

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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Last review date	October 2025	Throughout: replaced references to SEN for LS, and to PSHE to include 'Tutor curriculum'. 2.2 School visitors addition. 4.2.5 New point on discrimination & bullying. 5.4.2 New sentence on avenues of support. 4.2.2 Updated to reflect use of Ed-admin for record keeping. 7. Updated to reflect use of Ed-admin. 8. Inclusion of PESTAZ and edits to staff-student communications. 9. Update to DSL and Teaching Staff responsibilities. 10. Additions to Annex 1 and 2
Latest review date	May 2026	1.Addition of wording to emphasise the culture of safeguarding in ES schools. 3.1 Addition of definition of safeguarding and child protection. 5.2.5 Peer-on-peer abuse examples expanded. 5.2.6 new section: Online & Digital Safeguarding 5.4.2 Additional sentence to Stage 4; addition of introductory sentence to process chart. 7. New Procedure flowchart added for external / CoC process. 8. Additional wording in 'Allegations against Staff' section to emphasise school support. 8. Additional wording in 'Social Contact with Students' section to emphasise digital boundaries between students and staff.

		8.1 new section: 'Low-Level Concerns About Staff or Volunteers' 8. Addition of whistleblowing wording in 'Allegations Against Staff' section. 11. Related Policies: Added MCDSS Child Safeguarding Policy 2023
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School leader responsible	ALL	
Author	ACH	

1. Rationale

Educore Services (ES) fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection. All schools in the Educore Services group believe that all children and young people have the right to protection from abuse and neglect, and that the welfare of young people is of paramount importance. Educore Services is committed to maintaining a culture of safeguarding in which all adults understand that the welfare of children is paramount, and all understand their responsibility for safeguarding, promoting the welfare of children and young people, taking concerns seriously and ensuring that they are protected from harm.

The Educore Services Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy is based in international law and in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which Zambia is a signatory. The two key articles are:

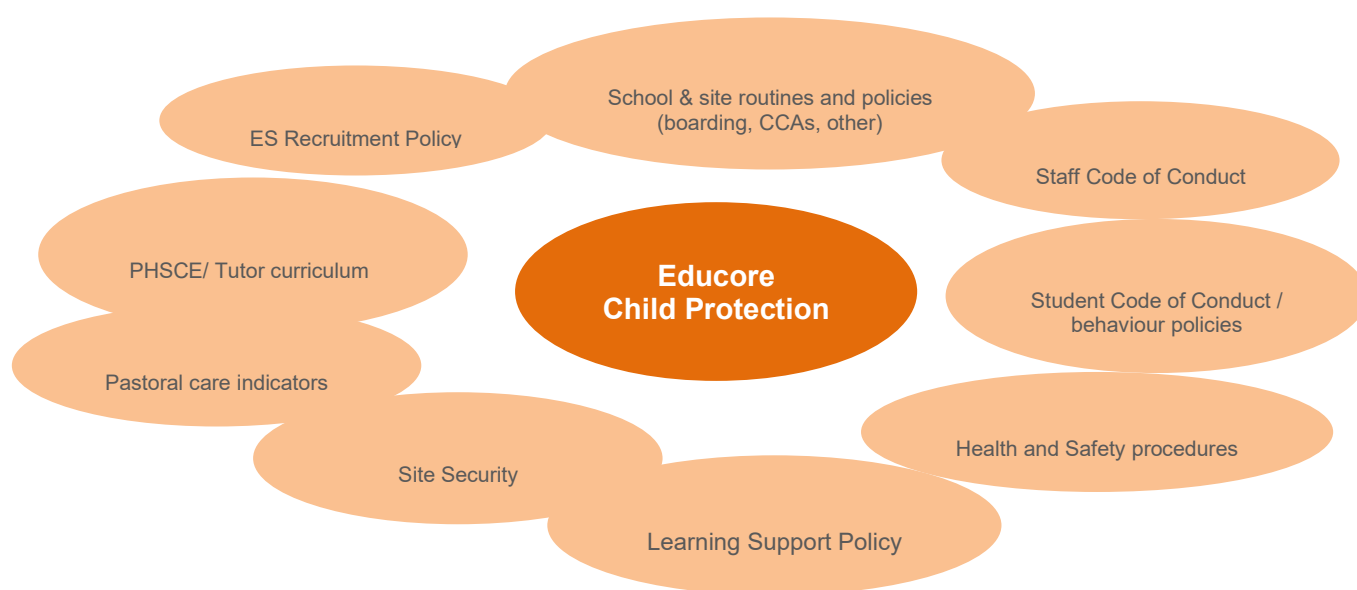
Article 19	Protection from abuse and neglect The State shall protect the child from all forms of maltreatment by parents or others responsible for the care of the child and establish appropriate social programs for the prevention of abuse and the treatment of victims.
Article 34	Sexual exploitation The State shall protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse, including prostitution and involvement in pornography.

The Educore Services safeguarding & child protection policy works for the child, the family and the community. Safeguarding children and young people from abuse or neglect is a multi-faceted issue that involves dynamics of the child, the family, and the community. The Educore Services Child Protection Policy works to respond at all three levels.

Level	Characteristics	EDUCORE SERVICES Responsibility
The Child	At-risk children and young people in this instance include those with unstable or unsafe home environments, those with mental, physical or socio-emotional issues, and those unaware of their rights to protection, who may be at greater risk of abuse, neglect or harm.	ES schools promote respect, study and social skills, teach rights to protection, healthy relationships, assertiveness, and where to go to find support.
The Family	At-risk characteristics include parents under stress, families with perceived less support and access to resources, and those who are socially isolated or have unusually high or low expectations of their children. A parental history of inappropriate discipline as children, families including vulnerable adults, and those with identified or unidentified physical, mental or emotional issues which might need additional support.	ES schools work with parents of at-risk children to understand appropriate discipline, network with community and health services, and teach parents child protection practices.
The Community	At-risk characteristics include: a limited capacity to enforce laws on child	ES schools strictly implement the Safeguarding & Child Protection

	protection; limited resources available for either expatriate or local families, unusually high stressors placed on parents, a culture of acceptance of inappropriate behaviour towards children or young people (i.e. corporal punishment, child marriage, child labour), unusually high or low expectations placed on children to achieve, and a lack of focus on individual, familial or community wellbeing.	Policy, trains teachers to recognise abuse and supports parents in protective behaviours, networks with community and health services for holistic referrals, networks with local authorities
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All staff (teaching staff, teaching assistants, administrative and support staff) and volunteers at Educore Services have a duty to ensure that all students within our care are safe and protected. All staff and volunteers have a duty to ensure that if there are any concerns relating to the welfare and/or safety of a young person that the procedures highlighted in this document are followed. At Educore Services we take a holistic approach to child protection, as illustrated in the chart below:



There are three main elements of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Prevention:	E.g. positive school atmosphere, teaching and pastoral support to students
Protection:	By following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to Child Protection concerns
Support:	To students and school staff in need of it.

2. Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy is to provide information for all staff to carry out this duty of care responsibly. The five main elements of the policy are:

1. Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
2. Ensuring we practice site safety including knowing who visitors to the school are, and where they are, at all times.
3. Ensuring we practice site safety including knowing which students are in school and where they are, at all times.

4. Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
5. Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
6. Supporting students who have been abused in accordance with his / her child protection plan.
7. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop, including ensuring our school sites are secure.

We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the PSHE / Tutor curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

3 Definition of children's rights

This policy covers any child or young person attending an Educore Services school. .

3.1 Definition of the terms 'Safeguarding' and 'Child Protection'.

Safeguarding means the actions a school takes to promote the welfare of children and young people and to protect them from harm. This includes creating a safe environment, preventing abuse or neglect, supporting wellbeing, and ensuring that concerns are recognised and responded to appropriately.

Child protection is a specific part of safeguarding. It refers to the procedures followed when a child is known or suspected to be at risk of significant harm, including abuse, neglect or exploitation, and the steps taken to protect that child.

3.2 Definitions of Children's Rights

All children have needs and rights. Zambia is a signatory to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, which means that the country has an obligation to protect, respect and fulfil the human rights of all its citizens, including children. As an organisation we also understand the importance of the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#). In terms of safeguarding, this means that students in our care have:

The need for ...	The right to ...
- physical care and attention	- have their needs met and safeguarded
- intellectual stimulation	- be protected from neglect, abuse and exploitation
- emotional love and security	- be protected from discrimination
- social contact and relationships	- be treated as an individual

Prominent among the rights of a child are the right to an education. This means children must have access to an effective education and official recognition of the studies a student has completed. Providing this alone however does not absolve us of our obligations to the students in our schools. Also of particular relevance to us are: the right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence; the right to freedom of thought, conscience or religion; the right to freedom of expression and the prohibition of discrimination and prevention of subjection to inhuman treatment or punishment.

4 The Children's Code

The [2022 Children's Code Act](#) stipulates in Zambian law certain basic requirements for settings which are in loco parentis. The most important requirements for day and boarding school settings are as below:

1. Each school has a nominated Designated Safeguarding Lead who is cognisant of their responsibilities and competent in carrying them out.

2. Safe channels are laid out for children and young people to report violence or abuse, and all children are aware of how to follow them. Information on reporting channels is conspicuously displayed in child-friendly language.
3. Safeguarding education which shows what constitutes emotional, sexual, physical and self-inflicting violence or abuse is provided to all children and young people in our care.
4. All staff members and those who work with children and young people connected to our schools know of their duty to inform authorised officers such as child welfare inspectors on suspicion or discovery of violence or abuse.

The following extract from the legislation details the points above:

166 No. of 2022]		<i>Children's Code</i>
PART XVII		
CHILD SAFEGUARDING		
Measures on child safeguarding in institution or organisation	276. (1)	An institution or organisation shall —
	(a)	establish and implement child safeguarding and protection procedures to prevent violence against a child and child rights abuse; 5
	(b)	educate a child on child rights and what constitutes physical, emotional, sexual and self-inflicting violence in a manner that is adapted to the age and maturity of the child; 10
	(c)	ensure that a child has access to a safe channel to report any form of abuse or violence and that a child in the care or custody of the institution or organisation is informed on the manner of reporting any form of violence or abuse; and 15
	(d)	have a child safeguarding focal point person and ensure that a child in the care or custody of the institution or organisation is aware of the safeguarding focal point person. 20
	(2)	An institution or organisation shall display information on the channel of reporting referred to under subsection (1)(c) in a conspicuous place that is legible for a child. 25
	(3)	An institution or organisation shall immediately inform a child welfare inspector or other authorised officer of any violence or abuse against a child. 30
	(4)	An institution or organisation that contravenes this section commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a fine not exceeding three hundred thousand penalty units. 35
	(5)	In this Part, unless the context otherwise requires, "institution or organisation" means an institution or organisation that provides services, care or protection to a child, without the presence of the child's parent, guardian or person having parental responsibility for the child. 40

5. Procedures

5.1 What staff should look out for

Any child may benefit from early help, but all staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- requires learning support or has additional needs (whether or not they have an individual action education plan (IEP));
- is a young carer; (A child under the age of 18 who has responsibility for other children or adult relatives)
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour,
- is frequently missing/goes missing from home;

- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or other exploitation.

5.2 Signs of Abuse

The presence of the following indicators should alert us to the possibility that a child is being abused:

5.2.1 Indicators of Physical Abuse

- a) Physical:
 - Bruises, burns, sprains, dislocations, bites, cuts and welts
 - Fractured bones, especially in an infant or in other cases where a fracture is unlikely to have occurred accidentally
 - Poisoning
 - Internal injuries
 - Shaking injuries
 - Strangulation.
- b) Behavioural:
 - Express little or no emotion when hurt
 - Offers unlikely explanations for injuries
 - Wears long sleeved clothes on hot days
 - Demonstrates a fear of parents or other adults
 - Is fearful when other children cry or shout out
 - Is excessively friendly to strangers
 - Is passive and compliant
 - Is nervous, hyperactive, aggressive, or disruptive
 - Tells someone that physical harm has occurred.

5.2.2 Indicators of Emotional/Psychological Abuse

- a) Physical:
 - Speech disorders
 - Delays in physical development
 - Failure to thrive.
- b) Behavioural:
 - Has low self-esteem
 - Exhibits unexplained mood swings
 - Exhibits age-inappropriate behaviours, for instance overly adult or overly infantile
 - Is withdrawn, passive, or tearful
 - Exhibits aggressive or demanding behaviour
 - Is highly anxious
 - Has difficulty relating to adults and peers.
 - Parents or carers who withdraw attention from their child (the 'cold shoulder'), who humiliate their child (for example by making negative comparisons or name-calling), or who blame their child for their problems.
 - Addiction to or over-reliance on social media or visiting inappropriate sites.

5.2.3 Indicators of Sexual Abuse or Exploitation

- a) Physical (some may only be identifiable through medical examination):
 - Bruises, scratches, or other injuries not consistent with accidental injury in either genital or anal areas
 - Inflammation, itching, soreness, discharge, or unexplained bleeding from either genital or anal areas
 - Painful and frequent urination
 - Signs of sexually transmitted infections
 - Semen in the vagina, anus or external genitalia or on clothing
 - Bruises, bite marks, or other injuries to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs
 - Difficulty walking or sitting
 - Torn, stained, or bloodied underwear

- Pregnancy of adolescents where the identity of the father is vague or secret
- Recurrent urinary tract infections
- Persistent headaches or recurrent abdominal pain
- Unexplained pain in the genital area.

b) Behavioural:

- Over attention to adults of a particular sex
- Displaying unusual interest in the genitals of others
- Acting out sexual behaviour with adults, dolls or other children
- Open displays of sexuality, for example, repeated public masturbation
- Precocious knowledge of sexual matters
- Promiscuity, repetitious sexually precocious behaviour
- Sudden changes in mood or behaviour
- Difficulty sleeping and nightmares
- Regressed behaviour, for example bedwetting, separation anxiety, insecurity
- Change in eating patterns including preoccupation with food
- Lack of trust in familiar adults, fear of strangers, fear of a particular gender
- Acting out behaviour – aggression, lying, stealing, unexplained running away, drug or alcohol abuse, suicide attempts
- Withdrawn behaviour such as passivity, excessive compliance, mood swings or depression
- Learning problems at school, loss of concentration, unexplained drop in school performance
- Poor peer relationships, family and/or child appear socially isolated
- Tells someone that sexual abuse has occurred
- Reluctance to undress, for example, for school sporting functions
- Excessive bathing
- Inappropriate displays of attention between child and caregiver that appear 'lover-like'.

Indications of sexual exploitation can include:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- Children who regularly miss school.

5.2.4 Indicators of Neglect from Children

a) Physical:

- Frequent hunger
- Malnutrition
- Poor hygiene
- Inappropriate clothing
- Unsupervised for long periods
- Medical needs not attended to
- Abandonment by parents or guardians
- Failure to thrive.

b) Behavioural:

- Steals food
- Stays at school outside school hours
- Is often tired, falls asleep in class
- Abuses alcohol or drugs
- Displays aggressive behaviour
- Is not relating well to peers
- Is indiscriminate with affection
- Shows evidence of totally unsupervised access to social media or harmful internet content.

5.2.5 Peer on Peer Abuse

We should also be aware of incidences of peer on peer abuse, between students in our schools or the local community. Peer on peer abuse is often gendered in nature and it is statistically more likely that girls will be

victims and boys will be perpetrators, although of course this is not always the case. Peer on peer abuse can include:

- Sexual intimidation, harassment, violence or assault
- Physical abuse, coercive behaviour, initiation or hazing
- Sexting, youth-produced sexual imagery or other image-based abuse
- Misogyny, discriminatory abuse or group-based intimidation
- Online harassment or sustained bullying, whether digitally or in person
- Other emotional or physical bullying or violence.

It is important that staff in all Educore Schools recognise that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as school banter, a joke, or part of growing up. Procedures for reporting and following up peer on peer abuse follow procedures for all other types of abuse and neglect.

5.2.6 Online and Digital Safeguarding

Online and digital activity is treated as a safeguarding matter where it may place a child at risk. Risks may include online grooming, cyberbullying, sextortion, image-based abuse, livestreaming or gaming risks, harmful online communities, radicalisation online and misuse of AI-generated content.

- Staff and students must use school-approved devices, platforms and communication channels for school activity.
- Staff must maintain professional boundaries online and must not use personal accounts or private messaging to communicate with students.
- Concerns about harmful online behaviour, explicit images, AI misuse or unsafe digital contact must be reported to the DSL without delay and recorded in line with school procedure.
- Schools will monitor school systems and respond to digital safeguarding concerns in line with the E-Safety Policy and this policy.

5.3 Issues of Disclosure

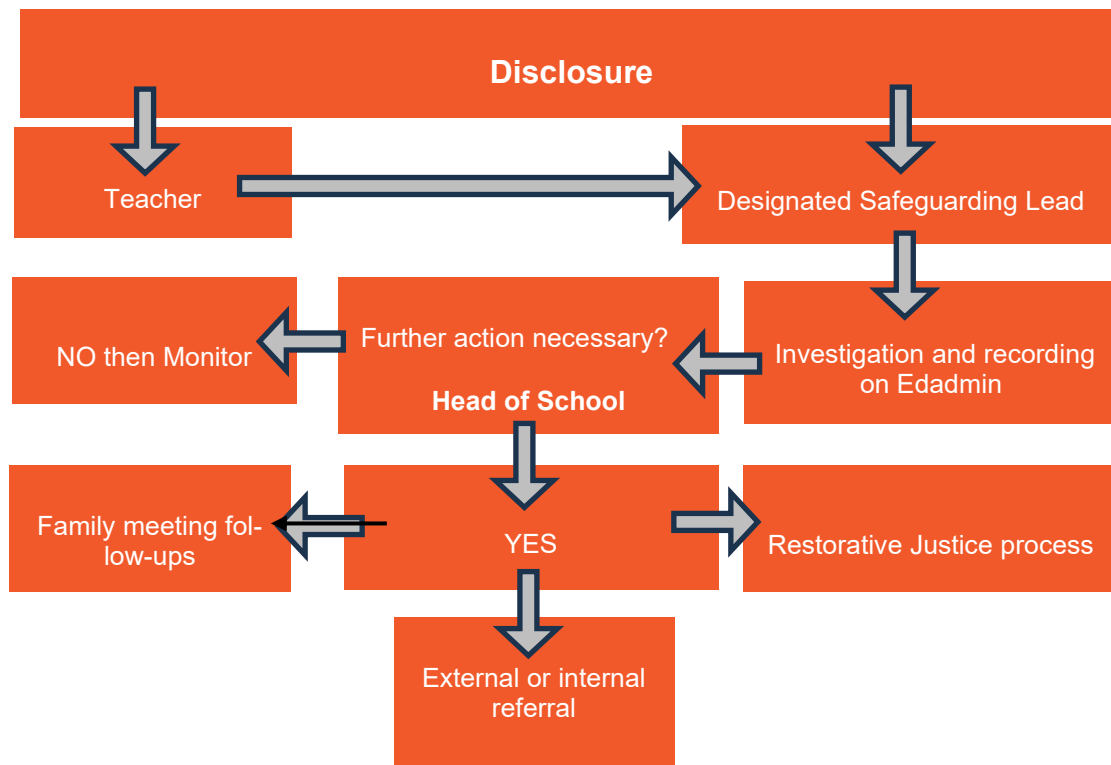
There are a number of ways in which abuse becomes apparent:

- A child discloses abuse
- Someone else discloses that a child has told him/her or that he/she strongly believes a child has been or is being abused
- A child may show signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no satisfactory explanation
- A child's behaviour may indicate that it is likely that he/she is being abused
- A member of staff's or volunteer behaviour or in the way in which he/she relates to a child causes concern.

Becoming aware of abuse can cause a multitude of emotional reactions, which are personal to each individual. Whatever the reaction and however the abuse has become apparent, actual or suspected, it must be responded to in the correct manner according to the procedure outlined below. Even if the truth of the disclosure is uncertain – an appropriate response has to be made. A response in accordance with the procedure outlined will be supported by the lead member of staff and ultimately Educore Services management.

5.4 Process

5.4.1 General Process Structure



5.4.2 Process Description

All staff have a responsibility to report safeguarding concerns immediately. Staff must never assume that another person has taken action.

Stage	Description
Stage 1	- If a teacher sees signs that cause them to suspect sexual abuse, emotional abuse, inflicted injury or neglect, he/she may have the opportunity to seek information from the child, gently and tactfully. If there is no opportunity to talk to the child, move on to Stage Three. - Students and staff should be made aware of the support available to them, and the signs to look out for, through information distribution such as INSET, special training, handbooks, information posters in child-appropriate language for students and separately for staff. This can be presented to children and young people during scheduled lessons, form or tutor time, workshops or assemblies. - New staff are provided with thorough safeguarding and child protection onboarding, ensuring they know their responsibilities and school process. - All staff and students need to know what to do in the case of a safeguarding or child protection incident or concern. All staff know how to safely and confidentially record incidents and concerns on Ed-admin. - Signs can range from physical marks and visible evidence of neglect, such as poor growth, inadequate clothing and hunger, to behavioural changes, such as sudden aggression, nervousness or a precocious interest in sexual matters.

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Stage 2	If the child's responses do not dispel suspicion, make a brief note of your concerns, using the Ed-admin student file under the Learning and Behaviour module (see Annex 1 for step-by-step instructions), recording your conversation as far as you can remember it (this may be used in case of required evidence), the time, date and location.																		
Stage 3	Report your concerns to your school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Each school has a DSL and a deputy DSL. It is each staff member's responsibility to know who the current DSL and Deputy are. If your DSL is absent on that day, please go to the deputy as your first point of contact. The DSL will first discuss the situation with you and then will contact the Response Team (School nurse or matron, Head Teacher or other named member of senior leadership, CEO) and/or the police if there are sufficient grounds for concern. Ensure the DSL can access the report filed on Ed-admin. If a child approaches you to make a disclosure, the procedure for gathering information and reporting is the same., The DSL must report the matter to the Response Team if a child makes a disclosure. If the DSL and Response Team are uncertain about whether the threshold for referral is met, they can contact a doctor and/or other support services including the police and social welfare confidentially and arrange to speak with them. . - It is likely that external referrals will be made if there are signs that a student in our care: - Is suffering or has suffered abuse and / or neglect outside or in some cases in school - Is likely to suffer abuse and / or neglect outside or in some cases in school - In the unlikely event of a disagreement arising between the Response Team and the DSL, the DSL shall make external referrals as described above to seek further guidance. - Referrals to the Response Team by the DSL should normally be put in writing but in extremely urgent cases an initial external telephone referral is acceptable if there is an immediate risk of harm to a child or young person, on the understanding that the referral will be confirmed in writing.																		

Stage	Description
	- All learners have the right to confidentiality, whether a minor or an adult. All disclosures, interventions and interviews take place in complete confidentiality, and sharing information with other stakeholders usually takes place only with the learner's consent. Student records are confidential and not accessible to all staff. However, if a child or young person is at risk of harm or in breach of the law, the school may have a duty to disclose confidential medical records to their parents and/or other authorities.
Stage 4	The DSL will manage the individual student file, ensuring complete confidentiality according to the appropriate security level. Please see Annex 1 for more detail on security levels and their use. The DSL will record copies of letters, reports, details of telephone conversations and all relevant case details, including dates and times. Child protection files are exempt from disclosure provisions, except when required by a court. On the occasion of external referral, it is important to ensure that no steps are taken internally by staff including the DSL until the appropriate pathway is made clear by the external agency.
Stage 5	Contact should be maintained between the DSL, the Response Team, social worker, family doctor and parents. The DSL to take the lead role in arranging case conferences and reviews at which all professionals involved will be present to discuss the child protection plan. Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (MCDSS) Child Protection Contacts (correct as of July 2026): Lusaka: Nosiku: +260 977 576 342. Solwezi: Mutale Chileshe: +260 976 134 336 Kyapamesa Kandela: +260 968 414 641
Stage 6	Should the DSL be invited to a case conference or legal proceedings concerning the child, a written report will be submitted by the school.

6. Monitoring and Support

The DSL will inform the Head Teacher and where necessary the Board DSL of students who are considered at risk by the school or who have a historical or ongoing external record of being at risk. The DSL will assign appropriate staff members to closely monitor the welfare of these students and will inform the DSL of any causes for concern.

Where appropriate an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be produced by the LS Lead to confirm support arrangements within the school.

When a child moves away from an Educore Services school, in addition to handing over the child protection file securely, DSLs are encouraged to share information to enable the new school to have support in place when a child arrives and ensure key staff, such as the SENCO or LS Lead, are aware of any needs.

7. Procedure Flowchart

If you have concerns about the safety or welfare of a child TAKE ACTION.
Doing nothing is NOT an option.

-Within 24 hours, complete the Confidential Safeguarding Record on Ed-admin.
-Write only facts about what you witness or hear from the pupil. Never opinions.
--Remember: always make and keep a written record of all events and action taken, date and sign each entry to this record. Keep records confidential and secure and separate from the child's curriculum file.

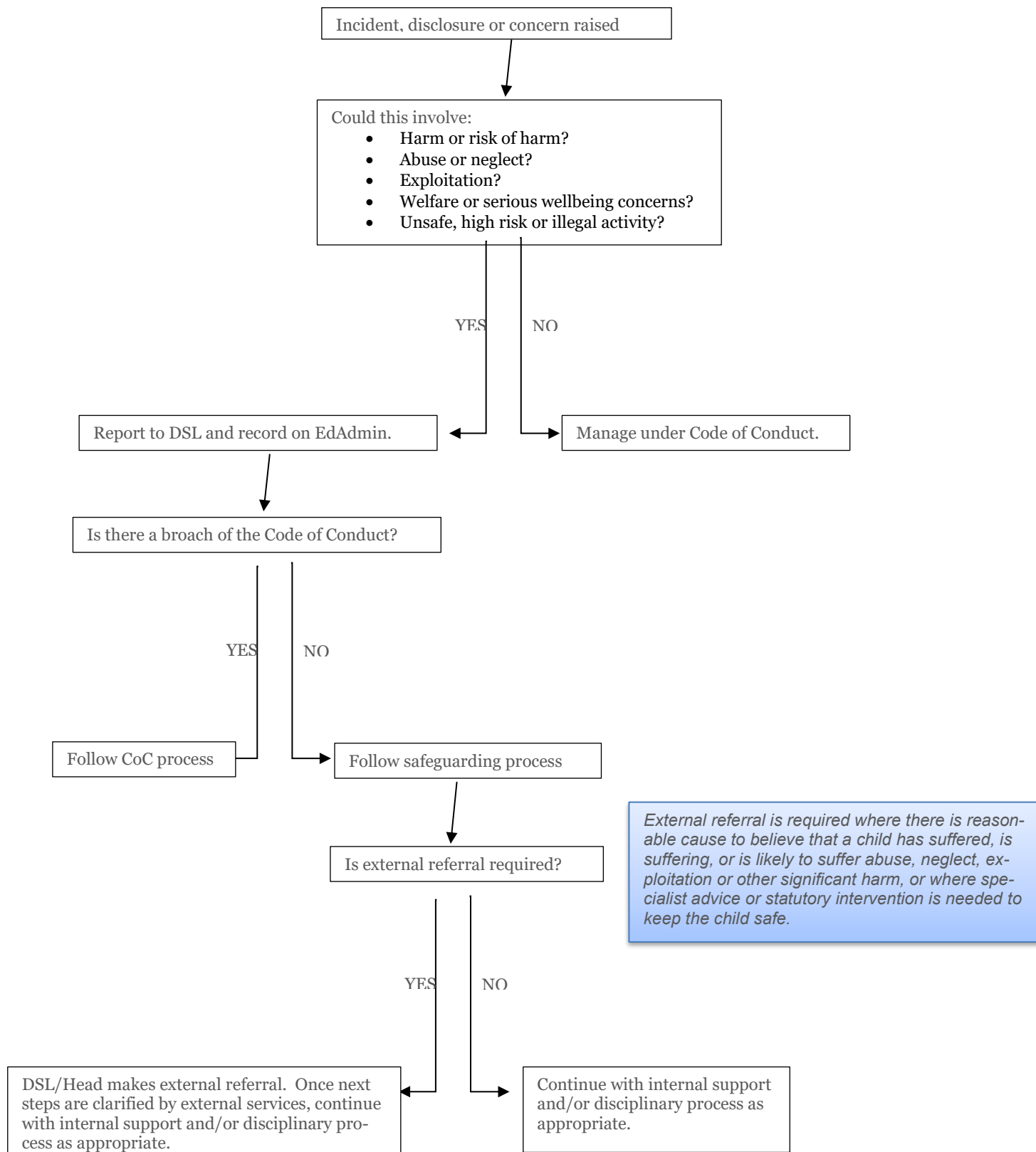
Notify one of the school's designated Designated Safeguarding Leads of the creation of a new safeguarding record on a student file.

What happens next?

DSLs will consult and respond. If you are asked to monitor the situation, make sure you are clear what you are expected to monitor, for how long and how and to whom you should feedback information to. If there is more than one DSL representative in a school (i.e. for each section of the school), they will meet fortnightly or as required to review all notifications and to assess all ongoing concerns.

Which Process Should I Follow?

To support consistent decision-making, the flow chart below summarises the recommended pathway for identifying, reporting, assessing, and escalating safeguarding concerns, including where disciplinary action or external referral may also be required.



8. Staff

It is important that all staff working in or for an Educore Services school read this policy and the related guidance and documents listed at the end of this policy.

Appointment of Staff	A separate recruitment policy gives full details of the procedures at Educore Services schools. The panel will ensure that their recruitment procedures include a check on the criminal background of all employees. A question about a child protection issues will be included in staff interviews, to alert candidates to the fact that a policy is in place.
Allegations Against Staff	Allegations against teachers or other staff should be referred to the DSL or Head. The Head will deal with each case sensitively, giving due consideration to any allegation, the risk of harm to students, the interests of the member of staff and of the school. It is Educore Services' policy to approach all safeguarding matters in a child-centric manner, and the safety and rights of the child will always be put first. In the event of an allegation against the Head Teacher, the Executive Head must be contacted. In the absence of an EH or in the event of an allegation against the Executive Head, the Board's safeguarding lead must be contacted. Staff may bypass line management where necessary and report safeguarding concerns directly to the Board safeguarding lead. Educore Services will protect staff who raise concerns in good faith from retaliation, victimisation or disadvantage. Educore is committed to protecting and supporting staff who act in good faith and follow safeguarding procedures. Staff involved in safeguarding investigations will receive appropriate support, including guidance, representation, and legal advice where necessary. Allegations will be handled fairly, confidentially, and professionally, with protection against malicious or unfounded claims. Staff will also receive regular safeguarding training to help them protect both learners and themselves in sensitive situations.
Physical contact with students	All staff should respect the need to behave appropriately and professionally, particularly when there is one-to-one contact with students. It is advised that staff should avoid touching students. Certainly they should never touch students in ways or on parts of the body that may be considered indecent. In the rare cases in which a teacher has to use physical restraint, no more than the minimum necessary force should be used. Sometimes touching is unavoidable, for example when teaching aspects of sport and giving appropriate support so that the student does not sustain injury (rugby, gymnastics, 'steering' a tennis backhand, cover drive in cricket etc.) The PE Departments at all our schools will adhere to any standards set out by the Physical Education and Sports Teachers Association of Zambia (PESTAZ) and will: - explain clearly to students the purpose behind any physical contact and how it contributes to improving their performance and safety - provide opportunities for students to discuss any reservations and, if necessary, decline such assistance - avoid physical contact in one-to-one situations. Staff at our schools undertake to use a hands-off policy when directing, moving and restraining pupils. In the infant classes, children may be directed through hand holding but never by force, by pushing or by pulling them. Guiding children by the hand whilst giving instructions to them is the safest way to move a child. Staff must use their professional discretion i.e.: shouting whilst pulling a child would be considered inappropriate, unless that child is in danger of immediate grievous harm like in the case of an oncoming car. Sometimes and particularly in the younger year groups it is necessary to show compassion through hugging a child. All staff who work with children should know that in comforting a child in this way, you do not compromise the child's rights. We want to have schools where children feel safe and where they can get comfort from a member of staff. For older children hugging should be avoided wherever possible. If a child comes in for a hug, meet that child side on, and avoid encouraging this from older pupils.

Social contact with students

Staff should be careful to maintain a professional teacher-student relationship with students in their charge and should not place themselves in a position where they are alone with a student or where their actions could be misinterpreted. It is strongly advised, for example, that staff do not use social networking sites or text messaging to conduct friendships with students, and do not ever share their personal contact details with students. If a staff member is speaking to a student alone, it is good practice to leave the door and any window curtains open, and if appropriate let another member of staff know a one to one conversation is taking place.

Communication with students should be through Microsoft Teams or email depending on school policy unless otherwise specified for a particular reason or one-off event by school leadership.

Staff must not post pictures or videos of learners on social media and messaging platforms without prior parental consent. All digital communication must respect the privacy and dignity of learners and families. Sensitive information must never be shared publicly on messaging platforms including WhatsApp, Teams, email, Facebook or other.

8.1 Low-Level Concerns About Staff or Volunteers

A low-level concern is behaviour by a staff member or volunteer that does not meet the threshold for an allegation of abuse, but may still be inappropriate, unprofessional or indicate a developing safeguarding risk.

Examples may include overly familiar behaviour, inappropriate jokes, excessive one-to-one contact, secretive communication, boundary crossing or favouritism.

- Any low-level concern must be reported promptly to the DSL or Head Teacher. If the concern relates to the Head Teacher, it must be reported to the Executive Head or Board safeguarding lead.
- Reports will be recorded securely and confidentially, separate from general staff records where appropriate.
- The DSL and Head Teacher will review records over time to identify any patterns or repeated concerns.
- Low-level concerns will be handled fairly and proportionately, with action taken where needed to protect students and maintain professional standards.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

The following roles and responsibilities have to be ensured:

Governing Body

- ensures each school has effective policies and procedures in place and monitors the schools's compliance with them
- ensures that a senior member of each school's leadership team is designated to take lead responsibility for child protection as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), and that a Deputy DSL is also appointed in each school.
- ensures that staff undertake appropriate training
- remedies, without delay, any deficiencies or weaknesses regarding child protection arrangements
- nominates a board member to be safeguarding lead, responsible for liaising with the partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Executive Headteacher (Trident or Sentinel) or other staff members.
- seeks assurance that, where services or activities are provided on school premises by another body, the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection and liaises with the schools on these matters where appropriate
- reviews its policies and procedures biannually.

Executive Head (Trident or Sentinel)	- ensures that the policies and procedures adopted by the Board are fully implemented in each school by the Head, and followed by all staff - ensures that Head Teachers have the resources and support they need to deal with any safeguarding or child protection issues as soon as they arise - ensures that Head Teachers always have the required DSL leads in place and relevant and updated policies and resources.
Head Teacher	- ensures that the policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body are fully implemented, and followed by all staff - ensures that sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the DSL and other staff to discharge their responsibilities - ensures that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner. - Ensures the students and/or staff are supported by the Board by keeping the Board safeguarding lead informed.
DSL and Deputy responsible for Child Protection	- ensure that all staff have access to and understand the school's child protection policy - ensure that all staff have induction training and annual safeguarding training. - keep detailed accurate secure records - obtain access to resources - attend appropriate training - ensure the child protection policy is updated and reviewed annually and works with the governing body regarding this. Ensures that the current version of the Safeguarding policy is published on the school website. - ensure parents have access to the school's child protection policy - ensure that, where students leave the school, their child protection file is copied and promptly transferred, separately from the main student file. - ensure that all students understand their rights with regards to their protection, wellbeing and safety, and know how to seek support or help if they need it. - Please see the 'DSL Responsibilities Guidelines' document for more detail.
Teaching Staff	- Annual training (after policy review) for all teaching staff must be maintained. - All teachers must demonstrate that they have read and understood the ES Safeguarding Policy, not only on induction but regularly enough to be confident in current policy, postholders and process. - School staff also have broader daily responsibilities to keep children safe from harm and abuse. These include: - o To treat every child without exception with compassion. - o To exercise self-restraint with our voices and with our actions. - o To take the duty roster seriously, be present and alert while on duty, and alert your supervisor and/or arrange cover for your duty if you are going to be absent. All pupils are in the care of all staff. If a child is in need on campus they should be attended to even if they are not taught directly by that teacher or that teacher is not technically 'on duty'. - o Primary teachers should know where the pupils in their class are at any given time. Secondary teachers should be able to locate any student quickly when necessary.

10. Partnership with Parents & Guardians

Our schools share a purpose with parents and guardians to keep children safe from harm and to have their welfare ensured. Educore Services schools are committed to working with parents positively-and we ensure that all parents are treated with respect. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission or it is necessary to do so in order to protect the child.

We will share with parents and guardians any concerns we may have about their child unless doing so may cause additional harm to the child. We encourage parents and guardians to discuss any concerns they may have with the relevant teacher or a member of the school management team (Head or senior leader).

Parents and guardians are made aware that they can view this policy on request; the updated Safeguarding policy is published on all school websites

11. Related Policies

The following documents are an integral part of or related to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy:

Pos	Description	Filename / Link
1	Pastoral Care Policy	<i>By school</i>
3	Code of Conduct	<i>By school</i>
	Recording Safeguarding Incidents	Recording Safeguarding Incidents 10-25
4	Educore Services eSafety Policy	Educore Services E-Safety Policy
5	ES Designated Safeguarding leads	ES Designated Safeguarding Leads 2025-2026
6	ES DSL Guidelines	DSL Responsibilities - Guidelines
7	Safeguarding Headlines for Support Staff	Safeguarding Headlines for Support Staff
8	School Pupil Codes of Conduct	<i>By school</i>
9	School Anti-Bullying Policies	<i>By school</i>
10	ES Health and Safety Policy	Health & Safety Policy EDUCORE SERVICES.pdf
11	ES Safer Recruitment Policy	ES Safer Recruitment Policy
12	Educore Services Equality Policy	ES Equality Policy
13	Ministry of Community Development & Social Services Safeguarding Policy	MCDSS Child Safeguarding Policy

12. Annexes

The following documents, annexed below, are an integral part of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy:

Pos	Description
2	Talking and Listening to Children
3	Advice for Parents
4	Risk Assessment 'Checklist'

Annex 1: Talking and Listening to Children

If a child wants to confide in you, you **SHOULD**

- be accessible and receptive
- listen carefully and uncritically, at the child's pace
- take what is said seriously
- reassure children that they are right to tell
- tell the child that you must pass this information on
- make sure that the child is ok
- make a careful record of what was said (see Recording Safeguarding Incidents).

You should **NEVER**

- investigate or seek to prove or disprove possible abuse
- make promises about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets' to children
- assume that someone else will take the necessary action
- jump to conclusions, be dismissive or react with shock, anger, horror etc
- speculate or accuse anybody
- investigate, suggest or probe for information
- confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved
- offer opinions about what is being said or the persons allegedly involved
- forget to record what you have been told
- fail to pass this information on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Children with communication difficulties, or who use alternative/augmentative communication systems

- While extra care may be needed to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are interpreted correctly, any suspicions should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children
- opinion and interpretation will be crucial (be prepared to be asked about the basis for it and to possibly have its validity questioned if the matter goes to court).

Recordings should

- state who was present, time, date and place
- be passed to the DSL or Head Teacher immediately (certainly within 24 hours)
- use the child's words wherever possible
- be factual/state exactly what was said
- differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation.

What information do you need to obtain?

- Schools have no investigative role in child protection (Police and other institutions) will investigate possible abuse very thoroughly and in great detail, they will gather evidence and test hypotheses – leave this to them!)
- Never prompt or probe for information, your job is to listen, record and pass on
- Ideally, you should be clear about what is being said in terms of who, what, where and when
- The question which you should be able to answer at the end of the listening process is 'might this be a child protection matter?'
- If the answer is yes, or if you're not sure, record and pass on immediately to the DSL/Director/line manager.

If you do need to ask questions, what is and isn't OK?

- Never asked closed questions i.e. ones which children can answer yes or no to e.g. Did he/she touch you?
- Never make suggestions about who, how or where someone is alleged to have touched, hit etc e.g. Top or bottom, front or back?
- If we must, use only 'minimal prompts' such as 'go on ... tell me more about that ... tell me everything that you remember about that ...'
- Timescales are very important: 'When was the last time this happened?' is an important question.

What else should we think about in relation to disclosure?

- Is there a place in school which is particularly suitable for listening to children e.g. not too isolated, easily supervised, quiet etc

- We need to think carefully about our own body language – how we present will dictate how comfortable a child feels in telling us about something which may be extremely frightening, difficult and personal
- Be prepared to answer the 'what happens next' question
- We should never make face-value judgements or assumptions about individual children. For example, we 'know' that [child.....] tells lies'
- Think about how you might react if a child **did** approach you in school. We need to be prepared to offer a child in this position exactly what they need in terms of protection, reassurance, calmness and objectivity
- Think about what support you could access if faced with this kind of situation in school.

Annex 2: Advice for parents

There are a few simple steps which parents can take to help their children use the internet safely.

- Get to know your child's online habits. Children are inquisitive. They will look to explore the internet as much as they do the real world. Knowing the sites they go to, the people they meet there and what they do will help to keep children safe. Know what your child is doing online and who he/she is talking to. Ask him/her to teach you to use any applications you have never used.
- Stay alert to any sudden changes in mood or appearance, or to any major change in habits or to increased secretiveness. These are often tell-tale signs that something is not right.
- Keep lines of communication open - tell your child he/she can always talk to you or another trusted adult, such as a teacher, if he/she does get into some sort of trouble on the internet. Make your child aware that there are things on the internet which may be distressing.
- Spend some time surfing the internet yourself. The more that you know about the internet, the better able you are, in turn, to help your child navigate around it without coming to any harm.
- Install internet filtering software such as family controls (Google Family Link, for example), which give you an understanding of and control over what your child can access online. Create a parental administrative profile on your child's laptop, making their profile a standard user profile. This will bar them from installing any programmes without your permission, and they will not be able to uninstall any software you install.
- If you link a payment card to your account or your child's account, be aware of the potential for your child to spend money on add-ons in games.
- Regularly check your child's devices and laptop for historical internet browsing, screentime, etc. You may choose to encourage good internet hygiene with family routines such as leaving devices downstairs at bedtime, or restricting screen time each day or week. Remember your child does not have fully developed impulse control, and it is our responsibility as adults to instill good habits that build constructive relationships with technology.
- Help your child to understand that he/she should never give out personal details to online friends - personal information includes messenger id, email address, mobile number and any pictures of themselves, their family or friends - if your child publishes a picture or video online - anyone can change it or share it.
- If your child receives spam / junk email and texts, remind him or her never to believe them, reply to them or use them.
- It's not a good idea for your child to open files from unknown people. Children won't know what the files contain - it could be a virus, or worse - an inappropriate image or film.
- Help your child to understand that some people lie online and that therefore it's better to keep online friends online. Children and young people should never meet up with any strangers without an adult they trust.
- Always keep communication open for a child to know that it's never too late to tell someone if something makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Teach young people how to block someone online and report the sender if they feel uncomfortable.
- Be aware of professional sources of help. These include:

- <http://childwelfare.org.za/>: the Child Welfare South Africa website has resources for parents on a range of child welfare topics.
- <https://www.savethechildren.org.za/news-and-events/publications?page=3>: Save the Children's regional work on Child Protection includes information on what is important in raising a happy healthy child.
- www.thinkuknow.co.uk: a UK Government website with advice for parents on how to keep children safe online
- www.iwf.org.uk: the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) works to remove illegal material from the internet. If you have found any material you believe to be illegal e.g. child sex abuse images, other obscene material or material which incites racial hatred, you can report it to the IWF.
- A number of specialist websites contain general advice that may be of help to parents. These include www.nspcc.org.uk, www.nch.org.uk, www.barnardos.org.uk, and www.bullying.co.uk.
- Other sites can offer parents support on broader issues. These include www.parentlineplus.org.uk and www.parents.org.uk.

Annex 3: Risk Assessment 'Checklist'

1	Does the suspected harm meet the World Health Organisation (WHO) definition of abuse?	
2	Are there cultural, linguistic or disability issues?	
3	Am I wrongly attributing something to impairment?	
4	Does the chronology indicate any possible patterns, which could/do impact upon the level of risk?	
5	Are there any injuries or incidents that are acute, cumulative or episodic?	
6	Did any injuries result from spontaneous action, neglect or intent?	
7	Explanations consistent with injuries/behaviour?	
8	Severity and duration of harm?	
9	Effects upon child's health/development?	
10	Immediate or longer term effects?	
11	Child's reaction?	
12	Child's perception of the harm?	
13	Child's needs, wishes and feelings?	
14	Likelihood of recurrence?	
15	Parent's and carer's attitudes and responses to concerns?	
16	How willing are Parents/carers to cooperate?	
17	What does the child mean to the family?	
18	What role does the child play?	
19	Possible effects of intervention?	
20	Protective factors and strengths of the child? (ie vulnerability/resilience?)	
21	Familial strengths and weaknesses?	
22	Possibilities?	
23	Probabilities?	
24	When and how is the child at risk?	
25	How imminent is any risk?	
26	How grave are the possible consequences?	
27	How safe is the child?	
28	What are the risk assessment options?	
29	What are the risk management options?	
30	What is the interim plan?	