



Child Protection Handbook

Review Schedule	
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Lab School Policy on Child Safeguarding and Protection

Lab School Paris aims to develop responsible, autonomous and empathetic learners through evidence-based, inclusive and bilingual education.

To do so, Lab School commits to providing a safe, respectful and nurturing environment for all students. The school recognises its duty of care and legal responsibility to protect children from harm and to promote their welfare and wellbeing.

This handbook outlines the Lab School's child protection protocols and procedures. It applies to all community members, including volunteers, working in or on behalf of the school.

Further, this handbook:

- provides child protection documentation that is appropriate to the Lab School and its context;
- provides the necessary definitions and assessment tools for clear identification and recognition of abuse/neglect situations;
- ensures an exemplary standard of child protection at the Lab School;
- ensures that prompt and adequate assistance is provided to a child in need of special care and protection;
- defines procedures for staff members and establishes clear reporting guidelines and mechanisms;
- outlines processes and protocols for Lab School by which it connects to its local community and to agencies for child protection support.

1.1 Aim of Handbook

To ensure that all members of the Lab School community understand their role in keeping students safe. Lab School community members must:

- contribute to the provision of safe learning environments for students;
- take appropriate action with the aim of making sure students are kept safe at school;
- identify students who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm;
- communicate to the school and wider community our commitment to safeguarding students.

This handbook outlines how the Lab School will:

- provide parents, staff and students with a developmentally-appropriate common definition of and understanding about child abuse and the related signs and symptoms (physical, neglect, sexual and emotional);
- create an environment where students feel secure, have their viewpoints valued, are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- develop awareness in all staff of the need for safeguarding student wellbeing;
- ensure staff know and understand their responsibilities in identifying abuse, with particular care being taken with students with special learning needs, including language acquisition;
- ensure all staff are aware of the referral procedures and can identify Designated Safeguarding Leads within the school;
- provide a systematic means of monitoring all students who have been identified as having heightened protection needs;
- ensure that outside local agencies are involved, as appropriate;
- ensure that key concepts of safeguarding are integrated within the curriculum;
- ensure students know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried;
- provide information for parents/carers outlining the procedures laid down by this handbook;
- ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of all staff, volunteers and service providers who work with our students

1.2 Scope of the Handbook

This handbook applies to all members of the Lab School community - all staff, students, parents, service providers and visitors.

1.3 Handbook Beliefs Statement

Child abuse and neglect are concerns throughout the world, which can have serious short and long-term psychological and physical implications for victims. Child abuse and neglect are violations of a child's human rights and are obstacles to the student's education as well as to their physical, emotional, and spiritual development. Lab School endorses the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (1989), of which France is a signatory.

At Lab School Paris, the emotional, social and mental wellbeing of every student lies at the heart of our educational philosophy. The school strives to foster a culture of trust, empathy and mutual respect, where every learner feels valued, supported, and empowered to thrive both personally and academically.

Educators at Lab School have a professional and ethical obligation to identify students who are in need of help and protection, and to take steps to ensure that the student and family avail themselves of the services needed to remedy any situation that constitutes child abuse or neglect.

All staff employed at Lab School must report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect whenever the staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a student has suffered, or is at significant risk of suffering abuse or neglect. Reporting and follow up of all suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect will proceed in accordance with the administrative regulations outlined in this handbook. Cases of suspected child abuse or neglect may be reported to the appropriate child protection agency in France and/or to local authorities.

Lab School seeks to be a safe haven for students who may be experiencing abuse or neglect in any aspect of their lives. As such, Lab School will communicate this handbook annually to all parents, staff and students, will provide annual training for all staff, will make every effort to implement hiring practices to ensure the safety of students and will review the handbook annually for compliance and effectiveness.

In the case of a staff member reported as an alleged offender, Lab School will conduct a full investigation following a carefully designed course of due process, keeping the safety of the students at the highest priority.

Equality statement

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practices and recognise students' diverse circumstances. We ensure that all students have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to students who:

- have learning variances and or disabilities;
- are young carers;
- may experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality;
- have English or French as an additional language;

- are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence;
- are at risk of Female Genital Mutilation, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalization;
- are asylum seekers;
- are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs;
- are looked after or previously looked after (mineurs sous protection sociale ou/et administrative ou judiciaire).

1.4 Key Definitions

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): The DSL is a member of the leadership team. Our DSLs are Deirdre Keyes in the Primary School and Stephine Corso in the Secondary School. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding.

Child Protection Team: This group is convened if there are suspicions of child maltreatment, or in the case of allegations against adults or students in the Lab School Community. (See Key Teams).

Wellbeing Team: This group is responsible for overseeing and implementing safeguarding measures within the Lab School community and monitoring the wellbeing of community members, both adults and students. (See Key Teams).

Child Protection (French law):

La protection de l'enfance vise à garantir la prise en compte des besoins fondamentaux de l'enfant, à soutenir son développement physique, affectif, intellectuel et social et à préserver sa santé, sa sécurité, sa moralité et son éducation, dans le respect de ses droits.

Elle comprend des actions de prévention en faveur de l'enfant et de ses parents, l'organisation du repérage et du traitement des situations de danger ou de risque de danger pour l'enfant ainsi que les décisions administratives et judiciaires prises pour sa protection. Une permanence téléphonique est assurée au sein des services compétents.^[1]

Child protection aims to ensure that the fundamental needs of the child are met, to support their physical, emotional, intellectual, and social development, and to safeguard their health, safety, morality, and education while respecting their rights.

It includes preventive actions for the benefit of the child and their parents, the organization of identifying and addressing situations of danger or risk of danger to the child, as well as administrative and judicial decisions made for their protection. A telephone hotline is available within the relevant services.

Prevention is a key element in the text of the French law. This handbook aims to ensure that all members of the Lab School community are equipped to help recognize and prevent situations which may impact child wellbeing.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students:

- Protecting students from maltreatment. Preventing impairment of students' physical and/or mental health or development.
- Ensuring that students grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all students to have the best outcomes.
- Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent students suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse: A form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse as well as other specific safeguarding issues.

Neglect: A form of abuse described as the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

Students: Students include everyone registered at Lab School under the age of 18.

2. REPORTING AND PROCEDURES

2.1 Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is everyone's responsibility. This handbook applies to all staff, interns, service providers, volunteers and school board members in the school and is consistent with legal procedures and guidance. Our protocols and procedures also apply to extended school, field trips and off-site activities for example *activités périscolaires*. (See appendix 5 for Lab School's responsibilities and obligations to Accreditation Agencies and Local and International Laws and Agencies).

All staff

All staff will read, understand and sign the Lab School Child Protection Handbook, and this will be revisited at least annually in safeguarding training delivered by Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs).

All staff will be aware of:

- Lab School systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection handbook, the *règlement intérieur*, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and the *charte relationnelle*.
- The process for notifying the DSL and the post notification procedures.
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a student tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals.
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child sexual exploitation (CSE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, extremism and radicalisation.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Outside of school hours the DSLs can be contacted via email. Safeguarding concerns should be reported via email, not via internal chat tools.
- When the DSL is absent, the Primary and Secondary School Directors will act as cover.
- If the DSL and Directors are not available, the Co-Presidents will act as cover.
- The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:
 - Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters.
 - Take part in discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so.

- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body eg. Cellules de Recueil des Informations Préoccupantes (CRIP), other schools, and/or police, and support staff who make such referrals directly .
- Acting as a member of the Child Protection Team.

For an organisation chart of the members of the Child Protection Team see 2.5.3.

Directors

The Primary and Secondary School Directors have overall responsibility for the implementation of this handbook, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff and aides accompanying individual students), volunteers and service providers are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this handbook, as part of their induction.
- Ensuring this handbook is communicated to parents when their child joins the school and is published on the school website, both on the recruitment page (as part of safer recruiting best practice) and on the enrollment page.
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent.
- Ensuring that the DSLs deliver annual safeguarding and child protection training to all members of the Lab School community, including, but not limited to: students, staff, board members, temporary staff, aides, service providers and volunteers.
- Acting as the case manager in the event of an allegation of abuse made against an adult member of the Lab School Community, where appropriate.
- Acting as the case manager in the event of an allegation of abuse made against a student.
- Acting as a member of the Child Protection Team.

Co-Presidents

The Co-Presidents have the following responsibilities:

- Acting as the case manager in the event of an allegation of abuse made against an adult member of the Lab School community, when appropriate.
- Acting as cover if the DSL and Directors are not available.

2.2 Confidentiality

It should be noted that:

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.
- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of students.
- French GDPR ([CNIL](#)) law does not prevent or limit the sharing of information when this is done with the aim of keeping students safe.
- Staff should never promise a student that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the student's best interests.
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

2.3 Reporting

It is a legal obligation for faculty, staff, and administrators, either as individuals or members of the institution, to report incidents of, or concerns about, physical or psychological violence, aggression, harassment, and physical or sexual abuse. This falls within Code Pénal, Article 434-3.

The reporting should be done via an email within the same school day, or at most within 48 hours, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. In his or her absence, the concern must be reported to a member of the Child Protection Team. Contact may be made at any time, and is not restricted to working hours.

Designated Safeguarding Leads

Deirdre Keyes, Primary School

Stephine Corso, Secondary School (middle and high schools)

Staff and students can also call 119 at any time ([119-Allô Enfance en danger](#)), also called *Numéro Vert* 0800 05 1234. The objective of this 24-hour national helpline is to 'listen to, assist, inform and advise via telephone any person confronted with a situation where a student is in danger or at risk to become so, especially when the calls are from the students themselves, so as to identify these situations and facilitate the protection of minors in danger.'

Note: Staff, as professionals working with children and young people, are normally expected to reveal their identity and number if using the 119 number.

2.4 Communicating Concerns and Dealing with Disclosures

Staff are under the legal obligation to report instances or suspicions of:

- Different types of abuse and neglect.
- Specific safeguarding issues, such as:
 - Child sexual exploitation
 - Indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime
 - FGM
 - Extremism
 - Radicalisation
 - Bullying
 - Harassment (sexual, moral, physical, verbal)

Note: They must also report any disclosures made to them by students. (*See appendix 6 for additional guidance.*)

Staff should follow the process outlined below:

Step 1

Any member of staff who has reasonable cause to believe that abuse is occurring or has occurred or that there is a risk of a specific safeguarding issue, must report it to the DSL. If they are unable to reach the DSL, they must contact any member of the Child Protection Team via email. The DSL will in turn convene the Child Protection Team.

Step 2

The Child Protection Team will gather further information regarding the reported incident, concern and/or disclosure.

Step 3

In all cases, follow-up activities will be conducted in a manner that ensures that information is documented factually and that strict confidentiality is maintained. The following procedure will be used:

- Interview staff members and/or students as necessary and document information relative to the case.
- Consult with school personnel to review the student's history in the school.
- Determine the course of follow-up actions.

Step 4

Implementation of the action.

Step 5

During and after the process described above, there may be a need for emotional support for staff, students and families involved. This will be provided by the Wellbeing Team or by external professionals.

All documentation of the investigation will be kept confidential.

Allegations against staff or students

In the event of an allegation against a staff member, investigative procedures will be specified by Human Resources. This investigation will be led by the relevant School Director with support from the Co-Presidents. The member of staff will be asked to remain off school premises for the duration of the investigation. If the allegation is made against the School Director the investigation will be led by the Co-Presidents. If the allegation is made against the Co-Presidents, the investigation will be led by the Board.

In the event of an allegation against a student by another student or a staff member, the investigation will be led by the Child Protection Team. The accused student will be asked to remain off school premises for the duration of the investigation. Distance learning will be provided to the student by the school.

2.5 Key Teams

2.5.1 Wellbeing at Lab School

The Wellbeing Teams in both the primary and secondary schools are responsible for the on-going proactive support for and monitoring of wellbeing in the school.

These team members are:

Primary:

Director, Deputy Director, homeroom teachers

Secondary:

Director, Deputy Director, advisors (*professeurs référents*)

Some, but not necessarily all, members of the Wellbeing Team will comprise the Child Protection Team (*see 2.5.3 chart below*).

Wellbeing is integrated into daily routines, pastoral sessions and project-based learning, ensuring that care and connection are central to school life. Each student has a *professeur référent*, who serves as their key point of contact and oversees their wellbeing, academic progress and social integration. This trusted adult maintains communication with families and collaborates with the Wellbeing Team to ensure the student's individual needs are understood and supported.

In primary school, homeroom teachers teach social and emotional skills just like any other subject, through thematic sessions or dedicated learning sequences. In addition, the weekly student council gives students an active role in shaping their school life and making a positive impact within their community.

From 6^{ème} to 3^{ème}, students take part in PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education) lessons, which help them build emotional intelligence, self-awareness, empathy and resilience. These weekly sessions provide a safe space to explore personal and social issues, learn conflict-resolution skills and develop a strong sense of self and community.

In Seconde, Première, and Terminale, students participate in a biweekly council, where they gather as a group to discuss school life, express ideas, identify challenges and propose initiatives. These meetings nurture responsibility, collective reflection, and democratic participation—helping students learn to listen, collaborate, and co-create their learning environment.

2.5.2 Wellbeing Team (Whole School)

This team ensures that adults and students engage in positive relationships in order to create a trusting and caring learning environment. It is composed of the directors, deputy directors, *professeurs référents* and homeroom teachers.

This team is responsible for:

- Setting the schedule for student lessons on safeguarding throughout the academic year.
- Addressing barriers to effective provision, such as teacher reluctance to report.
- Suggesting and implementing ways to encourage positive relationships.
- Teaching Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) lessons.

2.5.3 Child Protection Team

When a child protection concern is reported, the DSL will inform the Directors and convene the Child Protection Team.

This team will be led by the DSL who received the report and will include the other DSL and the school directors, including the Director of Finance and Human Resources.

This team is responsible for:

- Identifying mandatory training requirements for staff and students (i.e. annual training including student aides, parent volunteers, cleaners, building maintenance and after school service providers).
- Ensuring safeguarding and child protection provisions are up-to-date with research and current best practices.
- Organising safeguarding focussed meetings with teachers or staff during which maltreatment concerns can be discussed/assessed.
- Providing emergency/after-hours contact points.
- Interacting with local social/medical/legal services and implementing their expertise.
- Conducting annual review and internal audit of compliance and quality/effectiveness and analysis of policies and procedures every 2 years (including annual review by the school board.)
- Collecting and collating brief descriptions of each case for ongoing research.

- Ensuring access to resources in the community, Paris area, and beyond (often via staff who are not on the team):
 - Legal/Social - social services, *juge des enfants*, local police contacts, school or other e.g. lawyer.
 - Education/Training/Advocacy - colleges, universities, schools, other providers of resources,
 - Research - colleges, universities, other schools, local/national associations e.g. children's health, general health
 - Medical/Psychological - external counselors/psychiatrists/therapists/doctors specialising in children's health; school nurses locally; local associations specialising in abuse or victims of abuse.

3. GUIDELINES FOR AWARENESS, TRAINING AND PREVENTION

3.1 Parent/Community Awareness

It is vital that the school's commitment to the highest possible standards of safeguarding and child protection for all students is communicated clearly to the variety of stakeholders who come into contact with the school.

- School safety goals and objectives are communicated regularly to all parents.
- The Child Protection Handbook is available on the school website and Google Drive.
- The school's commitment to child protection is stated clearly on the school's marketing and communications materials - eg. website.
- New families receive specific information regarding the school's policies and procedures.
- Guidance and resources on student safety issues and how parents can talk with their children are available from the Child Protection Team.
- Safeguarding training is provided for all APELAB members, *délégués de classe* and parent volunteers.

3.2 Staff Recruitment

The school is committed to maintaining procedures to ensure the safe recruitment and selection of all teaching and non-teaching staff.

3.2.1 Information for applicants

There will be a clearly stated commitment to child protection on all recruitment communication including:

- school website;
- job adverts;
- information documents sent out to individual applicants.

3.2.2 Screening and criminal background checks

All personnel, staff, teachers, volunteers and other members of the community whose potential employment or volunteer service involves direct contact with, and/or the potential for unmonitored access to students (including any individuals who regularly provide transportation to students) are required to provide thorough references and criminal background checks.

Human Resources will be responsible for Lab School contracted employees for initiating and evaluating the applicants for positions. All positions whether short-term/permanent/part-time/full-time will require background checks. The elements of the comprehensive background check will include:

- A written application and a "statement of suitability" (eg. cover letter.)

- A personal interview, to include a question(s) regarding awareness and observation of professional boundaries; appropriateness of relationships with students; commitment to and evidence of taking action to protect students.
- Reference checks, including requested assurances regarding awareness and observation of professional boundaries; appropriateness of relationships with students; commitment to and evidence of taking action to protect students.
- Criminal history background checks must be provided from all previous countries of residence over the last 10 years (for periods of more than 6 months) for new staff. When not possible the Directors must determine next steps.
- Local background checks, which will be re-done on a yearly cycle, and will be administered for all staff returning from sabbatical or long term leave.
- Published procedures as to how and by whom criminal history records will be reviewed and evaluated (with criteria for disqualification) – including a description of the appeal process.
- Any background screening accomplished by or on behalf of the organization will comply with relevant privacy laws.

It will be made clear to all applicants that any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in the information provided by the applicant, whenever discovered, may result in disqualification from, or termination of employment or volunteer service with the organization.

All hiring practices with regard to background checks and suitability for employment adhere to French law.

3.2.4 Contractors and Service Providers

No contractors, vendors or service providers operating on-site during school operating hours will be left with unsupervised access to students.

Further, when Lab School enters into a contractual relationship with an external organization where that external organization will be bringing minors onto its property (such as field trip venues, study centres or sports facilities), these organizations will be required to provide evidence beforehand that the adults accompanying the minors have undergone the appropriate background and criminal record checks. When not possible the Directors must determine next steps.

3.3 Staff Training

Regular staff training is conducted to ensure staff feel confident about all aspects of child protection: awareness, types, signs/symptoms, prevention, policies and laws, reporting process, student's curricula, local authority support and resources available. Specifically:

- All new employees receive Safeguarding training from the Designated Safeguarding Leads when beginning their work.
- All staff including board members, receive annual Safeguarding Training, presented by the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

These fall within the French law from the Code de l'Education - *Article D542-1*.

The ongoing training needs of individuals, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s), staff involved in Child Protection Teams are monitored and ensured by the Directors. DSL training should be updated on a yearly basis.

3.4 Student Awareness

Students' own awareness of issues affecting their personal safety (including abuse) and strategies for dealing with difficult situations is vital. At Lab School students are made aware of these through:

- A *charte relationnelle* is publicised and implemented.
- Age-appropriate curriculum based on core elements and evidence-based practices is written and taught to students annually. This will be provided as part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum from Grades 7-10. It includes:
 - Students' rights and responsibilities with regard to child protection issues.
 - Strategies to recognize inappropriate behaviours, respond assertively and to report incidents to school personnel and/or family members.

3.5 Facilities and Security

School leadership ensures that all facilities are secure and appropriate to respect the safety and wellbeing of students in accordance with French national laws.

All rooms into which students are permitted have a window in the door, except the bathrooms and music room.

Students are not permitted on-campus before school opening hours. End of day sweeps are made by a member of staff to ensure no students are left in the buildings.

Off-site facilities are regularly reviewed in terms of safety and security.

Crisis procedures (lock-down, evacuation, bomb/terrorist attacks, fire) are reviewed annually and drills are regularly conducted.

Appendix 1: Additional Terminology

Child Protection

It is a broad term used to describe philosophies, policies, standards, guidelines and procedures to protect children from both intentional and unintentional harm. In this document, the term “child protection” applies to the protection of students at Lab School.

Child Protection Policy

It is a statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to protecting students from harm (to self and from others) and makes clear to all what is required in relation to the protection of students. It serves to create a safe and positive environment for students and to demonstrate that the school is taking its duty and responsibility seriously. This handbook considers that Lab School will provide appropriate student safety classes supported with a well-defined curriculum to increase student’s ability to understand abuse prevention.

Child protection concerns

These include suspected, alleged, self-disclosed or witnessed abuse of a student by anyone associated within or outside the school which must be investigated and followed by appropriate action.

Child Abuse

According to the [World Health Organization](#), child abuse constitutes “all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.”

The French organization [Observatoire National de l’Enfance en Danger](#) defines an ‘*enfant maltraité*’ as a child ‘*qui est victime de violences physiques, cruauté mentale, abus sexuels, négligences lourdes ayant des conséquences graves sur son développement physique et psychologique.*’ ([ODAS, Lettre de l’ONED 1997](#)). The 2007-293 Law (*Code de l’Action Sociale et des familles*) distinguishes a ‘child in danger’, as stated by ODAS, i.e. victim of abuse, from a child ‘in risk of danger’ (victim of neglect, moral, educational, or health-related).

A person may abuse a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional (e.g. school) or community setting; children may be abused by individuals known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger. Children may experience multiple forms of abuse simultaneously, further complicating the problem. Most child abuse is inflicted by someone the child knows, respects or trusts. International school communities have unique characteristics of which school personnel must be aware in terms of the individuals who are around our children. School personnel should be knowledgeable of the potential reasons why children may not be able to talk about any victimization they might have experienced. To increase the Lab School community's awareness, this Handbook focuses on four main categories of abuse and provides basic information about the physical and behavioural signs associated with each type.

Physical abuse (*child in danger*)

This may involve hitting, punching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, biting, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing intentional physical harm to a child. (These symptoms could also indicate harm to self, such as cutting and suicidal ideation).

Emotional abuse (*child in danger*)

This is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child so as to cause severe and adverse effects on a child's emotional development. It may involve: conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved; that they are inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person; age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children; causing children frequently to feel frightened; or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may also occur alone.

Sexual abuse and violence (*child in danger*)

This involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (i.e. rape) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production or viewing of pornographic material or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Children involved in commercial sex work are victims of sexual abuse, whether they perceive themselves as victims or not.

Sexting

This is also known as youth produced sexual imagery and is the sharing of sexual imagery (photos or videos) by children

Neglect (*child at risk*)

This is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or physiological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the France and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

Radicalisation

Radicalisation is the process through which a person comes to support or be involved in extremist ideologies. It can result in a person becoming drawn into terrorism and is in itself a form of harm.

CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation)

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type 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.

CRIP

'Cellule de recueil, d'évaluation et de traitement des informations préoccupantes du Conseil Général'.

The CRIP advises on cases related to children at risk, and receives '*informations préoccupantes*'

Information préoccupante

This is a written statement passed onto the CRIP stating concern.

Signalement

This is an action taken when it is deemed that there is sufficient cause for concern to require immediate judicial protection for the child. This report is addressed directly to the [Brigade de Protection des Mineurs](#).

Appendix 2: Commonly Held Myths vs Realities About Child Abuse and Neglect

Myth: Child abuse is carried out by strangers.

Fact: 90% of abuse is from domestic causes and is committed by individuals known to the child. International school communities tend to have families that move often and are separated from their extended families in their home-of-record. When abuse is within the family, the transient lifestyle then increases the risk to international school students who tend not to have access to outside resources, and therefore cannot get help.

Myth: Learning about child protection is harmful to your children.

Fact: Developmentally appropriate education makes children more confident and able to react to dangerous situations. Teaching using a specific population context increases protective behaviour.

Myth: Abuse education is sex education.

Fact: Research-based programs prepare students to develop the skills and attitudes to keep themselves safe from perpetrators, and behaviours that include bullying, harassment and other forms of exploitation

Myth: Abuse is a matter of culture; physical or sexual abuse falls within the norms of some cultures and is acceptable.

Fact: The reality is that there no excuse for child abuse! No culture supports harming children.

Myth: Child abuse is a result of poverty and happens in low socio-economic circumstances.

Fact: Abuse occurs in all racial, ethnic, socio-economic, and cultural sectors of society. A common characteristic of an abusive family is isolation, such as that commonly found in our international school families who move often or are separated from their extended families at home.

Myth: International Schools do not have to report abuse to local authorities.

Fact: International schools are bound by the laws of the host country and as such international schools must be knowledgeable and compliant with the child protection laws in their locale. Furthermore, international schools are legally and ethically liable for any violation of existing laws related to reporting of cases of abuse or neglect; there are cases now pending where schools are facing legal action in regard to non-compliance.

Appendix 3: Why International School Students Are Likely to Be Vulnerable to Abuse

Characteristics/attributes of international school children

- Transience and mobility impacts development of identity and relationships (especially for support in times of need).
- Early maturity/sophistication vs. naiveté and immaturity in other areas.
- Separation from extended families; working and travelling parents, and separation from long term friendships/relationships results in attachment issues and thus support during times of crisis or need may be minimal or non-existent.
- Lost between multiple and sometimes conflicting cultures and value systems resulting in confusion of behavioural expectations
- High expectations placed on students to achieve academically.
- Access to maids and other daily helpers (drivers).
- Access to expensive international schools because companies pay tuition while they (and their peers) in their home-of-record, previously attended public school

Characteristics of international school families

- Isolation from extended family, previous community for support.
- Power differential in marriage (Who has the work permit?) creates vulnerability
- “Love – hate” relationship with host country for expatriates.
- Lack of control over critical life decisions: company decides where, when, and how the family moves.
- Lack of stability.
- Superficial/tourist relationship with host country.

Characteristics of international school communities

- School takes on sole role as centre of family life - “goldfish bowl” - and often provides superficial relationships that cannot meet mental health needs.
- Power influence: family's “position” in community can be an inhibitor for school to act on Sense of being “lost” in diversity of community – can cause further isolation.

Cultural dynamics of international school communities

- Multiple norms rooted in different cultural traditions can cause confusion: religious values, values of parenting, discipline, care-giving, sexuality, gender roles and responsibilities.
- Impact of rapidly changing “pop culture” from developed nations.
- Varying degrees of openness rooted in cultural traditions.
- Varying cultural attitudes toward gender issues and child development – different concepts of developmental needs through childhood.

International school communities are vulnerable to abuse because the nature of abuse requires secrecy, insularity, isolation and limited access to support resources, which are some characteristics of the international community. International schools must respond to

the reality that these characteristics are exactly the characteristics that perpetrators will use to their advantage in abusing children.

Child abuse is a multifaceted issue that involves dynamics of the child, the family, and the community. In international communities we can assume that child abuse occurs, that certain factors and characteristics of international communities make expat children vulnerable to abuse, that international schools tend to be isolated from social service resources.

(<https://www.cois.org/about-cis/child-protection/international-taskforce-on-child-protection/safeguarding-standards>)

Appendix 4: Signs That Should Alert Educational Professionals

This is a list of possible signs of abuse and neglect which would arouse concern. Children may exhibit one or more of these signs. Whilst we must not ignore these potential signs of abuse, we also need to be mindful of the fact that many of them are exhibited in many other contexts.

As educators we have to be vigilant about gradual or sudden changes in the behaviour of the students in our care.

- Changes in moods
- Severe or frequent anxiety
- Unexplained fears
- Attention-seeking behaviours
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Withdrawal from physical or emotional contact (towards strangers as well as non-strangers)
- Mutism
- Changes in sleeping patterns
- Unexplained physical injuries (e.g. bruises, broken bones, burns, wounds, bites, scratches), which may have not received medical attention
- Improbable excuses or vagueness given by parents/guardians/students, or refusal to discuss injuries
- Patterns in absence from school
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Refusal to go to the swimming pool
- Physical, mental and emotional development is delayed
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Persistent tiredness
- Physical ailments - such as pain or irritation to the genital area - that can't be explained medically
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Regressive behaviours, bed wetting
- Enuresis and encopresis (inability to use the toilet)
- Age-inappropriate sexualized behaviours or language
- Drawings with developmentally-inappropriate sexual content
- Stomach pains or discomfort walking or sitting
- Mentioning receiving special attention from an adult or a new "secret" friendship with an adult or young person
- Medical needs unattended
- Lack of supervision
- Consistent hunger
- Inappropriate dress
- Poor hygiene

- Inadequate nutrition
- Self-harm behaviours, and suicidal ideations and/or attempts
- Extreme need for affection
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Poor social relationships
- Conduct disorder behaviours - vandalism, stealing, aggressiveness towards others
- Compulsive lying
- Drug or alcohol use

In addition to knowing the signs of victimization, below are some early warning signs to look out for in potential offenders:

Signs of offenders (students)

- Unusual interest in sex, sexualizing inanimate objects and activities
- Does not stop sexual misbehaviour when told to stop
- Uses force and coercion in social situations
- Unusual intensity when discussing sex and sexuality
- Socializes with students much younger
- Gives gifts, requires secrecy in relationships

Signs of offenders (adults)

- Has “favourite” student
- Attempts to find ways to be alone with student
- Inappropriate language, jokes and discussions about students
- Sexualized talk in the presence of students
- Gives private gifts or has private chats on social media/internet

FGM:

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A female:
 - Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
 - Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
 - Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
 - Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
 - Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
 - Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period
 - Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
 - Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
 - Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem

- Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
 - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
 - Having limited level of integration within UK society
 - Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
 - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
 - Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
 - Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
 - Being unexpectedly absent from school

Note: The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

Appendix 5: Child Protection at Lab School : Additional Guidance for Staff

These are procedures to protect children from abuse and neglect (*'maltraitance'*). Child protection concerns include suspected, alleged, self-disclosed, or witnessed abuse or neglect of a child, and must be followed up with appropriate action.

Types of abuse

Physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

Being Prepared

Students will be taught about child protection within the curriculum in a developmentally-appropriate way. They will learn strategies to recognize inappropriate behaviours, how to respond assertively and to report incidents to school personnel and/or family members.

If a student confides in you:

- Inform the student that you cannot keep a secret. If they or somebody else are in danger, you will have to report to the DSL in order to protect and support them.
- You can reassure the student that the information they give you will be treated sensitively and kept as confidential as necessary.
- If a student asks to speak with you, try to find a neutral setting where you can have quiet and few interruptions.
- Do not ask leading questions. Just listen, letting him/her explain in his/her own words.
- Respond calmly and matter-of-factly. Even if the story that the student tells you is difficult to hear, it is important not to register disgust or alarm. Thank the student for confiding in you and reassure them that they have done the right thing in doing so.
- Do not make judgmental or disparaging comments about the abuser - it is often someone the student loves or with whom he/she is close.
- Do not make promises to the student that things will get better.
- Do not confront the abuser.
- If the student does not want to go home, this should be considered an emergency. Report and handle immediately by contacting the DSL. If you cannot reach them, please contact another member of the Child Protection Team. Do not take the student home with you!
- Explain to the student that you must tell the DSL to get help.
- Try to let the student know that someone else also will need to talk with him/her and explain why.
- Empower the student as much as possible by allowing them to be a part in the process. They may want to come with you to speak to the DSL.

If you have suspicions, yet the student does not confide in you, contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If they are unavailable, please contact a member of the Child Protection Team. If a student tries to confide in you but then decides not to, please also inform the DSL.

Protecting yourself from vulnerability

Interactions between adults and students at Lab School should always be appropriate, and to protect them from false allegations, adults should always ensure that they are seen to be so:

- Avoid situations in which you are alone with a student. This includes not transporting a student alone in your car or other transport. When it is necessary to speak privately with a student, find a space out of earshot, but within sight of others for your conference.
- The privacy of students in situations such as toileting, showering and changing clothes should be respected.
- Minimal physical contact should be used only in the following situations: To prevent or treat injury; to ensure safety; as a means of instruction; to meet the requirements of the sport; to comfort a student in distress.
- Do not use corporal punishment in any form.
- Sexual jokes, comments of a personal sexual nature, inappropriate physical contact, massages or sexual gestures are not appropriate behaviour for an adult staff member or volunteer.
- When volunteering to supervise overnight activities, adults should not share sleeping quarters with children other than their own.
- Social media/online/ mobile phone : Maintain your own strict privacy settings on personal online profiles and do not maintain contact with students on social media and in any other online forums, such as gaming. Do not give your personal mobile phone number to students nor take theirs. Always use your and students' Lab School email addresses to communicate.

It is always the adult's responsibility to set and respect boundaries. When a student attempts to involve an adult in inappropriate behaviour, the adult must reject the overture and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead of the incident.

Resources

French and International Laws:

CIDE convention Internationale des droits de l'enfant

<https://www.unicef.fr/dossier/convention-internationale-des-droits-de-lenfant>

Code de l'action sociale et des familles

<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCode.docidTexte=LEGITEXT000006074069>

Code Civil

Loi 89-899- du 18 décembre 1989 , Loi 2007-293 du 5 mars 2007 and Loi du 2016-297 du 14 mars 2016

Code Pénal

<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCode.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006070721>

Loi 98-468 du 17 juin 1998

<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCode.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006070719>

https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/article_lc/LEGIARTI000021796973/

French Child Protection Documentation:

<https://eduscol.education.fr/pid23812/protection-de-l-enfance.html>

https://media.eduscol.education.fr/file/Action_sanitaire_et_sociale/27/8/memento_infractions_115278.pdf

https://media.eduscol.education.fr/file/Action_sanitaire_et_sociale/52/8/guide_prevention_violences_sexuelles_144528.pdf

https://cache.media.eduscol.education.fr/file/Protection_de_l_enfance/27/3/2014_ecole_bien_veillante_bdef_315435_407273.pdf

https://cache.media.eduscol.education.fr/file/Protection_de_l_enfance/42/5/Guide_Souffrance_psy_Enfant_ado_2014_407425.pdf

<https://eduscol.education.fr/cid50658/missions-de-l-ecole-et-de-ses-acteurs.html>

Service Nationale d'Accueil Téléphonique de l'Enfance en Danger
<http://www.allo119.gouv.fr/>

Agir contre la maltraitance - Guide juridique à l'usage des professionnels de l'enfance
Enfance et Partage, Paris

http://www.enfance-et-partage.org/IMG/pdf/Guide_juridique_Agir_contre_la_maltraitance_leger.pdf

Brigade de Protection de Mineurs, Prefecture de Police
<http://www.prefecturedepolice.interieur.gouv.fr/Nous-connaître/Services-et-missions/Missions-depolice/La-direction-regionale-de-la-police-judiciaire/La-brigade-de-protection-des-mineurs>

UK Child Protection Documentation:

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019)

Working Together to Safeguard Children

(2018) The Key -

<https://schoolleaders.thekeysupport.com/>

NSPCC:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/radicalisation>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-sexual-exploitation>

WHO:

World Health Organisation (Ed.2014) Fact sheet N.150 Child maltreatment,
<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs150/en/>

[1] Article L112-3 Version en vigueur depuis le 16 mars 2016 Modifié par LOI n°2016-297 du 14 mars 2016 - art. 1