



PEGASUS SCHOOLS, EKET, AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Designated Safeguarding Lead

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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

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Approved/reviewed by	
The Head of Schools	
Date of review	January 2024
Date of next review	January 2025

1. Policy Statement

Pegasus Schools is committed to the protection and promotion of the welfare of all students, with an unwavering focus on fostering a secure learning environment. The paramount concern of our institution is the health, safety, and wellbeing of our students. It is imperative that every staff member acknowledges their responsibility to promptly report any suspected or disclosed cases pertaining to child protection to the designated safeguarding team.

Our institution has established robust procedures designed to identify indicators of abuse, promptly address concerns, and report cases to the appropriate authorities. These actions align with local legislation and adhere to the guidelines set forth by the Council of British International Schools (COBIS). The present policy explicitly outlines the framework of processes and procedures integral to the effective implementation of our commitment to child protection.

2. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to the entire school community, encompassing the Management team, teaching and non-teaching staff, volunteers, and temporary staff.

This policy should be interpreted in conjunction with the following allied school policies, where more detailed safeguarding arrangements and risk assessments specific to respective areas are outlined: Safer Recruitment, Health and Safety, Anti-Bullying, Complaints, and the school's Code of Conduct.

Furthermore, this policy is crafted in alignment with contemporary guidance, including the Child Rights Act¹ and COBIS² guidelines.

Pegasus Schools acknowledges and diligently upholds its duty to protect and safeguard the welfare of children under its care. The child protection policy is structured around three core components: **Prevention:** This involves fostering a positive school atmosphere and delivering comprehensive teaching and pastoral support to pupils.

Protection: Adherence to established procedures, coupled with ensuring that staff are adequately trained and supported, guarantees an appropriate and sensitive response to child protection concerns.

Support: Provisions are in place to offer assistance to pupils who may have experienced abuse

3. Aim of Policy

The aim of this policy is to:

- I. To protect children from harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- II. To establish clear guidelines and procedures for identifying, reporting, and responding to safeguarding concerns.
- III. To promote a culture of safeguarding among staff, students, parents, and the wider community.
- IV. Support the child's development in ways that will foster security and confidence.
- V. To provide an environment where children feel safe, secure, valued, and respected, and where they are confident and knowledgeable about approaching adults in case of difficulties.
- VI. Emphasize the importance of early help and intervention

¹ Act No. 26 of 2003, Child's Rights Act, 2003 [Nigeria], 31 July 2003, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5568201f4> ² Council of British International Schools

- VII. Raise awareness that safeguarding incidents could happen anywhere and staff should be alert to possible concerns being raised in school.

4. Policy Review

The Designated Safeguarding Team (DST) is responsible for ensuring the school adheres to the obligations outlined in this policy. Additionally, they are tasked with maintaining an updated list of key contacts provided on the cover sheet.

The Safeguarding Policy and its associated policies undergo an annual review to incorporate any revisions aligned with COBIS guidelines or modifications in local legislation. These documents are made accessible to parents through regularly updated newsletters, emails, and the school website.

Regular audits and evaluations are conducted to assess the efficacy of safeguarding practices and identify areas for improvement. The Board of Management conducts an annual review of the school's safeguarding policy and procedures, evaluating the efficiency with which related duties are fulfilled. Every adult within the school will be provided with a copy of this policy, and it will be a recurring agenda item for discussion at least annually during staff meetings.

5. Training

The Designated Safeguarding Team has completed annual Child Protection and Safeguarding training to remain well-informed about issues related to safeguarding and child abuse in an educational context. This training is essential for assessing the risk of children being subjected to abuse, radicalization by gangs or extremist groups, or involvement in terrorism.

The Head of Schools, Principal, Head Teacher, Coordinators, teachers, and all other staff working with children are required to undergo yearly child protection awareness training facilitated by the DST. This training equips them with the necessary knowledge to effectively fulfil their responsibilities for child protection.

6. Prevention

6.1 Supervision

We have an appropriate ratio of staff members supervising students throughout the school day. All students must be supervised at all times and no students must be left alone. This includes supervision of boarders during their free or leisure activities. This must be strictly adhered to for protection and monitoring of students.

6.2 Security

The security of the school site is a paramount concern, prioritizing the safety of all students and staff. To uphold this commitment, all staff, parents, and visitors are expected to adhere to the school's established procedures. There is 24-hour CCTV monitoring and all visitors must sign in at the security office upon arrival. A corresponding visitor's badge will be issued, and visitors must remain under staff supervision throughout their stay, returning the badge to the Security Office upon departure. Individuals visiting the school for a 'one-off' activity involving direct interaction with students must undergo identity verification by the event host. It is imperative that such individuals are not left unsupervised with children.

All staff members present on the school premises are mandated to wear visible ID badges. In instances where a staff member forgets their badge, they must obtain a temporary badge from the security team.

Any persons that are not wearing the appropriate lanyard/No lanyard, must be challenged, this is the responsibility of all staff members.

6.3 Recruitment and Selection

Please refer to the school's Recruitment Policy for precise details concerning employment criteria. A mandatory safeguarding induction is conducted for all new staff members, and regular child protection training sessions are obligatory for all staff.

All newly appointed staff, including temporary staff, will receive comprehensive induction training on safeguarding matters and it will include:

- a) The school's safeguarding policy;
- b) The staff code of conduct;
- c) The identity of the safeguarding team.

6.4 Attendance and School Roll

The school mandates class teachers, coordinators, and year heads to vigilantly oversee attendance, promptly engaging with parents when attendance raises concerns. Such instances should be presented to the team lead during weekly meetings. Recognizing the heightened vulnerability of children outside the school environment, any cases of truanting demand immediate attention, necessitating referral to the Designated Safeguarding Team (DST).

Upon a child's placement on Safeguarding, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) assumes responsibility for monitoring the child's school attendance, overall welfare, and presentation. The DSL is accountable for ensuring the school's representation in all meetings related to the child, maintaining thorough records of attendance, and documenting the issues discussed. All concerns pertaining to the child's welfare are to be deliberated and documented during meetings, except when the child is at a heightened risk of significant harm. In such instances, the DSL must promptly notify the child's key worker (Parent/Class teacher), record the communication, and document the agreed-upon actions.

6.5 Third party groups

The Safeguarding Policy is mandated for dissemination to organizers of third-party groups utilizing school facilities, and it is binding upon them. Voluntary sector groups operating within the School premises, delivering off-site services to our pupils, or utilizing School facilities are required to strictly adhere to the provisions outlined in this Safeguarding Policy.

7. Safeguarding Reporting Process

7.1 Identification of Safeguarding Concerns

Recognizing safeguarding concerns is imperative for the welfare and protection of all children. Two primary categories outline situations requiring attention:

a. Children with needs

- Refers to circumstances where a child is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development.
- Encompasses situations where a child's health and/or development are likely to be impaired or when a child is disabled.

b. Children Suffering or Likely to Suffer Significant Harm

- Involves cases of maltreatment, including but not limited to abuse, neglect, radicalization, sexual exploitation, or other concerning behaviours.

Refer to *Appendix A* for a comprehensive guide on recognizing abuse within these two categories.

7.2 Procedures to Follow

a) If you have a concern about a Pupil

- All concerns should be reported without delay directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, This should be followed by a written account of the concerns through the incident form for affixed in *appendix c*.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will take immediate action if required. Depending on the situation after this point, the process may be escalated to a higher authority. They may contact a child protection agency, parents the police or simply provide further advice.
- In the unlikely event that the DSL team is unavailable and you believe the situation to warrant further action, you may contact any member school management but remember to allow maintain strict confidentiality guidelines.

b) If a child makes an allegation of abuse

In the event of a child making a disclosure of abuse, staff members are required to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Staff should attentively listen without interruption and maintain a calm demeanour.
- Staff should refrain from promising confidentiality to the child. Instead, clearly articulate to the child who needs to be informed and the reasons for such disclosure.
- Visually observe any visible bruises or marks. Record these observations using the provided body map form (*appendix B*). Avoid requesting for the child to adjust clothing for better visibility.
- Staff should minimize the use of questions as their role does not involve investigation. If necessary, pose open-ended questions using the "TED" model: "Tell me about that," "Explain that to me," "Describe that."
- Document the disclosure promptly in the incident form (*appendix C*) utilizing the words expressed by the child and staff member to the best of their recollection.
- Include relevant details about the child, such as visible injuries, their position, and description, as well as the child's demeanour (e.g., crying, withdrawn).
- Clearly distinguish between facts, opinions, and third-party information.
- **Immediately report the matter to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will initiate the appropriate actions.**

Proper Recording

- Records must be maintained in a legible format, signed, and dated for proper documentation.

- Records should be completed in accordance with the specified prompts on the incident form to ensure consistency and comprehensive documentation.
- Records must be completed contemporaneously or promptly after the event occurs. They should be regularly updated as new information becomes available or decisions and actions are taken.
- Records must be written concisely in black ink to ensure legibility. Use plain English, avoiding judgmental or speculative statements. Focus on factual information regarding the needs, strengths, and objectives of individuals. Avoid the use of pencils or colored pens as they may fade.
- Entries into case records should be written with sensitivity to differences in diverse ethnic, religious backgrounds, and lifestyles.
- Use of technical or professional terms and abbreviations must be minimized. If their meaning is likely to be unclear, they must be defined or explained to ensure understanding.

c.) Child-on-Child Abuse

The school maintains a strict zero-tolerance approach toward instances of 'child-on-child' abuse. Staff members are mandated to address inappropriate behaviour promptly, even if it initially seems innocuous, with the objective of deterring problematic, abusive, and/or violent conduct in the future.

The school firmly asserts that abuse is never to be tolerated or dismissed as mere "banter" or "part of growing up." Special attention must be accorded to children with special educational needs (SEND) and/or disabilities, and such vulnerable children receive dedicated support from the SEND coordinator. In cases of safeguarding concerns, the established reporting procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be adhered to, treating any child protection matters with utmost seriousness. Staff members are expected to adopt a proactive listening role.

While most incidents of students causing harm to others will be addressed under the school's Code of Conduct, this safeguarding and child protection policy becomes applicable when allegations present safeguarding concerns. Such instances may include behaviours that are serious, potentially constituting a criminal offense, posing a risk to pupils within the school or involving violence. The procedures outlined in **paragraph b** above must be diligently followed. Additionally, accounts from all students and any eye witnesses should be considered, guided by the previously mentioned guidelines.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will promptly update individual risk assessments to encompass newly identified risks and adjust positive behaviour support plans. These plans will incorporate strategies to minimize risk for all parties involved, including both the victim(s) and the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made. These individuals will be provided with a designated person to talk to if needed, ensuring comprehensive support. If deemed appropriate, the DSL will engage specific services to address the situation.

To mitigate the risk of child-on-child abuse, the school is committed to:

- Vigilantly challenging any form of derogatory or sexualized language or behaviour.
- Remaining attentive to issues that disproportionately affect different genders, such as sexualized or aggressive touching or grabbing towards pupils, as well as initiation or hazing-type violence among students.
- Ensuring the curriculum contributes to educating students about appropriate behaviour and consent.

- Providing staff with training to recognize that a student harming a peer could be indicative of the child being abused themselves, falling within the scope of this policy.

d.) Allegations against a member of staff

All staff members are expected to familiarize themselves with the school's Code of Conduct and other pertinent policies and procedures. It is crucial for staff members to prioritize the welfare of the child in all circumstances. Concerns about potentially misunderstanding a situation or the impact of reporting on a colleague's career should not supersede the paramount importance of a child's well-being. The school's whistleblowing policy should also be consulted for guidance. It is mandatory for both staff and volunteers to promptly report any safeguarding concerns regarding another staff member to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Such concerns must be promptly investigated and where a student is interviewed, recourse must be made to reporting and recording guidelines paragraph b above.

Any allegation of abuse against a staff member will be addressed impartially and consistently, ensuring effective protection for the child and supporting the individual under investigation. In certain situations, the implicated staff member may be requested to take a temporary period of paid leave pending the outcome of the investigation.

Pegasus Schools is committed to maintaining confidentiality and preventing unwarranted publicity during the investigation or consideration of an allegation. Every effort will be made to protect the privacy of individuals involved.

Malicious allegations against staff will be thoroughly investigated and addressed by the Head Teacher and, if deemed necessary, by the Board of Management.

Staff members who, in good faith, raise concerns about the attitudes or behaviour of their colleagues (whistleblowing) are granted a degree of employment protection. Conversely, failure to promptly report information that could jeopardize the safety of children and bring the School into disrepute may result in disciplinary action.

In the event that a parent or visitor communicates information to the school, the Designated Safeguarding Lead shall:

- Convene a meeting with the parent/visitor to collect comprehensive details.
- Implement any relevant measures in accordance with the above specified categories.
- Provide feedback to the parent/visitor once a decision has been reached on the course of action, ensuring assurance that the matter is or has been duly addressed.

7.3 Notifying Parents

Where appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) shall engage in discussions with the parents of a child concerning any identified concerns. Typically, the DSL will undertake this communication when there is a suspicion or disclosure of potential harm. Other staff members are only authorized to communicate such concerns to parents subsequent to consultation with the DSL. Should there be a belief that notifying the parent may escalate the risk to the child, consultation with the local authority will precede any communication.

In cases involving allegations of abuse directed towards other children, it is our standard procedure to inform the parents of all children implicated. This notification will be accompanied by guidance on the course of action undertaken and assurances that the matter is actively being addressed.

APPENDIX A

RECOGNISING ABUSE

Physical signs such as bruising, bleeding, or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised usually serve as indicators of certain types of abuse. Identifying these physical signs is a complex process, as children may take measures to conceal injuries, often due to feelings of shame or embarrassment, or because their abuser has threatened additional violence or trauma if disclosure occurs. Furthermore, individuals lacking medical training may find it challenging to definitively classify injuries as accidental or deliberate.

Given these challenges, it is imperative that staff members remain vigilant not only regarding physical signs but also recognize a spectrum of behavioural indicators of abuse. Any concerns, whether related to physical signs or behavioural cues, should be promptly reported to the Designated Safeguarding Team..

Abuse Reporting and Recognition

All instances of abuse, irrespective of their nature, shall be reported in accordance with established safeguarding procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This comprehensive approach ensures a prompt and suitable response, safeguarding the well-being of individuals involved.

General Signs of Abuse

Individuals subjected to abuse, particularly children, may exhibit reluctance to disclose instances of abuse. Feelings of guilt, shame, or confusion may be prevalent, especially when the abuser is a parent, caregiver, or close family member or friend.

Those engaged in activities involving children or young people are obligated to remain vigilant to the indicators outlined below. While these signs do not conclusively denote abuse, they likely suggest that the child is encountering challenges warranting investigation.

- Regular occurrences of nightmares or sleeping difficulties (Boarding House staff should take note).
- Alterations in personality.
- Episodes of uncontrolled anger.
- Changes in eating habits.
- Displaying an unexplained fear of specific places or offering excuses to avoid particular individuals.
- Engagement in self-harming behaviours (e.g., head banging, scratching, cutting).
- Lack of adequate medical attention following injuries.
- Demonstrating violence toward animals, toys, peers, or adults.
- Awareness of "adult issues," such as alcohol, drugs, or sexual behaviour.
- Instances of fabricated or induced illness.
- Low self-confidence or persistent wariness/anxiety.
- Regression to behaviours typical of younger children.
- Frequent flinching in response to sudden but harmless actions (e.g., someone raising a hand quickly).

APPENDIX B

BODYMAP

(This must be completed at time of observation)

Names for Child:

Year:

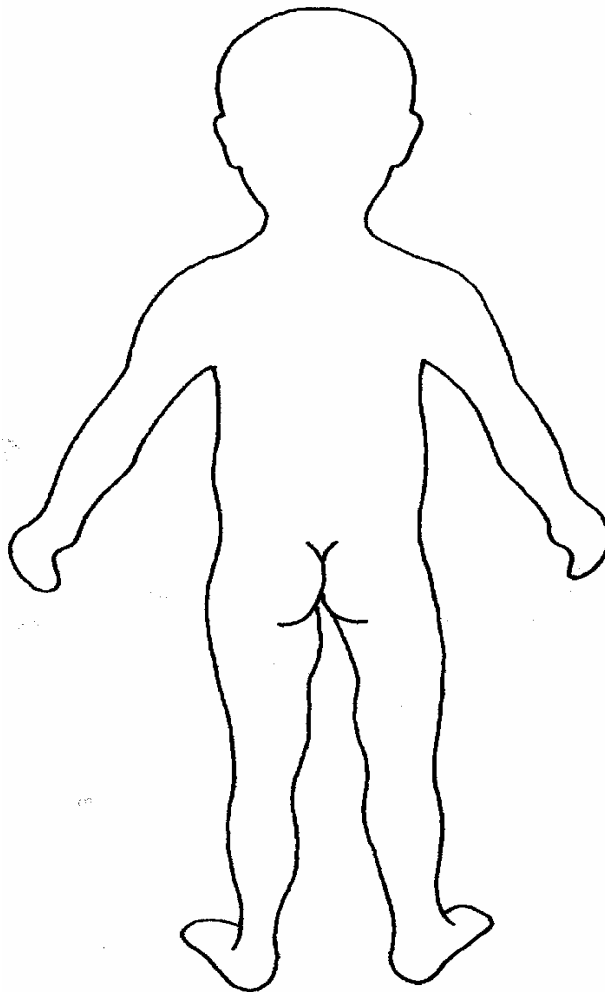
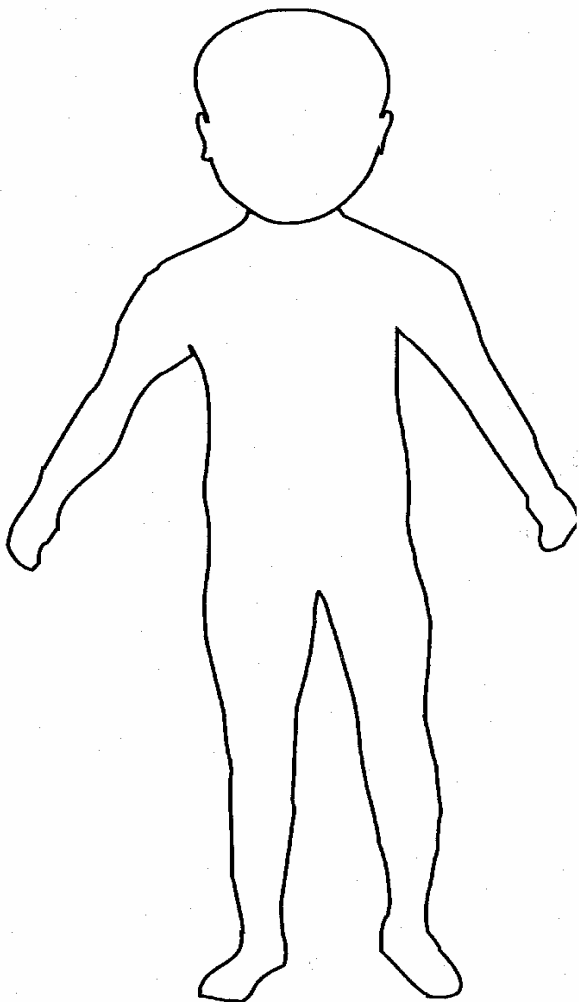
Name of Staff:

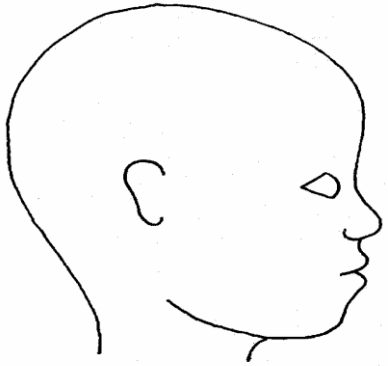
Date and time of

Observation:

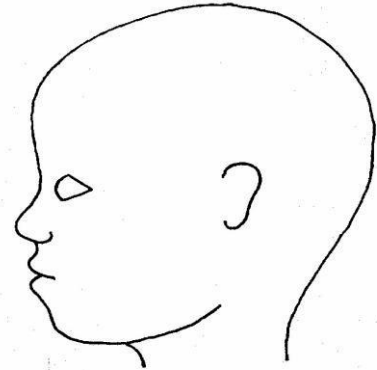
FRONT

BACK





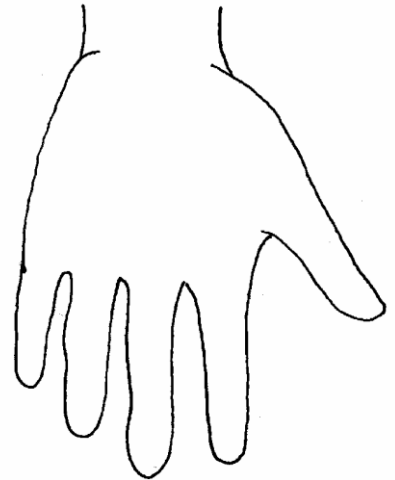
RIGHT



LEFT

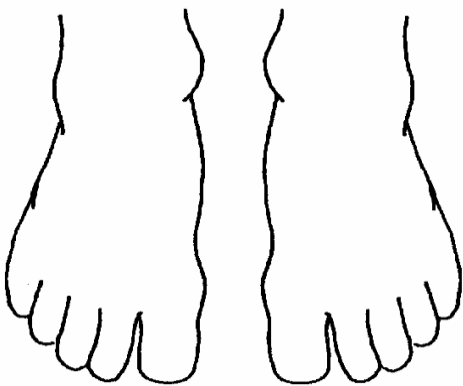


RIGHT

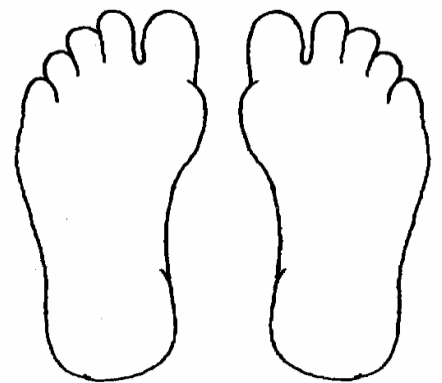


PALM

LEFT



R TOP L



R BOTTOM L

APPENDIX- C

Safeguarding Incident Form

Date of the Incident: _____

Date of Reporting: _____

Full name of child	Date of Birth	Year	Your name and position in school

Nature of concern/disclosure

Please include where you were when the child made a disclosure, what you saw, who else was there, what did the child say or do and what you said. *(attach extra paper if necessary)*

Was there an injury? Yes / No	Did you see it? Yes / No
Describe the injury:	
Have you filled in the body map form to document the injury is and its approximate size? Yes / No	
Was anyone else with you? Who?	
Has this happened before?	
Did you report the previous incident?	
Who are you passing this information to?	
Name:	Position:
Your signature:	
Time:	
Date:	