safe. We are committed to seeking ways to continually review our practice such that our school protects children and provides the conditions for human flourishing.

1.3. Roles and responsibilities

All staff are involved in safeguarding children at STIS, however there are some with very specific responsibilities. These are outlined below:

● Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – is responsible for policy generation; systems and compliance related to safeguarding; oversight of staff safeguarding training; coordination of safeguarding audits; devising the safeguarding action plan; maintaining the momentum of the safeguarding action plan; conducting internal audits of safeguarding; leading the safeguarding taskforce; maintaining the confidentiality and integrity of safeguarding records; leading on difficult or stressful safeguarding cases; ensuring that safeguarding remains at the forefront of the school's corporate consciousness; reviewing, and acting upon, serious casereviews; and any other duties which may periodically be necessary to maintainor improve the school's safeguarding policy and procedures.

● Child Protection Officers (CPOs) – is responsible for day-to-day safeguarding issues in their designated area of the school. Duties in this regard include, butare not restricted to: acting as the first port of call (designated focal point) for disclosures; maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of safeguarding records; keeping the DSL informed of safeguarding issues as they arise; liaising with parents, caregivers and other agencies to ensure the safety of children; organizing case conferences where these are required; devising and implementing welfare plans for students where these are required.

● Designated Manager – is responsible for overseeing policy and procedure; reporting back to the board on all issues to do with safeguarding; ensuring that safeguarding sits firmly within the board's collective consciousness; sampling first-hand the procedures in place at the school as often as is practicable, but no less than annually.

● Safeguarding Taskforce – are responsible for developing an annual development plan and a report to the SMT; are responsible for reviewing policy and procedure; are responsible for agreeing a timetable of training for staff and other adults.

1.4. Record-keeping

Well-kept records are essential to good safeguarding practice. STIS is clear about the need to record any concern about a student or students within our school, the status of such records and confidentiality.

Any member of the school community (including parents and carers) receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible, and within 24 hours, noting what was said or seen, putting the event in context, and giving the full date, time and location. If in doubt, report. All records are signed and include the action to be taken.

These notes are kept, in hard copy only, in a confidential file, which is separate to other files, and stored in a fireproof safe, locked with a combination lock. In the same way, notes are kept of any student who is being monitored for safeguarding reasons (this includes ongoing casework, case reviews and external supervision).

Safes are currently kept:

● under the auspices of the Principal of School (for the Whole School)

Where children leave the school, we ensure their safeguarding file is transferred to their new school as soon as possible. We make sure that these records are sent separately from the main student file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt is obtained.

1.5. Our core beliefs

We recognize - and believe to the core of our being - that:

● the welfare of children trumps all other considerations in school

> ● all children regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse

● some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, because of special educational needs, or because they have a high level of dependency, communication difficulties or other issues

> ● working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare

1.6. How we keep young people safe

At Suratthani International, we keep young people safe by:

1. employing rigorous recruitment procedures for all staff2 to check their suitability to work with children and following UK guidance on when to disbaran individual from taking up a role in school

2. raising awareness of safeguarding issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe

3. teaching pupils explicitly and in an age-appropriate way about safeguardingissues and ensuring that children recognize when they are at risk and how to gethelp when they need it

4. managing students' online access whilst in school by, for example, by banning own-devices in the LS, and restricting device use (device down-days, E-zones, firewalls) in the Upper School

5. helping children help themselves - for example by educating about mental health, appropriate sleep patterns, sensible device use, the dangers of social media etc.

6. having a well-trained team of professionals in place (counselors, a well-being lead etc.) to help children when they are struggling with their own mental health issues

7. training all staff in safeguarding awareness

8. ensuring that all staff have read and understood the Safeguarding Policy

9. ensuring that all staff are aware of the indicators of child abuse and how torespond to concerns or disclosures of abuse

10. ensuring that staff understand the concept of contextual safeguarding andthat safeguarding issues can occur beyond the family and school

11. Ensuring staff understand the dangers posed by child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child criminal exploitation (CCE)

12. establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and developwhilst valuing them, listening to and respecting them

13. adopting best practice as it relates to safeguarding through clearly defined procedures and a code of conduct for all staff, volunteers and visitors

14. developing and implementing effective social media and e-safety policies andrelated procedures

15. providing effective management for all staff and contractors through supervision, support and training

16. sharing information about safeguarding and best practice with students,parents, staff outside providers, interns, volunteers and visitors

17. sharing concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents andstudents appropriately

18. ensuring that all parents give the school at least two emergency contacts atthe point of admission

1.7. Key contacts

All adults on our campus are involved in keeping children safe at STIS. Responsibility does not fall only on teachers, or only on a select group of managers. However, the following staff oversee safeguarding at Suratthani International school and operate as focal points for collating information about safeguarding.

2. RECOGNISING ABUSE – WHAT STAFF SHOULD LOOK OUT FOR

2.1. Importance of vigilance

All staff should be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child. Staff should also be aware of outside pressures on children (contextual safeguarding).
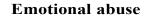
2.2. Types of abuse and

neglectAbuse

Abuse is 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.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is 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.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse involves the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child suchas 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 (e.g. witnessing domestic violence). 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.

Sexual abuse

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 ornot 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 nonpenetrative 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.
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE) exists in Thailand and staff should be alert to this.

Neglect

Neglect is 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 caregivers); orensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotionalneeds.
- this would include failure to provide proper adult guardianship such as leaving children unsupervised at home for an extended period of time.

Peer-on-peer abuse

Often abuse is seen exclusively as something that adults do to children but it is important to recognize that abuse can equally occur within the pupil body – between peers, or between pupils of different ages. Vigilance for this type of abuse is just as important as for adult-child abuse; the means by which it should be reported are just the same.

Criminal exploitation

Both child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child criminal exploitation (CCE) are forms of abuse. Both occur where and individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. This sort of abuse can take many forms - staff should be awareof it and report it using the approved channels if they have concerns.

2.3. Other causes for concern Mental health concerns

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child is at risk. Only appropriately trained staff should diagnose such problems. Nonetheless, if a child's behaviour gives cause for concern about their mental health this could also indicate a safeguarding concern. Staff should file a concern report using the procedures outlined in this document.

3. DEALING WITH DISCLOSURES/REPORTING PROCEDURES

The role of all staff is not to investigate or verify the situation, but rather to report the concern or disclosure and set in motion the process of getting help for the child.

Step 1

You have a concern about a child's well-being, based on:

1. something the child or another child or adult has told you

2. something you have noticed about the child's behaviour, health (includingmental health), or appearance

3. something another child or adult said or did

Even if you think your concern is minor, the CPO may have more information that, together with what you know, represents a more serious worry about achild. It is never your decision alone how to respond to concerns – but it isalways your responsibility to share concerns, no matter how small.

Step 2

Decide whether you need to find out more by asking the child/young person, or their parent to clarify your concerns, being careful to use open questions:

…beginning with words like: 'how', 'why', 'where', 'when', 'who'?

Step 3

Let the child/young person/parent know what you plan to do next if you have heard a disclosure of abuse or you are talking with them about your concerns. Do not promise to keep what s/he tells you a secret.

…for example, 'I am worried about your bruise and I need to tell Mrs Smith so that she can help us think about how to keep you safe.'

Step 4

Please log all information for record keeping, noting:

1. Name of child
2. Date, time and place
3. Who else was present
4. What was said/What happened/What you noticed … speech, behaviour, mood,drawings, games or appearance/injuries. If a child or parent spoke, record their words rather than your interpretation
5. Analysis of what you observed and why it is a cause for

concernStep 5

Give the completed Concerns Logging Form Principal as soon as possible ensure it is handed in and not copied or stored electronically. The Principal will decide on further appropriate action and will remain in close communication with other professionals around the child/young person and with the family if appropriate.

The School appreciates that dealing with a disclosure can be emotionally draining for the member of staff who has received it. Staff who feel they are suffering from the after-effects of a difficult safeguarding incident should speak to the Principal who will be happy to arrange for independent counselling to be set up.

4. PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of safeguarding. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a pupil nor should they agree with a pupil to keep a secret. Where there is a safeguarding concern, this must be reported to the Principal. Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding safeguarding on a 'need-to-know basis' only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held confidentially to themselves.

5. MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

Allegations of abuse can be made by children and they can be made by other concerned adults (including supply staff and volunteers):

● Any concern about the behaviour of a member of staff or volunteer, or allegation of abuse against a member of staff, must immediately be reported to the relevant Head of School who will take the necessary action.

● Any allegation about a Head of School or another member of the ELT should be reported to the Head Master.

Any allegation of abuse will be dealt with in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation. The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

Malicious allegations against staff will be investigated and dealt with by the Principal and, if appropriate, a committee of governors.

6. CONCERNS ABOUT A COLLEAGUE – WHAT TO DO

6.1. Reporting channels

If staff members have concerns about another staff member or volunteer this should be referred to the relevant Head of School.

Where there are concerns about the Head Master, this should be referred to the Chair of Governors and the designated Governor for Safeguarding. Any concern or allegation against a member or the Head Master will be reported without informing the individual concerned.

No individual should feel that they cannot speak up and let their concerns be known about any matter relating to the safety of children in the school. Individuals who raise such concerns are assured that they need not fear any deleterious consequences as a result of having raised such concerns. It is their absolute right – indeed their duty – to speak up when they have concerns.

6.2. Types of allegations

As specified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) the following definitions should be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

a. Substantiated: there is sufficient identifiable evidence to prove the allegation;
b. False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
c. Malicious: there is clear evidence to prove there has been a deliberate act to deceive and the allegation is entirely false;
d. Unfounded: there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made. It might also indicate that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw; alternatively,they may not have been aware of all the circumstances;
e. Unsubstantiated: this is not the same as a false allegation. It means that there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore,does not imply guilt or innocence.

7. IMMUNITY & SPEAKING UP PROCEDURES

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardize their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of a child is paramount. This procedure empowers staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

In a community school like STIS, there is always a risk that a breach in child safeguarding or inappropriate behaviour may occur. Such activities cannot be tolerated and their rapid identification and elimination is of benefit to the School, its staff and, above all, the students. Sometimes called whistle-blowing inother jurisdictions. In Thailand whistle-blowing has political connotations so we have opted for a less loaded term.

The school recognizes that its staff are often the first people to suspect or realize that something is wrong and is therefore fully committed to dealing responsibly and professionally with their genuine concerns about child safeguarding. The school also recognizes that, for a number of reasons, staff often feel reluctant to raise such concerns. That is why the school will always support any and every member of staff who 'speaks up' about a concern they have.

To make a disclosure in our school, you only need to act in good faith, e.g. with an honest belief about the concern you raise. Through its policies and practice, the school actively encourages you to raise concerns internally making use of the accepted channels of reporting to the Principal. Your concern will be treated in the strictest confidence. The school will ensure that your concerns are investigated promptly and efficiently and, whenever possible, you will be advised of the outcome.

The school will not hold responsible or at fault any school employee making areport of abuse that is later judged to be false, unless it can be demonstrated that the person willfully and intentionally falsified a report. This could include reporting matters concerning members of staff.

8. SAFEGUARDING AND THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The school must be a safe place for all students. The way we achieve this is outlined in our Health and Safety Policy. This policy covers all aspects of school health and safety including fire safety and crisis management, medical concerns and resource use. Please also note the following key points, which relate specifically to the safety of children:

- Doors should have clear glass windows. Any film or blinds must still allow occupants to be visible from outside the room

- Staff bathrooms are available and are clearly identified as such. Staff must not use the same bathrooms as students. In cases where it is necessary to enter a student allocated bathroom, such as to attend to a behavioural or health andsafety issue, leave the door open and announce your reason for entering thespace as a warning to other students using the bathroom. Where possible in such situations avoid being alone. We understand that with very young children, staff will be assisting with children's toileting and intimate care needs.

In this case please refer to the Intimate Care Policy.

- If staff are in a one-to-one situation with students in a room, (e.g. on expeditions or trips etc.) they should ensure that the door remains open, or move to a more public space where this is possible and appropriate.

9. SAFER RECRUITMENT

9.1. Our aims

The safer recruitment of all staff at STIS is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. At STIS, we ensure the practice of safe recruitment in checking and recording the suitability of all staff.

1. Deter potential abusers by setting high standards of practice and recruitment.
2. Reject inappropriate candidates at the application and interview stages.
3. Prevent abuse to children by developing robust policies and agreeing on safe practice.

9.2. Achieving our aims

We ensure that at least one member of staff on every recruitment panel has undertaken training in safer recruitment and that:

● up-to-date police records from a teacher's country of origin and previous country of employment, have been received and checked by the school

● after two years – usually, at the time of contract renewal – we renew thispolice check

● we have at least two references, one of which must be from a candidate's current, or most recent, employer

● if a teacher has worked in two or more schools, within 5 years, telephone contact is made with those schools to ask why the teacher is leaving and if there were any concerns of a safety nature with children

● all new staff read and sign the Child Safeguarding Policy and our Code of Conduct

● we give staff training on arrival in safeguarding and refresh this trainingformally on a biennial basis

9.3. Minimum safeguarding requirements expected of contractors

We expect the following as a minimum in the case of all contractors:

● Induction training provided which covers safeguarding

- ● Director of Operations ensures that CSP information is shared with relevantmanagers through regular meetings

● Contractors read, complete and sign the CSP Self Declaration Form

- ● Police checks for any member of staff who will be employed on-site for longerthan 6 days
- ● Our Code of Conduct for contractors is shared and a record is kept of theirhaving read and understood it

● Toolbox Talks - daily reminders given on CSP awareness

9.4. Minimum safeguarding requirements expected of all adults livingon campus

- ● Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct made available to all at inductionmeeting (during new staff induction)
- ● The expectation for all residential occupants to adhere to the SafeguardingPolicy and the Code of Conduct

● Resident adults read, complete and sign the CSP Self Declaration Form

10. STAFF TRAINING

The HR Manager, supported by the Safeguarding Taskforce, keep detailed records of all staff safeguarding training and issue reminders when trainingupdates are required. It is good practice to include a safeguarding agenda item in all staff meetings. All paid and unpaid members of staff have regular, mandatory safeguarding training, including school governors, senior managers, outside providers, volunteers, interns, and contractors, or anyone working on behalf of STIS.

New staff have safeguarding training as part of the induction process and that this is kept up to date by refresher training at two-yearly intervals. We train staff who arrive at other times of the year with the use of this video (andassociated training questions).

In addition, the designated members of staff (CPOs, and DSL) will undertake multi-agency training every two years to keep their knowledge and skills up to date.

All members of staff read and agree to the Safeguarding Policy and to the Safeguarding Code of Conduct before their duties begin. Standards of behaviour expected of staff, are outlined in the Safeguarding Code of Conduct. It is expected that all staff read this code and sign to acknowledge that they havedone so.

Every year, all staff are made aware of how to access the school's most recent version of the safeguarding policy.

11. SELF-ASSESSMENT AND INTERNAL QUALITY CONTROL

We have several mechanisms for ensuring that our safeguarding procedures and policies are effective and up to date. These include:

1.   A biennial external audit is carried out, which forms part of our safeguardingimprovement action plan
2. An internal audit occurs annually

12. BUDGETING FOR SAFEGUARDING

In recognition of the central importance of safeguarding to the entire enterprise, safeguarding has its own budget line in the school accounts. From this budget comes:

1. Funds for the biennial audit
2. Funds for signage
3. Funds for storage and office sundries
13. RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment is undertaken to good effect in promoting safety. Such assessments cover all aspects of the school's work, such as premises and equipment, on-site activities, off-site activities and the venues used, use of minibuses and other forms of transport.

Our risk assessments include sections to address child safeguarding risks and a risk management plan.

Our risk assessments consider all safeguarding matters when working with other partners and third-party providers, for example on expeditions and trips. In our trip management booklet, we have a list of safeguarding requirements thatwe expect all outside providers to follow. Risk assessments are also conducted aspart of the recruitment process as and where appropriate. Where appropriate, short briefings/training input are given to staff of host organizations/locations on child safeguarding and how to report issues of concern. Risk assessments are signed off by managers/senior leaders, not only by the trip or expedition leader.

14. IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

In order to implement and monitor this Safeguarding Policy, we will:

1. ensure we have a designated senior person for safeguarding who has received appropriate training and support for this role

2. ensure we have a nominated governor taking a lead role for safeguarding including championing safeguarding issues within the school and liaising withthe Principal, having an overview of the safeguarding and all related policies, auditing safeguarding measures annually alongside the Principal following acalendared timeline

3. ensure every member of staff, volunteer, site user, employee and governor knows the name of the designated safeguarding officer responsible forsafeguarding and their role through the training program and the display of posters around the site

4. ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alertto the signs of abuse and responsibility for recording any concerns and referring any concerns to the designated teacher responsible for safeguarding

5. ensure all visitors to our school are aware of our child safeguarding expectations and reporting procedures by having information on signedacknowledged visitor slips and CS reporting posters at key points around the school

6. develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters

7. ensure all child welfare and safeguarding records are kept securely, and in locked locations

9. ensure safer recruitment practices are always followed

10.   ensure that any allegations against members of staff with a safeguarding aspect are dealt with following agreed procedures and all such concerns to be dealt with urgently

11.   ensure that the school building and site are appropriately secure, with a clear record kept of any risk assessments carried out, by following school procedureson health and safety and risk assessments

12.   ensure that other school policies which have a safeguarding element (eg health and safety; anti-bullying; e-safety; behaviour; HR recruitment) are all consistent with this policy and with each other and where appropriate make cross-reference to this policy

13.   carry out an annual safeguarding and safeguarding audit, and track progressagainst a safeguarding action plan, reviewed mid-year.

14.   ensure all staff, governors and volunteers receive and sign for a copy of this policy

15.   ensure that parents receive information from the school about the responsibility placed on the school and staff for safeguarding through calendared workshops

16. provide age-appropriate education and safeguarding training to students