

Policy:

# Safeguarding

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St Edward's  
College

Founded 1929

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# Who we are

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## ***Mission Statement***

At St Edward's College we strive to create exemplary citizens in this increasingly globalised and technological world, placing strong emphasis on character formation, genuine intercultural understanding and leadership skills which will assist them to contribute to the well-being of society.

## ***About us***

St Edwards is an Independent private school which accepts students from Early Childhood to IBDP Sixth Form. We have a modern boarding section for students age 11 years up. Our educational experience has shaped us into the person we are today. Whether we learned from our own experiences, from our parents, grandparents, friends or teachers, we have gone through the 'learning experience'. Dedicated, caring and experienced professionals are the key to our success. The underlying approach to all lessons throughout St Edward's is simple. We do not want our students to solely learn, unless there is understanding of a concept/topic there is little point in learning and to understand one needs to think. Hence, TUL - Think, Understand, Learn.

At St Edward's we deliver our lessons with the most current, tried and proven international methodologies.

# Defining Safeguarding and Abuse

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## *Introduction*

Put in simple terms, abuse is ill-treatment or maltreatment of another person. The difference between these two terms is usually legal. Maltreatment is cruel, harmful treatment while ill-treatment is bad or unkind treatment. Both are abusive behaviours. So for the purposes of this policy document, the term abuse will cover both aspects. This criterion is important since it leads to the definition of safeguarding. Ill-treatment could happen anywhere, to anyone – between the children entrusted in our care, between adults at the College, between adults and children. **Whatever the case may be, safeguarding trumps everything else. You must always take time to listen to a person in distress who wishes to confide.**





# Types of Abuse

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Abuse involves ill-treatment of a child or adult. The definition of child abuse is wide in order to cover all forms of cruelty that children may endure in their lives. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can happen wholly online or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Abuse can take four main forms:

- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse
- neglect



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

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



frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

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

**Child sexual exploitation** is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity



(a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or  
(b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

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

**Radicalisation** is a form of indoctrination into a particular criminal and extremist viewpoint. Radicalisation feeds on emotional abuse and children with low self-esteem or have a history of suffering from bullying are regarded as most vulnerable.



**Vicarious abuse** is when there is the intention of harming another person through a minor. In this form of abuse, usually there is no clear intention to directly harm the child, however, the child may be used as a device to hurt another person putting the child at risk of trauma or other highly negative experiences. This is usually associated to parental alienation contexts where one parent says or does things that lead the child to develop unjustifiable negative emotions towards the other parent.

# Policy Details

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At St Edward's College, ill-treatment and/or abuse are strictly NOT tolerated at any level. The College maintains a zero-tolerance policy to all forms of abuse in strict adherence to the Laws of Malta as well as the Christian values the College is based on. This policy is based on the criteria of Policy, Prevention and Intervention.

## Policy

All students have the right to expect equitable supervision and care from the adults in the school. They should also feel that they have recourse to authority for protection if they feel that they need it.

## And teachers?

All Teachers are expected to carry out their duties in a professional manner, unhindered by unnecessary restrictions. They have a duty of care to their students and with that an authority which must be used to the benefit of the students. They have a right to be treated with respect in a way which reflects both their role as well as their professional status. All teachers have a right to privacy.

The Safeguarding of teachers is discussed in more detail in the College Policy Handbook.



# Usefull Terminology

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## **Abusive Behaviour**

Refers to patterns of various behaviours which may be aggressive, coercive or controlling, destructive, harassing, intimidating, isolating, or threatening, that an abuser may use to control a domestic partner, a colleague, a child or other victim.

## **Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)**

Ideally, a member of SMT appointed by the Head of the College to be a point of reference for any member of staff at the College, for the Interdisciplinary team and for visiting professionals. The College may appoint more than one DSO in charge of different year groups.

## **Head of College**

Refers to the College legal representative – Headmaster, Governor and/or Chairman of the Board of Governors

## **Interdisciplinary Team**

Refers to Counsellors, Social Workers, Psychologists, Psychotherapists, Play Therapists, Youth Workers, Inclusion Coordinators, Occupational Therapists, Autism Spectrum Support Team, Career Advisors and other psychosocial professionals employed by the College.

**Learners**

Refers to children who are attending Kindergarten, Primary, Secondary levels, and 6th forms up to 18 years old.

**Parents**

Refers to the biological or legal guardians of the learners

**College Worker**

Refers to Kindergarten, Primary, Secondary, 6th Forms and College administrators as well as social workers employed by the College

**Trusted member of Staff**

The College employee receiving disclosure from learner/parent



# Safeguarding Structure

## DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER (DSO)

Ms Claire Suzanne Borg [studentsupport@stedwards.edu.mt](mailto:studentsupport@stedwards.edu.mt)

## DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS

Ms Stephanie Grech 77771704 [earlyyears@stedwards.edu.mt](mailto:earlyyears@stedwards.edu.mt)

Ms Sharon Scerri 77891557 [junior@stedwards.edu.mt](mailto:junior@stedwards.edu.mt)

Ms Samantha Abela 77771702 [middle@stedwards.edu.mt](mailto:middle@stedwards.edu.mt)

Ms A M Cassar Torreggiani 79706604 [senior@stedwards.edu.mt](mailto:senior@stedwards.edu.mt)

Mr Jolen Galea 77771701 [ibhead@stedwards.edu.mt](mailto:ibhead@stedwards.edu.mt)

Ms Gianella Attard 99827780 [inco@stedwards.edu.mt](mailto:inco@stedwards.edu.mt)

## HEAD OF SCHOOL (WHERE CONCERN IS ADULT TO ADULT)

Mr Nollaig Mac an Bhaird [hm@stedwards.edu.mt](mailto:hm@stedwards.edu.mt)

## CHAIRMAN OF BOARD OF GOVERNORS (WHERE THE CONCERN IS ABOUT THE HEADMASTER)

Mr Michael Paris [chairman@stedwards.edu.mt](mailto:chairman@stedwards.edu.mt)

## IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Safeguarding Commission 22470950 [info@safeguarding.mt](mailto:info@safeguarding.mt)

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# Making a Disclosure

## READY

- A pupil may wish to talk to you at any point - if this involves safeguarding you must be prepared to listen immediately.
- Do not ask the pupil to come back later or to make an appointment.

## RECEIVE

- The pupil has chosen you - you are in a position of trust.
- Listen carefully to what they say.
- Do not show shock or disbelief.
- Take it seriously

## REASSURE

- Tell the pupil that they have done the right thing by speaking out.
- Do not promise confidentiality - you have a duty to refer. You can, however, state that information will only be shared with the people who need to know.
- Alleviate guilt - the pupil is not to blame, and they did the right thing in coming to you.

## RESPOND

- Do not ask leading questions (eg 'did X do this to you?') or interrogate them.
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
- Do not ask the pupil to repeat the matter to another member of staff. Explain that you need to talk to the DSL.
- Do not investigate the matter yourself.

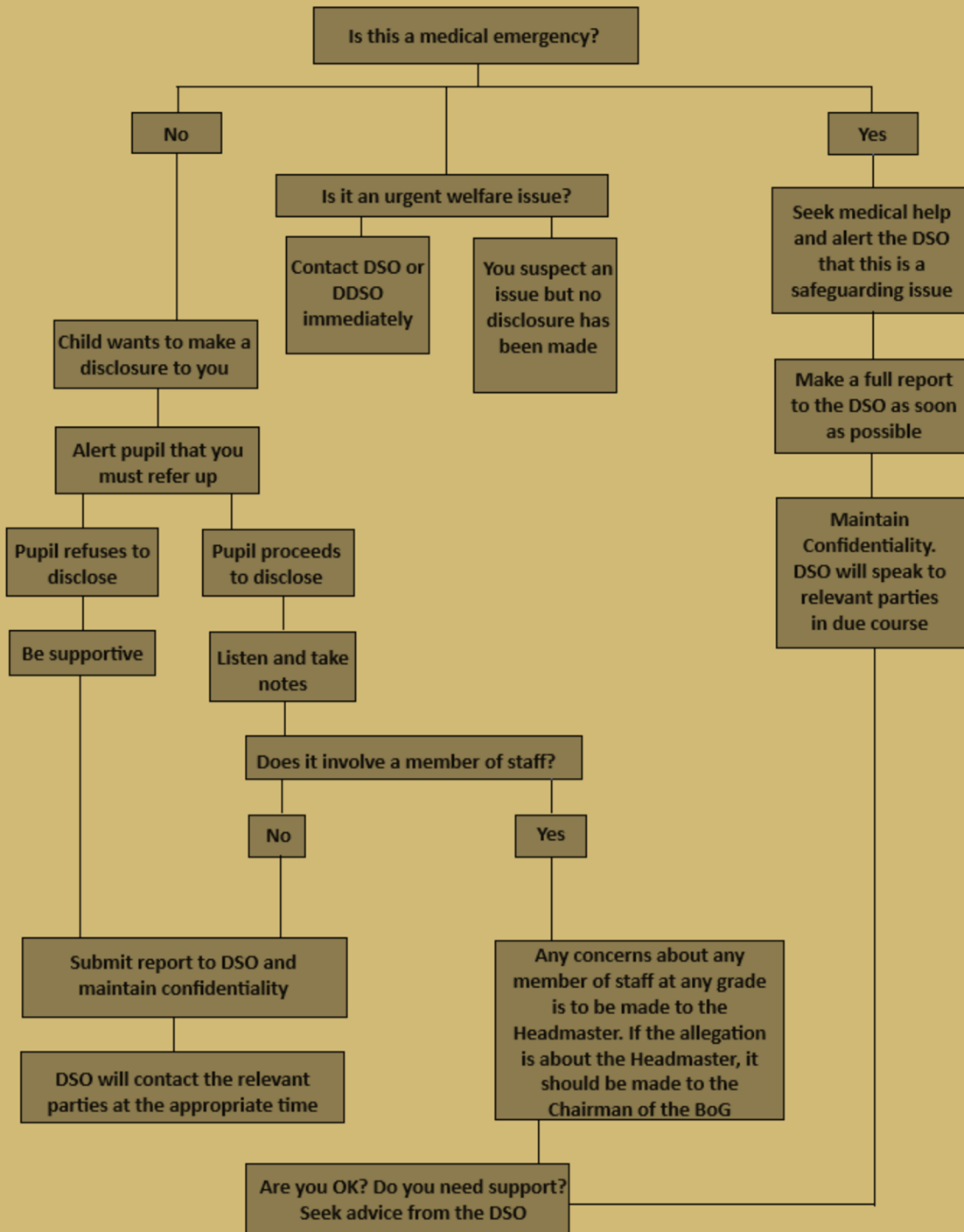
## RECORD

- Make brief notes if you can during the meeting, or if not, immediately afterwards.
- Keep your original notes.
- Record the date, time, place and the actual words used by the pupil.
- Record statements and actions rather than your interpretation.

## REPORT

- Immediately contact the school DSO or the Headmaster as appropriate.
- Give the notes to the DSO.

# The PROCEDURE





In case of an observation of bruising which raises suspicion of child abuse, inform the DSO. Do not ask the child how they came to have the bruising and do not ask leading questions.

In the case of bruising inform the DSO immediately.

# Appendix 1

# Incident Report



Name of student  Class

This is a:

Disclosure of Abuse

Suspicion of Abuse without disclosure

*Please tick*

*Full name and Surname in Block*

Person Reporting

Date of Incident  Time of Incident

Location of Incident  DSO Informed

## Details of Incident

*Details of disclosure or observation. Please be as thorough as possible and include any information that you may deem relevant. Use additional paper if required.*