



2025

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY

For the wellness of our children



JOYBIRDS PREPARATORY SCHOOL

~THE SKY IS THE LIMIT~

Introduction & Purpose

The of Director and staff of Joybirds Preparatory School take seriously their responsibility for safeguarding and promoting welfare of all pupils in their care. The Joybirds Preparatory School's Director is ultimately responsible for the provision stated in this policy.

This policy applies to all staff, Director and volunteers working at Joybirds Preparatory School. The governing body and staff of the school take seriously their responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils in their care, to provide a safe environment and to work with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within the school to identify, assess and support those children who are suffering harm. Harm could include; **emotional abuse, physical (including sexual) abuse or neglect**. Joybirds Preparatory School recognises that any form of abuse directed towards a child could be perpetrated by peers, siblings, parents or carers/guardians, extended family members, members of staff or by people not known to the child.

This policy is intended to guide all staff in the school in providing an environment in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued and they are encouraged to talk and are listened to. We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff, volunteers and Director, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm, and that the child's wellbeing and welfare is our paramount concern. Compliance to the aims and procedures provided in this policy are mandatory. This policy complies with:

- The Education Standards and Quality Assurance Council Regulations - 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education - Sep 2024
- Working Together to Safeguarding Children - March 2015
- UNICEF Convention of Rights of the Child - 1990
- It is also informed by DfE advice, 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused - advice for practitioners' - March 2015

Interpretation

In this policy:

- The Director means the Owner of Joybirds Preparatory School.
- ICT means Information and Communication Technology.
- PSHE means Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education, also referred to as Wellbeing
- School means Joybirds Preparatory School.
- Child refers to any person under the age of 18 years old.

Objectives of this Policy

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of all staff to work with children (Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014) and ensuring staff are trained, guided and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns (Working Together to Safeguard Children - March 2015).

- Establishing and maintaining a safe environment where children can learn and develop. Children should feel secure, should be encouraged to talk and always be listened to.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse.
- To ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Provide support to pupils who may have been abused.

For all members of staff to appreciate and realize that children who are looked-after, adopted, receiving Learning Support, have Learning Difficulties, are disabled or who have specific emotional or physical needs are vulnerable and are therefore at risk of child protection/safeguarding issues.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following table serves as an easy reference point for the contact details of key personnel and agencies named in this policy:

Name	Role	Location	Phone	Email
Elphas Wanda	Director	School	0792 835 686	joybirdspreparatoryschool@gmail.com
Catherine Karani	Senior Teacher	School	0712 361 012	joybirdspreparatoryschool@gmail.com
Esther Muthoni	Head of Primary Section & Girls Wellness	School	0717 071 145	joybirdspreparatoryschool@gmail.com
Ezekiel Omondi	Head of Boys Wellness	School	0703 970 513	joybirdspreparatoryschool@gmail.com
Annrose Gakii	Students' Disciplinarian	School	0727713751	joybirdspreparatoryschool@gmail.com

The Director shall co-ordinate action within the school and liaise with the Police (when need be) and other agencies over suspected child abuse. Legal responsibility for the welfare and care of children still lies with all adults employed by or contracted by Joybirds Preparatory School.

The Senior Teacher, Students' Disciplinarian, Head of Primary Section & Girls Wellness and The Head of Boys Wellness have the responsibility to ensure that procedures and guidance set out in this policy are adhered to, and that the children enrolled in Joybirds Preparatory School are safe.

Any decisions to seek advice or refer students to outside expert help will be undertaken by the Director in liaison with the Senior Teacher and or The Head of Boys Wellness/Girls Wellness.

All staff must be familiar with the contents of this policy and understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and the responsibility of referring any concerns to the Students' Disciplinarian.

Parents should have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection.

Written records of all concerns will be kept in the student's file or in a locked safe in the Director's office in cases where sensitivity is paramount.

Procedures laid out in this policy will be followed where an allegation is made or suspected.

The school will endeavor to support pupils through:

- The content of the curriculum.
- A positive, supportive and secure school ethos which gives the pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school Behaviour Policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse that has occurred.
- Ensuring that, when a student leaves, information about any serious concerns is transferred to the new school.

Joybirds Preparatory School Allegation Response Team (JPSART)

a. Director:	Elphas Wanda
b. Senior Teacher:	Catherine Karani
c. Head of Primary Level & Girls' Wellness	Esther Muthoni
d. Head of Boys' Wellness	Ezekiel Omondi
e. Students' Disciplinarian	Annrose Gakii
f. Chairperson of Parents Association	Charles Mwaura
g. Legal advisor	
h. Local Community Representative	

The roles of each member of the JPSART:

Member of JPSART	Defined Role
Director	Collate information relating to Child Protection and Safeguarding issues Report serious issues to the police and any Child Protection and Safeguarding Agency Responsible for training staff and sensitizing parents Proactively implementing guidelines on Child Protection and Safeguarding within the school
Senior Teacher	Oversight of Child Protection and Safeguarding issues within the school and advise the Director accordingly
Students' Disciplinarian	Oversight of Child Protection and Safeguarding issues within the school and advise the Senior Teacher/Director accordingly Contact point for JPSART in school members
Head of Primary Section & Girls' Wellness	Advise the Senior Teacher on girls' wellness-related matters regarding Child Protection and Safeguarding Proactively inform the Director and/or The Senior Teacher about Child Protection and Safeguarding concerns Attend disciplinary hearings concerning Child Protection and Safeguarding issues
Head of Boys' Wellness	Advise the Senior Teacher on boys' wellness-related matters regarding Child Protection and Safeguarding Proactively inform the Director and/or The Senior Teacher about Child Protection and Safeguarding concerns Attend disciplinary hearings concerning Child Protection and Safeguarding issues
Legal Advisor	Be conversant with international and Kenyan Child Protection laws Provide timely feedback to queries from the Director Proof-read documents relating to Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy before publication. Advise on any Child Protection and Safeguarding related cases and proposed processes Liaise with Lawyers of accused persons and inform the Director

Chairperson of Parents Association	Liaise closely with parent of Joybirds Preparatory School on Child Protection and Safeguarding issues Engage with members of JPSART and offer counsel as required
Local Community Representative	Liaise closely with JPSART on local reactions to communications/issues Engage with members of JPSART and offer counsel as required

The school's position on Safeguarding and Child Protection:

Joybirds Preparatory School upholds values of **Care, Respect, Honesty, Courage and Cooperation** in all that we do. These values permeate all aspects of Joybirds Preparatory School. Ethically, we are committed to tackling any child protection issues directly with care, respect, honesty, courage as we cooperate with all the children and adults involved or alleged to be involved as we firmly believe that children have the right to a safe, happy, purposeful learning experience. While Joybirds Preparatory School is operational in Kenya, we therefore respect and act upon Kenyan legislation and laws that “ensure that the welfare of children is paramount”. The school's management accept and endeavor to appreciate our Kenyan context and sensitively navigate cultural practices that may negate the law of the land.

Defining Abuse:

The term *child abuse* and *neglect* describe a range of ways in which people, often known and trusted by the child, harm children knowingly or by failing to act to prevent harm. Child abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual or neglect. In many cases, children are subjected to a combination of types of abuse, for instance, neglect and emotional abuse.

Child abuse can take place in the home, at school or anywhere else children spend their time.

The categories of Child Abuse are as follows:

Neglect

The persistent or severe neglect of a child, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

Physical Abuse

Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child, including deliberate poisoning, suffocation – by fabricating or inducing illness in children. A child who is forced to consume alcohol or to take drugs may be deemed to have suffered physical abuse.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilations (FGM) comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or non-therapeutic reasons.

As a school, we believe that all our pupils should be kept safe from negative cultural practices. At Joybirds Preparatory School, we have a duty to report concerns we have about girls at risk of FGM to the relevant authorities.

1) Key Points about FGM:

- Not a religious practice
- Occurs mostly to girls aged from 5 to around the age of 15
- It is a criminal offense.

2) Reasons why this cultural practice, FGM, is performed includes:

- Cultural identity – It is an initiation into womanhood
- Gender Identity – Moving from girl to woman
- Sexual control – reduce the woman's desire for sex
- Myth on purity – un mutilated women are regarded as unclean

3) FGM's Risk Factors include:

- Mother or sister who has undergone FGM
- Girls who are withdrawn from Psychological, Social, Health and Economic Wellbeing

4) High Risk Time:

- This procedure often takes place during the November and December holidays, as the recovery period after FGM can be 6 to 9 weeks.

Schools should be alert to the possibility of FGM as a reason why a girl in a high-risk group is absent from school or where the family request an 'authorized absence' for just before or just after the November/December school holidays.

Although, it is difficult to identify girls before FGM takes place, where girls from these high-risk groups return from a long period of absence with symptoms of FGM, advice should be sought from the police or social services.

5) Post-FGM Symptoms include:

- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- Spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- Unusual behaviours after a lengthy absence
- Reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations
- Asking for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

6) Long term problems include:

- Difficulties urinating
- Frequent or chronic vaginal, pelvic or urinary infections
- Menstrual problems
- Kidney damage and possible failure
- Infertility
- Complications during pregnancy and childbirth
- Emotional and mental health problems

It is a legal responsibility for teachers/employed adults to report any case of FGM they discover to the Police. Unless a teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss such a case with the Director.

Sexual Abuse

Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent or developmentally immature (this includes Sexual Exploitation radicalization). There is often no physical sign or symptom of such abuse. This includes; forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities. These may be contact, such as assault or penetration or non-contact, example, forcing children to look at pornographic images or watch pornographic videos.

Peer On Peer Abuse

Peer on peer abuse can include; but is not limited to, bullying such as cyberbullying, sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm.

As Joybirds Preparatory School, we recognize the danger of any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between children and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate).

Peer on peer abuse can take various forms, including; bullying (and cyber bullying), relationship abuse, domestic violence, child sexual exploitation, youth and serious youth violence, harmful sexual behaviors, and/or gender-based violence. In many cases, types of abuse do not occur in isolation, and one particular case of peer-on-peer abuse may reveal that participants themselves, including the alleged perpetrators, are themselves receiving abuse from other sources.

Given the multi-textured experience in most cases of peer-on-peer abuse, any response to a case must see the biggest possible picture and aim to consider types of abuse being experienced and capture the full context of the child's/children's experience. In order to achieve this, we aim to discuss any concern with as many sources of information as possible, including staff (directly involved with witnessing a concern or who have knowledge of the pupils involved), friends of relevant pupils, families and any other agencies.

In all cases of alleged Peer on Peer abuse, the actions of the school will:

- 1) Remove any children from immediate risk of harm.
- 2) Investigate incidences by seeking views and testimonies from as many relevant people as possible.
- 3) Resolve the issue and communicate outcomes to relevant parents.
- 4) Sensitize cohorts to the learning points of resolved cases of Peer-on-Peer abuse.
- 5) Provide follow-up support for victims and, where appropriate, perpetrators.
- 6) Seek opportunities to sensitize parents to signs, symptoms and action to be taken if Peer On Peer abuse is suspected.

Emotional Abuse

Actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioral development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment.

Children who run away or go missing:

Children running away or going missing is a safeguarding issue.

Important definitions:

Missing: Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another.

Absent: A person is not at a place where they are expected or required to be.

Confidentiality

Staff and members of JPSART will ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. Members of JPSART will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only. All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.

Recruitment and Appointment of Staff

Joybirds Preparatory School is totally committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and young people and expects the same from its employees. All new staff will be subject to Disclosure and Barring Service clearance or similar depending on their country; identity checks, qualification checks, employment checks to include an exploration of any gaps within employment, two satisfactory references - one of which must be current and from their most recent employer, registration with the Disclosure and Barring Service if applicable, or ICPC (International Child Protection Certificate) or Certificate of Good Conduct. Any candidate who does not meet safeguarding checks may not be considered for interview.

Details of all employees of the school are held in a centralized register; this register includes their starting date of employment at the school.

Induction and Training

All new staff will, during their induction, receive training on their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and the procedures contained in this policy.

All staff will undergo training every two years, run by the Director and will undergo professional training by an outside agency every two years. New staff will be provided with the following policies in their induction pack:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct (Staff Behaviour Policy)
- Part 1 of KCSIE 2024

All staff are also required to read Part 1 of the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) - September 2024, which is available for new staff in the induction pack. All staff will be notified when changes are made to this document and are required to re-read. This section of the KCSIE will be included training and reminded of any updates in Staff Meetings to ensure that it is understood by all staff.

Informal updates and training are regular throughout the year at Joybirds Preparatory School. These may take the form of; zoom meeting, WhatsApp group updates & staff meetings. These are as required, but at least annually.

Pupils are taught about Safeguarding, including online, through the curriculum and Wellbeing programs.

Guidance on Interaction with Pupils:

- In general, pupils should be encouraged to discuss with their parents or guardians about issues that are troubling them.
- Staff need to ensure that their behaviour does not inadvertently lay them open to allegations of abuse.
- Staff need to treat all pupils with respect and try, as far as possible, not to be alone with a child or young person. Where this is not possible, it is good practice to ensure that others are within the place.

Where possible, a gap or barrier should be maintained between teacher and child at all times:

- Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint.
- Staff should not give their personal mobile phone numbers to pupils, nor should they communicate with them by text message, personal email or through social networking sites. If they need to speak to a pupil by telephone, they should use one of the school's telephones/mobile phones.
- Any physical restraint of a pupil is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on him/herself or on another, and then only as a last resort, when all

efforts to diffuse the situation have failed. Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness. All incidents of physical restraint should be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the Director.

Referral Procedures:

- Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse, an allegation or suspects that abuse may have occurred must report it immediately to the Senior Teacher, or in their absence to the Head of Primary Section and Girls' Wellness/Head of Boys' Wellness and/or Director.
- If any member of staff receives a disclosure or they suspect that a pupil or staff member may be drawn into terrorism or extremism they must report it immediately to the Director.
- The member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse will be requested by the Director to put down a written log of the concerns and incidents and the dates these concerned immediately.
- The Senior Teacher will immediately follow up any cases of concern in liaison with the Director.
- If there is physical evidence of recent and severe abuse, the Director may take the decision on advice of the Legal Advisor to accompany the child to Mutuini sub-District Hospital for immediate attention, and initiate an investigation into how the child has sustained injuries. Parental permission will not necessarily be sought as the school would be responding to an emergency situation.
- If appropriate, the Director will arrange a meeting with the parents with another member of the JPSART, or the member of staff who has reported the allegations. Other close relatives of the child may be called in to assist the child and to approach the concerned family.
- In the case of where the parents or guardians have been implicated the matter shall be reported to the parents or guardians and the Police.
- Where appropriate, the Director will arrange for the pupil and the family concerned to see a recognized, recommended counsellor.
- Sexual and physical abuse allegations may be reported to the Director who shall forward the case to the police.
- In the case of diplomatic staff, the matter may be reported to the embassy so that action according to the laws of that country may be taken.
- A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a pupil nor should they agree with a pupil to keep a secret, as where there is a child protection concern this must be reported to the Director and may require further investigation.
- Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a need-to-know basis only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held confidentially to themselves.
- In the case of pupils identified as being at risk of radicalization, Joybirds Preparatory School will consider the level of risk to identify the most appropriate referral.
- Although decisions to seek support for a child in need, or about whom concerns relating to radicalization, would normally be taken in consultation with parents and pupils, consent is not required to a referral when there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child is at risk of significant harm.

- Any member of staff can make a referral to external agencies, which include The National Child Helpline in Kenya at 116, etc.
- For procedures with dealing with abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm. It is important in this instance that all children involved, whether perpetrator or victim be treated as being at risk.

Disclosure:

Teachers need to be aware that a disclosure from a pupil may occur at any time. The location of a disclosure from a pupil may be in private, in a busy classroom setting or in any other place where pupils and teachers interact.

Where a pupil makes a disclosure to the teacher:

- The teacher must offer reassurance that anything they say will be treated with respect but may be passed on to an appropriate authority if it is in the pupil's best interest.
- The promise must never be made that whatever the pupil discloses will remain confidential.
- The pupil should not be hurried but should be allowed to make the disclosure in their own way and their own time, although, the pupil may well indicate by their words or demeanor that they are looking for the teacher to gently encourage because of the difficulty of the situation.
- It is better, where practicable, that a girl makes the disclosure to a female member of staff. There may well be cases where this will not be actually practicable and the pupil should never be prevented from making the disclosure for this reason.
- Whilst it may be necessary for some limited questioning by the teacher to take place the questioning should never be 'in-depth' in nature and should never be along 'blow-by-blow' lines. Unskilled in-depth questioning can not only be damaging and distressing to the pupil, but can result in an unsatisfactory outcome of the case. In-depth questioning is a matter for experts who are specially trained, skilled and resourced to deal with such matters.
- The student should NEVER be questioned in front of other pupils or be coerced into giving a 'satisfactory' answer.
- After the interview, the member of staff should write down what the child said in their own words. The Incident Form should be completed and submitted to the Director along with a verbal discussion. The Incident Form captures the following key information:
 1. Time, day of the week, date, and location of the disclosure/discovery;
 2. Identity of child and alleged perpetrator;
 3. Details of the demeanour and behaviour;
 4. Who it was reported to
 5. The name of the person making the report.

- Following the disclosure, the pupil will need to be cared for in a kind and considerate way. As soon as is proper, however, the Director should be informed. The matter will then be dealt with by the Director.

At a glance:

DO: • stay calm and show no signs of shock; • listen and respond with empathy in a non-judgmental and open way; • consider the disclosure seriously; • remain calm, supportive, and reassuring; • validate the child's feelings; • explain what you need to do (report to the DSL) and why; • allow the child control when feasible; • consider the child's language needs and whether support in another language is necessary; • reassure the child that they have done the right thing in coming forward; and • take notes and make a record as soon as possible following the disclosure.	DO NOT: • view images of children (rather ask for a brief description and secure a device as possible evidence for law enforcement); • interview the child, ask leading or unnecessary questions, or provide language for the child; • take notes during the disclosure; • make promises that may not be able to be honoured (such as promising you won't tell anyone or that this will never happen again); • suggest that the child may be to blame in any way for what happened; or • ask the child to wait until another person can be present to witness the disclosure.
---	---

Managing Disclosures about a Member of Staff/Adult:

Our Guiding Principles when managing all allegations about the action(s) of a member of staff employed at Joybirds Preparatory School are:

1. The duty to children:
To keep children safe and act in the best interests of victims and children at Joybirds Preparatory School or elsewhere. This takes precedence over all other duties and includes providing support for all children affected; ensuring the continuity of education and delivery of services to children; ensuring that the best interests of the victim are the primary consideration in decision-making; where possible, taking into account the victim's wishes and feelings when making decisions, while recognising that the ultimate decision lies with adults; working with the parents unless to do so would jeopardize the welfare of a child; and working across agency and institutional boundaries to protect children.
2. The duty to the alleged perpetrator:
Ensuring that their rights are upheld (including their employment and privacy rights) and that the principles of natural justice are followed. These principles require Joybirds Preparatory School to provide alleged perpetrators with notice of the allegation and an opportunity to respond.
3. The duty to the law and mandatory reporting obligations:
Ensuring that Kenyan and international legal obligations are complied with; allegations are reported promptly to relevant external agencies; and that the school's immediate actions protect as far as possible the integrity of any future criminal investigation.

No disclosure:

- When no actual disclosure has been made, it is up to staff members to watch for early signs or symptoms. These can only be taken as indicators.
- When these signs or symptoms are apparent in a pupil, especially where several are present, there will be cause for concern. Where a member of staff has a suspicion, they should refer the matter to the Director.
- The Director should always be informed - a teacher should never take action through his/her own initiative unless the person against whom allegations is made is one of the designated persons for Child Protection.

Record Keeping:

All staff are responsible for keeping written records of any conversations with children, parents or third parties when the information is concerning a child, no matter how small or irrelevant it may seem. Child Protection records should only be kept by the Director and should not be kept on normal school files. If the information is for general consumption, the records will be kept in the child's file in the school office.

The Director will:

- Keep clear detailed written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken) as well as follow up.
- Ensure all records are kept secure and in a locked location.
- Ensure all relevant child protection records are sent to the receiving school or establishment when a pupil moves schools.
- Coordinate the gathering of child protection information from schools that pupils joining Joybirds Preparatory School are coming from.

ICT and Child Protection:

All users of ICT in the school are aware of the Regulations governing use of the Internet and all sign a document agreeing to abide by its rules.

The safety of using and communicating via email and social networking sites is taught and discussed at the beginning of every year during ICT and PSHE/Wellbeing lessons.

Supporting Pupils at Risk:

Our school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth or view the world as a positive place.

The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, whilst at school their behavior may still be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

Joybirds Preparatory School will endeavor to support her students through:

- The curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- The implementation of the school's behavioural management policies.
- A consistent approach agreed by all staff which will endeavour to ensure the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but she/he is valued.
- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's best interest to do so.
- Recognition that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse, so staff who work in any capacity with children with emotional or behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.
- Recognition that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.
- This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in school.

Teaching Children how to keep Safe:

The school will teach children about safeguarding, including online through a range of approaches, which involve a partnership with the Child Exploitation & Online Protection.

- PSHE/Wellbeing Lessons
- ICT Lessons
- Safety talk to parents during AGM
- Pastoral Assemblies (PPI)

Privacy Statement:

Joybirds Preparatory School will manage all allegations of abuse with a view to adhering to the UNICEF Convention of Rights of the Child, Article 16:

“Children have a right to privacy. The law should protect them from attacks against their way of life, their good name, their families and their homes”.

All information of a sensitive nature or information that has the potential be used negatively against a child, which will be kept securely.

Updating this Policy:

Any member of staff who identifies a weakness in the arrangements and procedures in this policy must immediately bring it to the attention of the Director, who will take appropriate steps of amending this policy where necessary.

The Director will review this policy and arrangements annually, including the manner and effectiveness of their implementation.

Appendix A – Policy on Procedures when a Member of Staff, Volunteer, Senior Teacher Faces Allegations of Abuse:

Introduction:

Allegations that a member of staff has abused a student or students either inside the school premises or during a school trip or visit could be made by:

- Parents, guardians or relatives
- The abused pupil
- Other members of staff
- Other pupils
- A third party

An allegation of such seriousness would normally be made directly to the Director; but if another member of staff is told first, they will ensure that the Director is informed immediately.

Anonymous Allegations:

If the allegation of child abuse is made anonymously and names both a member of staff and a child, the situation will be handled in exactly the same way as if the identity of the person making the allegation was known. Where the allegation names the member of staff but not the child, the member of staff will be interviewed and asked for their version of events. It may be appropriate to establish a mentoring or review program for that individual, or to provide them with further training. A record will be kept on the individual's personal file.

Procedures:

The Director will respond immediately and sensitively to the legitimate concerns of the victim and his or her family. Shall undertake to:

- Take any allegation of abuse involving a member of staff very seriously
- Establish the facts before jumping to any conclusion
- Inform the member of staff honestly of the allegation that has been made and advise them to contact the school legal representation for advice and support
- Inform the child's parents in confidence, inviting them to maintain confidentiality whilst the investigation takes place.

Where the facts suggest that there may be reasonable grounds for suspecting actual abuse, or grooming of a child, or other criminal behavior, the Director will always:

- Invite the Police to conduct investigations
- Involve the JPSART and seek legal representation
- Consider suspending the member of staff or volunteer concerned
- Seek legal advice

Support for the Pupil:

Our priority is to safeguard the young people in our care. We will give them all the support that we can to a pupil who has been abused. The Director will consider how best to support and monitor the pupil concerned through any process of investigation, liaising closely with parents, guardians, relatives or agencies identified as capable of support strategies that will be appropriate.

Under no circumstances should the pupil be dismissed or expelled from the school pending such an investigation.

Suspension:

Suspension of a member of staff is a neutral act and does not imply that any judgement has been reached about their conduct. Even so, it is a serious step, the Director will take legal advice before initiating suspension procedures, and will only suspend a member of staff where:

- There is a serious risk of harm to the child
- The allegations are so serious as to constitute grounds for dismissal, if proven
- The police are investigating allegations of criminal misconduct.

We recognise fully that we have a duty of care towards all our staff, and we will always:

- Keep an open mind until a conclusion has been reached
- Interview a member of staff before suspending them
- Keep the member of staff informed of progress of the investigation.

Any member of staff who is invited to a meeting whose outcome is likely to result in their suspension, is entitled to be accompanied by a friend, relative or a legal representative.

Alternatives to Suspension:

We will always consider whether an alternative to suspension might be appropriate. Possibilities include:

- Sending the member of staff on leave
- Giving the member of staff non-contact duties

The resignation of a member of staff or volunteer mid-way through an investigation would not lead to the investigation being abandoned. Every investigation into allegations of child abuse will be completed. We will not entertain any compromise agreements suggested by a member of staff in which they agree to resign if the school agrees not to pursue any disciplinary action.

Length of Investigatory Process:

The school recognises that everyone's interests are served by completing any investigatory process as swiftly as possible. The JPSART will aim to spend as little time as is compatible with fair and impartial processes on the investigatory process. Every investigation will be completed within one month.

Recording Allegations of Abuse:

We will record all allegations of abuse, and our subsequent actions, including any disciplinary

actions, on an individual's file. A copy will be given to the individual and they will be told that the record will be retained for ten years.

Handling Unfounded Allegations The child:

A child who has been the center of unfounded allegations of child abuse needs professional help in dealing with the aftermath. We will liaise closely with an Educational Psychologist to ensure a professional program of support.

However, much support the child may need in such circumstances; we need to be sensitive to the possibility that the aftermath of an unfounded allegation of abuse may result in the irretrievable breakdown of the relationship with the teacher. In such circumstances, we may conclude that it is in the child's best interests to move to another school. We would do our best to help them have as smooth a transition as possible, working closely with the parents or guardians.

The member of staff:

A member of staff could be left at the end of an unfounded allegation of child abuse with severely diminished self-esteem, feeling isolated and vulnerable, all too conscious that colleagues might shun them on the grounds of 'no smoke without fire'.

If issues of professional competency are involved, and though acquitted of child abuse, disciplinary issues are raised; we recognise that they are likely to need both professional and emotional help. We will undertake to arrange a mentoring program in such circumstances, together with professional counselling outside the school community. A short period of re- training may be appropriate.

Appendix B – Possible Signs of Abuse

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered:

Physical Abuse

Physical signs:

- Injuries which the child cannot explain, or explains unconvincingly
- Injuries which have not been treated or have been treated inadequately
- Injuries on parts of the body where accidental injury is unlikely, e.g. cheeks, chest or thighs
- Bruising to the face, back, abdomen, arms, buttocks, ears and hands
- Bruising which reflects an imprint – of an implement or cord, hand or finger marks
- Multiple bruises – in clusters or of a uniform shape
- Human bite marks
- Fractures that are inconsistent with the child's development stage
- Scalds, especially those with upward splash marks where hot water has been deliberately thrown over the child, or tide marks – rings on the child's arms, legs or body where the child has been made to sit or stand in very hot water
- Multiple burns, burns with a clearly demarcated edge and burns affecting unusual areas of the body such as the back, shoulders or buttocks.

Behavioral signs:

- Reluctance to have their parents contacted
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Running away or showing fear of going home
- Flinching when approached or touched
- Reluctance to get changed for sporting activities
- Covering arms or legs when it is hot
- Depression or moods which are out of character with the child's general behaviour
- Unnatural compliance with parents or carers.

Emotional Abuse

Physical signs:

- A failure to grow or to thrive, particularly if the child thrives when away from home
- Sudden speech disorders
- Delayed development, either physical or emotional.

Behavioral signs:

- Compulsive nervous behaviour such as hair twisting or rocking
- Unwillingness or inability to play
- Excessive fear of making mistakes
- Self-harm or mutilation
- Reluctance to have parents contacted
- Excessive deference towards others, especially adults
- Excessive lack of confidence

- Excessive need for approval, attention or affection
- Inability to cope with praise
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away / stealing / lying
- Sudden under achievement or lack of concentration

Sexual Abuse

Physical signs:

- Pain, itching, bruising or bleeding in the genital or anal areas
- Signs and symptoms of sexually transmitted disease
- Recurrent genital discharge or urinary tract infections without apparent cause
- Stomach pains or discomfort when the child is walking or sitting down.

Behavioral signs:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour
- Apparent fear of someone
- Running away from home
- Nightmares or bedwetting
- Self-harm, self-mutilation or attempts at suicide
- Abuse of drugs or other substances
- Eating problems
- Sexualized knowledge or behaviour in young children
- Sexual drawings or language
- Possession of unexplained amounts of money
- Taking a parental role at home and functioning beyond their age level
- Not being allowed to have friends, particularly in adolescence
- Alluding to secrets which they cannot reveal
- Telling other children or adults about the abuse
- Reluctance to get changed for sporting activities.

Neglect

Physical signs:

- Being constantly hungry and sometimes stealing food from others
- Being in an unkempt state, and frequently dirty or smelly
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Being dressed inappropriately for the weather conditions
- Untreated medical conditions – not being taken for medical treatment for illnesses or injuries.

Behavioral signs:

- Being tired all the time
- Frequently missing school or being late
- Failing to keep hospital or medical appointments
- Having few friends
- Being left alone or unsupervised on a regular basis
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging, especially of food.

Appendix C – Reporting Abuse Documents

Please pass this form to the Director or designated person upon filling it.

Logging a concern about a child's safety and welfare:

Part 1/2 (for use by any member of staff)

Pupil's Name:	Date of Birth:	Class:
Date and Time of Incident:	Date and Time (of writing):	
Name:		
Print Signature		
Job Title:		
Record the following factually: Who? What (if recording a verbal disclosure by a child use their words)? Where? When (date and time of incident)? Any witnesses?		
What is the pupil's account/perspective?		
Professional opinion where relevant.		
Any other relevant information (distinguish between fact and opinion). Previous concerns etc.		
Note actions, including names of anyone to whom your information was passed and when.		

Part 2/2 (for use by the Director or designated person)

Time and date information received, and from whom.
Any advice sought – if required (date, time, name, role, organisation and advice given).
Action taken (referral to children’s social care/monitoring advice given to appropriate staff etc.) with reasons. Note time, date, names, who information shared with and when etc.
<u>Parents informed?</u> YES/NO and reasons.
<u>Outcome</u> Record names of individuals/agencies who have given information regarding outcome of any referral (if made).
Where can additional information regarding child/incident be found (e.g. pupil file, serious incident book)?
Should a concern/ confidential file be commenced if there is not already one? Why?
Signed
Printed Name

Logging concerns/information shared by someone external to the school (Pass on to the Director or the designated person)

Pupil's Name:	Date of Birth:	Class:
Date and Time of Incident:	Date and Time of receipt of information: Via letter / phone etc.?	
Recipient (and role) of information:		
Name of caller/provider of information:		
Organisation/agency/role:		
Contact details (phone number/address/e-mail)		
Relationship to the child/family:		
Information received:		
Actions/Recommendations for the school:		
Outcome:		
Name:		
Signature:		
Date and time completed:		
Counter Signed by Director or designated person:		
Name:		
Date and time:		

Body Map Guidance (attach to form if necessary)

Body Maps should be used to document and illustrate visible signs of harm and physical injuries. Always use a black pen (never a pencil) and do not use correction fluid or any other eraser.

Do not remove clothing for the purpose of the examination unless the injury site is freely available because of treatment.

At no time should an individual teacher/member of staff or school take photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's body, the body map below should be used. Any concerns should be reported and recorded without delay to the appropriate safeguarding services, e.g. Social Care direct or child's social worker if already an open case to social care.

When you notice an injury to a child, try to record the following information in respect of each mark identified e.g. red areas, swelling, bruising, cuts, lacerations and wounds, scalds and burns:

- Exact site of injury on the body, e.g. upper outer arm/left cheek.
- Size of injury - in appropriate centimetres or inches.
- Approximate shape of injury, e.g. round/square or straight line.
- Colour of injury - if more than one colour, say so.
- Is the skin broken?
- Is there any swelling at the site of the injury, or elsewhere?
- Is there a scab/any blistering/any bleeding?
- Is the injury clean or is there grit/fluff etc.?
- Is mobility restricted as a result of the injury?
- Does the child feel pain?
- Has the child's body shape changed/are they holding themselves differently?

Importantly the date and time of the recording must be stated as well as the name and designation of the person making the record. Add any further comments as required.

Ensure First Aid is provided where required and record
A copy of the body map should be kept on the child's concern/confidential file.

This must be completed at time of observation:

Name of Pupil:	Date of birth:
Name of staff:	Job title:
Date and time of observation:	COMPLETE ALL DIAGRAMS AND SUBMIT IN FULL

