

SKOLA Safeguarding Policy 2019

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Written by *Mary Staszczuk* Principal SKOLA English in London July 2018

Signed off by *Ben Toettcher*, School Manager, SKOLA English in London July 2018

With reference to British Council, English UK and Government guidelines (KCSIE 2016) and law (Children Act 1989 and 2004)

**1.** **POLICY STATEMENT**

SKOLA English in London is a year-round language school offering short term English courses and activities to children aged 6 – 16 (in exceptional circumstances we can accept a 17 year old, especially if they are a sibling or a junior setting is more appropriate). We operate on 1 site with 2 annexes in the summer:

* SKOLA Camden: Year round courses/ summer courses for 6-16 year olds: 27 Delancey Street, London, NW1 7RX
* SKOLA Primrose Hill: Summer school courses for 6-9 year olds
* ORT House annexe for students aged 10-16

In our centres we provide homestay accommodation via 2 agencies (Perfect Hosts Homestays and Hosts International) and a door-to-door car service through Atlas Cars.

**Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment for all students and staff. All adults involved with SKOLA will aim to safeguard children attending our courses. The management will continuously raise awareness among staff and other adults about important safeguarding issues.**

**We will endeavour to safeguard children by adapting an appropriate code of behaviour and act upon any concerns.**

**All** the adults working for/ with SKOLA English in London are expected to:

· Read this policy

· Adhere to this policy at all times

· Safeguard the welfare of all students at all times

· Promote a safe environment

· Report any concerns or allegations to the Designated Safeguarding People

WHO THE POLICY APPLIES TO

The policy applies to all children who are students of SKOLA English in London, all staff employed by SKOLA English in London and all adults who work with the school (e.g. group leaders, DJs, cover teachers, coaches, etc.) at any of our centres. It applies to anyone regardless of gender, race, religion or sexual orientation.

A ‘child’ or ‘student’ in the context of this policy refers to anyone under the age of 18 who is, was or will be a student at SKOLA English in London.

An ‘adult’ refers to all members of staff employed directly by SKOLA or through any contractors as well as group leaders, parents and any visitors to the school.

Homestay hosts providers contracted through homestay providers will follow relevant parts of our Safeguarding Policy as well as policies provided by the companies.

‘Employer’ in this context refers to SKOLA English in London

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING PERSON

The designated safeguarding persons are:

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Mary Staszczuk, Principal. Email: mary@skola.co.uk, Tel: 02073877575

Deputy Designated Lead:

Veronica Floreno, Director of Studies. Email: veronica@skola.co.uk, Tel: 02073877575

POLICY REVIEW

We will review this policy annually to ensure it is up to date with all legal and accrediting body requirements. We will welcome feedback form any members of staff or group leaders upon how we can improve our safeguarding systems. The all designated safeguarding staff will contribute to reviewing the policy and the Principal will sign it off.

POLICY AVAILABILITY AND FORMATS

The policy will be shared with all staff electronically. A printed copy will be available in the staff room and reception. A reduced version of the policy containing the core elements will be given to all staff members in the Staff Handbook and to all group leaders.

ASSOCIATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

Staff members should also familiarise themselves with the following policies/ documents:

· Health and Safety Policy

· Recruitment Policy

· Abusive Behaviour Policy

· Guidelines for Taking Students on Excursions

· Absence Policy

· Supervision Policy

· Use of Electronic Devices Policy

· Risk assessments

**2.** **CHILDREN’S RIGHTS**

All children have the right to:

Ø Be safe and happy

Ø Say ‘no’ if any person tries to do something they feel is wrong

Ø Be listened to

Ø Be taken seriously when reporting any incidents/ allegations

Ø Be respected and safeguarded from harm

Ø Privacy

Ø Be referred to professional help if needed

Ø Be protected from abuse and bullying

**3.** **CODE OF CONDUCT: SAFER WORKING PRACTICE FOR STAFF**

All adults should aim to create a safe school culture. The relationship between adults and children is a relationship of trust. Adults should try to build trust between them and children and avoid any situations which may be misconstrued. Staff should act as role models for the students.

**3.1** Duties of staff:

Duty of care: All adults have duty to keep children safe and protect them from any abuse.

Duty to report: Staff have a duty to report any allegation or suspicion of inappropriate contact with children to senior managers.

Duty to treat all students equally: All students should be treated with respect and equally. No staff member should favour any students. Be fair and consistent.

**3.2** Adult interaction

Relationship: Remember to maintain professional boundaries between you and the students. This is not a relationship between equals, you are in a position of power but do not use your position to your advantage.

Physical contact: Keep physical contact brief and never touch a child in a way that is considered indecent. Seek permission before making physical contact. Be aware of cultural/ religious views on touching and be sensitive to issues of gender. In case you need to demonstrate something (e.g. in sports or drama) it should be in an open environment and for minimum time necessary. Use this procedure: demonstrate alone> ask permission > demonstrate with student.

Physical intervention: It should be avoided, used only in exceptional circumstances in a way that maintains dignity and safety. Never use force or degrading treatment to punish a child. In case of bad behaviour follow the procedure outlined in the staff handbook.

Any inappropriate contact may be considered a ‘Position of Trust’ offence according to Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Social contact: Do not seek social contact with a student or their family outside the school. Such contact could be misconstrued.

Infatuations: If a student develops an infatuation with you inform your manager as soon as possible. This should be recorded and professional boundaries must be maintained at all times.

Sexual comments: Do not have any communication with a student that would be sexually suggestive or make sexual remarks about a student (in any form).

Being alone: Avoid being alone with a child. If you need to speak to them in private, do it in a place where someone can see you.

**3.3** Adult conduct

Use of appropriate language: Always be aware of your language when speaking to and around the students. Never lose your temper or raise your voice.

Confidentiality: You may have access to confidential information about the students. However, this should remain confidential at all times and only shared if it’s in the interest of the student.

Dress code: Dress in a way which is appropriate to your role. Don’t wear anything considered inappropriate such as miniskirts, rudely worded t-shirts, anything too tight or revealing. In a residential setting wear appropriate nightwear.

Smoking and alcohol: Staff must not smoke or drink on school premises and/or in the presence of the students.

Gifts: Any gifts given to a student should be given publically and for positive behaviour (e.g. SKOLA Star Awards) not to favour a student.

**3.4** Electronic and social media contact

Electronic contact includes telephone communication and online environments. Staff should maintain the same professional standards in electronic contact with children as they would in face-to-face contact.

Safe practices:

· Do not initiate, establish or seek to establish electronic contact with a student

· Use only the school camera(s) to take photos/ recordings of the students. If the school camera is unavailable you may use your camera but once you copy the images onto the school computer delete them from your device in the presence of a colleague. Do not store images of students on your personal device.

· Avoid using your personal mobile when communicating with a child. In case of an emergency when you have to contact a student using your mobile (e.g. if they get lost on an excursion), delete the number afterwards. Also, if a student uses your mobile (e.g. to contact a parent) delete the number afterward.

· Do not lend personal removable media (USB sticks, CDs, portable hard drives) to students

· Do not exchange any personal data like personal phone numbers or emails with the students.

· Make sure your social media accounts have appropriate privacy settings so that students can’t access them. If a student sends you any inappropriate messages electronically, don’t encourage them. Don’t reply. Notify your manager. Record the details.

· Do not initiate or accept any friend requests from students on social networking sites.

· Do not post on social networking sites or distribute by any other means any photos, videos of or information about the students.

SKOLA EST will not use the images of students without their parents’ consent. All staff will be informed about cases where consent is not given.

**4.** **WELFARE SYSTEMS**

SKOLA EST will have certain welfare systems in place to ensure the students’ safety at all times. These include:

**4.1** **Risk assessments:**

These are in place for all on and off site activities. They are revised regularly. All students will be inducted before each activity and reminded what to do in case of emergency.

**4.2** **Behaviour and discipline procedures:**

Staff will follow guidelines outlined in the Staff Handbook when disciplining students. Staff should aim to be positive when dealing with behaviour issues. Praise good behaviour.

**4.3** **Staff photo board:**

There will be a board in each premises with staff photos, names and titles so that students know who works in the school and what are the responsibilities of each member of staff. Students will also receive this information during induction as well as in their folder

**4.4** **Missing students:** This should be avoided but in case a student goes missing follow the procedures below

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| How to avoid missing students? | What to do if a student goes missing |
| IN CLASS |
| 1. Establish rules with your class: students are not allowed to go out of class during lessons2. Be on time for the lessons; lead by example3. Check the register before each lesson  | 1. Inform a member of the management or admin team as soon as possible.2. If it is the first lesson the admin team will follow the guidelines in the absence policy3. If it is the second lesson ask the other students if they have seen the missing student. Try to establish his/ her whereabouts and inform a member of the management or admin team. |
| DURING EXCURSIONS/ STUDY TRIPS |
| 1. Remind the students of the rules before every excursion/ activity2. Never allow students to go anywhere alone3. Make sure all students have wristbands/ cards with the school’s emergency number4. Headcount the students as often as possible (before leaving the school, getting to the station, on the platform, on the train, etc.)5. When reaching your destination establish a meeting point where the students should go in case they get lost6. Make sure there is a member of staff at the front and back of the group | 1. Stop the group as soon as you realise that a student has gone missing. One member of staff should go back to search for the student2. Try to contact the student, you can call the school and a member of the management team will contact the student and advise them what to do3. Call and/ or wait for a call from a member of staff responsible for the emergency number |
| STUDENTS IN HOMESTAY MISSING CURFEW |
| 1. Students and parents will receive information about curfew times before arrival2. Homestay hosts will remind students about these rules every time students go out3. Homestay hosts will ensure students have all necessary travel information and contact numbers4. Students will only go out if they have a mobile phone with them | 1. Homestay hosts will attempt to contact the student2. Homestay hosts will call the school emergency number3. School will attempt to contact the student4. If student cannot be contacted within 2 hours police will be notified |

**4.5** **Safety and First Aid:**

The school has the following in place to ensure the student’s safety:

· Staying safe information: The student handbook includes information on how to stay safe during their time in the UK which they can apply not only when in school/ in the school campus/ on excursions but also in their own time.

· Emergency number: All students are given a wristband with the 24-hour school emergency number. They are asked to wear the wristband at all times.

· Travelling to and from school: Students under 14 must be brought to school by a guardian or use the school bus service. Students over 14 may travel on their own only if parents/ guardians complete the appropriate permission form. Appropriate guidance will be given to such students to help them with their journey.

· Permission forms: Parents/ guardians are asked to sign appropriate permission forms for the students, which include:

Ø Permission to travel to and from school on their own (only for students aged 14-17)

Ø Permission for free time on excursions (only for students aged 14-17). This allows students to have up to an hour of free time during Saturday excursions. However, they must follow the rules outlined in the staff handbook. This is a privilege that the staff can withdraw.

Ø Permission to use the student’s photographs, audio recordings, etc. in the school’s promotional materials

Ø For students 14 and over in homestay: permission to go out unaccompanied in the evenings and at weekends. However, students must follow rules set out in a separate document as well as adhere to curfew times which are 9.00 pm for students aged 14-16 and 10.00 pm for students aged 17.

Ø Consent for emergency medical treatment

· Transfers: Students travelling alone going into homestay accommodation must book a transfer from the airport/ station to the homestay address. This will be made clear to parents/ guardians/ agents. They will be warned that if inappropriate arrangements for the child’s arrival have been made, the UK Border Agency may refuse entry (e.g. they may suspect Child Sexual Exploitation).

For UMs a departure transfer includes accompanying the student to check-in.

· Visitor book: any visitors that come into the building or school campus must read the visitor leaflet and sign the visitor book which is located at reception (name, time in and out and purpose of visit). A staff member should oversee any visitors

· Absence policy: The school will follow a strict absence policy when dealing with student absences.

· First Aid and medical: First aid will be administered by qualified staff only following general guidelines. All cases of first aid administration will be recorded in the incident book.

In case of an emergency a staff member will accompany the student in an ambulance or take them to a walk-in centre if a parent/ guardian is unable to do it.

If a student falls ill when in homestay, the homestay provider is expected to look after the student or make alternative arrangements and take them to the doctor if necessary.

· Road Safety: Students will be inducted on how to behave while walking on the street before each excursion. Appropriate supervision will ensure road safety.

· Fire safety: During induction, all students will be instructed what to do in case they hear the fire alarm and taken to the fire meeting point.

· **Additionally for non-residential schools:**

· Going home procedure: This will follow the guidelines outlined in the staff handbook. Parents/ guardians of students who are picked up need to sign a list daily. Students leaving on their own are also required to sign out. If the student will be picked up by someone other than parent/ guardian the school needs to be informed in advance. The appointed person needs to show an ID.

· Students going home early: students may be allowed to go home early only if consent is given by parents/ guardians. In such case they need to sign out.

**4.6**  **Supervision ratios**: We are obliged to provide adequate supervision for all the students not only during lessons but also outside lessons on excursions, activities, during breaks and in their accommodation when in residential centre. Supervision ratios will be stated in the risk assessments.

During excursions and activities we will provide minimum the amount of supervision outlined by the DfEE publication Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits, however in most cases we aim to exceed it. The staff to student ratio will be outlined in the risk assessments.

When deciding on staff/student ratio a number of factors need to be considered:

Ø Gender, age and language ability of the group

Ø Pupils with special educational or medical needs

Ø Nature of the activity

Ø Experience and competence of the adults in the party

Ø Requirements of the organization/location to be visited

Ø Competence and behaviour of the children

Ø Type of accommodation provided

Ø First aid cover

Important notes to staff:

· Staff should follow the supervision guidelines outlined in the staff handbook and never leave the students unattended.

· Special attention will be paid to students while travelling on the underground.

· At least 2 members of staff will be with any number of students during outside of school activities in case they need to deal with an emergency.

· Staff should be vigilant at all times when outside the school.

Permission to be out of class:

No students should be out of class without the teacher’s permission. Students should be encouraged to visit the toilet during break and before lessons only. Where necessary, (especially for young students or special needs students) suitable breaks for the toilet should be scheduled. Any absence from the class must be noted in the class register.

**4.7** **Age appropriate activities:** All the activities must be appropriate to the child’s abilities and development stage. This will be outlined in the risk assessment of each activity. Here are some examples of important things to take into consideration:

Films: when showing a film in class or taking the students to the cinema make sure that the film has appropriate ratings for the age group

Contact games: Do not mix younger and older children in contact games. Some girls may not want to be mixed with boys, respect that.

Art and Crafts: make sure that the utensils used during art and crafts classes are appropriate for the age, younger students should use plastic needles and safety scissors.

**4.8** **Homestay Accommodation:** All homestay providers follow the Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct provided by the Homestay Agencies we work with: Hosts International and Perfect Hosts Homestays.

**Private fostering:** The school will cooperate with homestay agencies and parents to inform local councils about any private fostering arrangements.

Private fostering occurs when a child under 16 is cared for, and provided with accommodation, by an adult who is not a relative, for 28 days or more, by a private arrangement between parent and carer.

**4.9** **E safety:** SKOLA will take all measures to help our students stay safe when they go online. Student folders will contain guidance about being safe: not believing all they read, not sharing personal data or photos with people they don’t know, etc.

All internet usage will be supervised by teachers and appropriate filters will be placed to block inappropriate websites.

As a rule, students are not allowed to use mobile phones in the school and during out of class activities throughout the day.

**4.10** **PREVENT Radicalisation & Extremism** PREVENT is a government strategy to stop people becoming involved in violent extremism and/or supporting terrorism and therefore entering the criminal justice system as a result.

To prevent extremism and radicalisation we will:

· Ensure all staff are familiar with the terms radicalisation and extremism and aware of the problem

· Educate students about acceptance and tolerance on a range of views

· Promote core UK values like: democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs

· Educate staff to identify vulnerable students. Some factors which make students vulnerable may include:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| PERSONAL | EXTERNAL |
| Not having a sense of identity/belongingLoss/ bereavementIsolation/ exclusionPersonal crisisMental health issuesSense of injusticeBeing a victim of a hate crime/ discrimination | Family valuesGlobal eventsInspirational speakerPeer pressureMedia biasHaving friends/ relatives who were harmedExtremist material |

· Educate staff to be vigilant and look out for signs which may suggest extremist behaviour. This may include:

|  |
| --- |
| Change in attitudeBecoming intolerant/ closed mindedBeing isolatedOvert new religious practicesFall in work standardAccommodation changes, e.g. posters, etc.Asking questions about certain topics |

· Focus on IT safety

· Staff will raise any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

**5.** **RECOGNISING CHILD ABUSE AND BULLYING**

**5.1** **Types of abuse:** There are four categories of abuse:

· Physical, for example: hitting, kicking, shaking, poisoning, burning etc. But also female genital mutilation (FGM) which is illegal in the UK, it is also illegal for it to be performed on any British national abroad.

· Emotional, for example: telling children they are worthless or unloved, valued only if they meet certain needs, lack of affection, unrealistic demands, silencing the children, not allowing them to state their views, making fun of them, overprotection, limiting the children, verbal bullying, cyber-bullying, exploitation or corruption of children

· Neglect: failing to meet the child’s basic physical and/ or psychological needs, it may involve: failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, failing to protect children from harm, not providing adequate supervision

· Sexual, for example: forcing the child to take part in sexual activities, both physical (inappropriate physical contact) and non-physical (forcing the child to look at pornography, taking indecent photos of children), grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including over the internet)

· Cyber bullying: any of the above happening in an online environment

NOTE TO STAFF: Try to remember the types of abuse using the acronym PENS

**5.2** **Typical signs of abuse:** All of the categories of abuse have both physical and psychological signs. Some to watch for are:

· Physical abuse:

Has unexpected bruises, burns, etc.

Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather

Refusal to undress for e.g. sports

· Sexual abuse:

Acting in an inappropriate sexual way with objects or peers

Becoming withdrawn or clingy

Personality changing, seeming insecure

Unaccountable fear of particular places or people

Becoming secretive

Physical signs such as unexplained soreness around genitals, sexually transmitted diseases

· Emotional abuse:

Delayed physical or emotional development

Shows extremes of passivity or aggression

Overreaction to mistakes, or continual self-deprecation

Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation/harm)

· Neglect:

Often hungry

Badly dressed in clothes that need washing

Poor appearance and personal hygiene; unwashed, hair not brushed

Lacks needed medical or dental care

Often tired

Might abuse alcohol or drugs

Some of these may appear naturally as the children are in a new environment. However, in extreme cases, these might be indicators of a deeper problem.

**5.3** **If a child discloses abuse:**

A child may choose any adult to talk to; therefore all adults need to know the right way to respond.

If a child discloses abuse follow the procedure outlined in the next section of this Policy

**5.4 Bullying**

Bullying is usually a repeated action intended to hurt someone physically or emotionally and is not tolerated at SKOLA EST. The first and most important rule is to respect the staff and other students.

Identifying bullying:

Bullying can take many forms, it can be: physical assault, making threats, teasing, name-calling, cyber bullying, lack of respect for someone’s property, exclusion, etc. Sometimes it is not obvious and sometimes the bully might not even be aware that they are hurting someone. A bullied student may feel too frightened or worried to tell a member of staff. That is why it’s important for the staff to be observant at all times, especially during break times and activities.

How to deal with bullying:

· Don’t ignore it. React and confront the behaviour. Don’t assume it’s just ‘teasing’.

· Remain calm. Don’t argue or get into conflict with the students. If you display anger this will not enable the student to reflect on the consequences of their behaviour.

· Report all cases to the Designated Safeguarding Staff however trivial they may seem. Record everything in the incident book

· Deal with the students individually. Don’t attempt to sort out the facts while everyone is present. Students may get into an argument with one another. If you talk to them on a one-to-one basis, everyone will be able to say their side of the story.

· Hold bystanders accountable – they provide an audience for the bullies. Explain that this type of behaviour is wrong and will not be tolerated. They also have a responsibility to stop bullying.

· Listen and don’t pre-judge - it’s possible that the person you suspect to be the bully is actually being bullied.

· Elicit examples from the offender: examples of bad behaviour and the cause/ effect of it. Tell them that this kind of behaviour is unacceptable. Ask them to consider an appropriate way of putting things right.

· Ensure that any apology is done with a member of staff present and recorded in the Incident Book.

· Inform the Designated Safeguarding Staff who will inform the parents of what happened and how it was resolved.

· If the bullying continues EST will do its best to protect the victim which may include changing or restricting the activities of the bully. Parents will be informed.

· If a student continuously bullies others he/she will be expelled.

For detailed information please see the Policy for Dealing with Abusive Behaviour in the Staff Handbook

**5.5 Female Genital Multination**

This procedure is illegal in the UK (Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003). It is considered child abuse, however most FGM families don’t see it as a form of abuse. This procedure is carried out on a broad age range of girls and always has harmful consequences.

Some short-term consequences involve: severe pain, emotional/ physical shock, haemorrhage, wound infections.

Some long term consequences involve: vaginal, pelvic infections, difficulties in menstruating/ passing urine, damage to reproductive system, complications during pregnancy, PTSD

Girls who are more at risk of FGM:

· Girls from less integrated communities

· Familial history of FGM

· Sister who underwent FGM

· Girl withdrawn from personal, social and health education

Signs that FGM might take place:

· Older visitor (e.g. from country of origin)

· References to FGM in conversation

· Girl may confide (e.g. that she will have a special procedure or will become a woman)

· Long holiday abroad/ parental statement to take child on long holiday

Signs that FGM has taken place:

· Difficulty in walking

· Long time in toilet

· Urinary/ menstrual problems (e.g. very painful periods)

· Behaviour changes

If staff notice any of the above they should notify Designated Safeguarding Staff immediately. If a girl discloses FGM, staff should treat it as abuse and handle it like other forms of abuse, outlined in the next section.

**6.** **HANDLING ALLEGATIONS**

**6.1** **When to react to allegations**:

All adults have a duty of care towards the students and need to respond in the following circumstances:

· If you notice any signs of abuse (above), tell the Designated Safeguarding Staff

· If you suspect any adult may be a threat to a child, or behaves inappropriately towards a child tell the Designated Safeguarding Staff

· If a child tells you that they are being abused act according to the outlines below:

**6.2** **If a young person tells you they are being abused**

|  |
| --- |
| **VERY IMPORTANT!!** |

A child may choose any adult to speak to, therefore it’s very important that all staff know how to react if a child discloses to them.

You should do the following:

1. Allow them to speak freely without interruption and accept what they say

2. Be understanding and reassuring but do not give your opinion

3. Tell them you will try to offer support but you must pass the information on

4. Tell the Designated Safeguarding Staff

5. Write careful notes of what was said, using actual words wherever possible

6. Pass your report to the Designated Safeguarding Staff

**6.3** **Dos and Don’ts**

If a child approaches you to disclose that they are being abused remember about the rules below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| DO | DON’T |
| React calmly Be aware of your non-verbal messages Keep responses short, simple, slow and gentle Observe and listen but don’t ask for more information than you need

|  |
| --- |
| **VERY IMPORTANT!!** |

 **Ask open questions:**Ø **Tell me…**Ø **Explain to me…**Ø **Describe to me…****Be careful not to ask leading questions and remember you are not conducting an interview** If you suspect FGM ask value-neutral questions (*Have you been closed? Have you been cut down there? How long does it take to pass urine?)* Assure the child:Ø What you are saying is importantØ I’m glad you were able to tell meØ I will do my best to help youØ This is so important I need to talk to someone else about it If you have a difficulty in understanding the child’s communication method reassure them that you will find someone who can help Tell the child they have done the right thing by telling you Write a report that includes what has happened, what you have seen, suspected or been told immediately. Avoid stating your feelings but write a factual description of what happened Speak to the Designated Safeguarding Staff as soon as possible  | Stop a child who is freely talking about what happened Ask for more information than you need Make comments or judgements about what is shared (e.g. “That must have been awful!”) Speculate or accuse anybody Make promises that you cannot keep Tell the child that you will not tell anyone else Tell all the staff |

**6.4** **If an adult is accused**

Our aim is to provide a safe environment for our students, however, we do recognise that sometimes behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

If an allegation is made or information is received indication that a member of staff may not be suitable to work with children the member of staff receiving the information must notify the Principal immediately.

The Principal will notify the Designated Officer (from the Local Authority Safeguarding Board) within one working day.

**6.5** **If a child is accused**

Any allegations made will be investigated by the Principal straight away. The guardians of the child will be notified as well as the Designated Officer.

**6.6** **Keeping records**

All records need to be kept in a secure, locked place so when you complete them return them to the Designated Safeguarding Staff.

**7.** **SAFER RECRUITMENT**

**7.1** **Overview:** SKOLA English in London aims to recruit suitably qualified and experienced teaching and non-teaching staff appropriate to the type of courses we deliver and the type of students we enrol on our courses. Our aim is to choose staff who are not only appropriately qualified but also aware of safeguarding and child protection issues. To avoid attracting staff who are seeking employment with children for the wrong reasons SKOLA will adapt safer recruitment practises.

**7.2** **Recruitment materials:**

Publicity: Publicity will state that we are an organization that is committed to safeguarding and welfare of children and we seek to maintain a safe and supportive environment so that any potential staff looking at our publicity will be aware of their expectations.

**7.3** **Information for applicants**

Advertising: Advertisements for any positions will include the information that we are committed to safeguarding. Candidates will be informed that they will have to explain gaps in their CV, will undergo a DBS check and references will specifically ask whether there is any reason that the candidate should not be employed to work with under 18s.

**7.4** **Safer recruitment at different stages**

Applying: Selected candidates will be sent an application form to retain control of the applicant’s information. This form has a section relating to child protection where the candidate has the opportunity to share any information.

Shortlisting process: Candidates are shortlisted based on the fit between their skills and experience in relation to the job description and person specification. The same criteria will be applied to all the applicants. At least 2 people will be involved in the process of shortlisting candidates to avoid subjective judgments. Also, it is less likely that any information will be missed if two people scrutinize the applications. Any gaps in the person’s history or inconsistencies must be identified.

References: All candidates will be asked to provide names and contact details of 2 professional referees. One of these should be the current or most recent employer. If a candidate has worked with children previously a reference should be obtained from the person or organization that employed the candidate in work with children (whether or not this company/ person is the candidate’s current/ most recent employer).

During the interview: At the start of the interview the candidate will be asked to show a photo ID and original documentation confirming qualifications. These documents will be copied during the interview. Before starting the interview the candidate must sign a declaration regarding suitability to work with children. This is an opportunity to discuss any relevant information at an early stage. However, self-disclosed information cannot be used for short-listing. Fair assessment criteria should be applied. Once short-listing has taken place the disclosed information can then be considered.

The candidates will be informed that a DBS check will be carried out on all successful candidates. The 2 disclosures can be compared against each other to highlight any issues.

The candidate will be asked specific questions to ensure that they are genuinely interested in the post for the right reasons.

Background check: All successful candidates will undergo a DBS check before the commencement of employment or, in exceptional circumstances, during the first week of employment. In case of staff living abroad for a long period of time before the start of employment, an appropriate police check from the country of residence will be required.

Important note: Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act convictions become spent after a period of time (this depends on the conviction). However, there are some situations in which a person must declare any criminal record (including one that is spent) and one of these situations is when someone is applying to work with children.

**7.5** **Applicants awaiting DBS**

In case an applicant’s DBS/ Police check does not come through before the start of employment the new employee can start work under exceptional and justifiable circumstances. There will be a record of such a decision.

We will write a risk assessment for the employee in question. We will do the following:

* Obtain 2 positive references that state that there is no reason why this employee should not be working with children
* Observe the employee within the first few days
* Ask the employee to teach in a classroom near the office with the door open and a senior member of staff supervising
* In case of afternoon activities the employee will not be solely responsible for the students, they will be working with other staff who have DBS

The employee will not be solely responsible for any under 18s until the DBS comes through.

**7.6** **If a disclosure shows a criminal record:**

The applicant’s suitability will be judged on a case to case basis. If a person has a criminal record we will take into account those which are relevant to the job. The following factors will be considered:

· Seriousness and nature of offence(s)

· Nature of appointment

· Age of offence(s)

· Frequency of the offences

The disclosure will be discussed with the prospective employee and at least 2 people will participate in the decision process.

**8.** **STAFF TRAINING**

**8.1** **Responsibility:** SKOLA EST will do everything we can so that our staff are trained and aware of all safeguarding aspects. The management team is responsible for training and making sure all staff members are familiar with our Safeguarding Policy.

The people responsible for safeguarding will have at least level 2 or 3 Safeguarding qualification. At least 1 person in the recruitment team will be qualified in Safer Recruitment.

**8.2** **How training is delivered:**

· A copy of this Policy will be included in the Staff Handbook. All staff will be asked to read it and sign a form stating that they have read and understood it

· All staff will complete an online Safeguarding course before starting work. In case any candidates have safeguarding certificates they will be asked to provide a copy

· The staff induction procedures will include a safeguarding session. All staff (including admin, catering staff, etc.) will be trained in safeguarding.

· All group leaders will be given a copy of this Policy to read and sign.

· Knowledge about safeguarding will be regularly updated and revised during staff meetings

**9.** **WHISTLEBLOWING**

If you have any concerns about students or fellow staff members report it to a senior staff member. All such concerns will be treated as confidential and will be investigated.

**10.** **FAILURE TO COMPLY**

Non-compliance with the policy on contact with students under 18 will result in disciplinary procedures. Employers have a duty to, and will remove an individual from regulated activity where there is a risk of harm to children. Employers have a duty to refer the suspicion or allegation to external authorities where there is a risk of harm to children.

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Bibliography:

Working together to safeguard children- HM Government

Keeping children safe in education- Department of Education

What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused- HM Government

Information sharing- HM Government

Prevent Duty Guidance- HM Government

Guide to assist members in writing a safeguarding policy- Accreditation UK