

## GEMS SAFEGUARDING POLICY MANUAL

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## **Policy Statement**

GEMS are driven by a singular purpose - to put a quality education within the reach of every student. For our students, we are a window into a vibrant tomorrow - to their future, and their endless potential. We recognize that in order to ensure all our students achieve their potential we must first ensure students feel safe, and are safe.

GEMS are fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people. We recognise our responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation.

GEMS acknowledge our duty to act appropriately in response to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

Paid staff and volunteers will endeavour to work together to develop an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults.

This is the Introductory Policy Statement for GEMS Safeguarding Policy Manual - a comprehensive set of documents, processes, guidance, policy and procedures, adopted by all GEMS schools. The Policy Framework will be followed by all members of the organisation, and promoted by those in positions of leadership within the component individual organisations.

To fulfil their commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, all GEMS schools must have:

- Clear priorities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, explicitly stated in strategic policy documents.
- A clear commitment by senior management to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare.
- A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- Recruitment and human resources management procedures that take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of students, including arrangements for appropriate checks on staff and volunteers.
- Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers.
- Arrangements to ensure that all staff undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities effectively, and keep this updated by refresher training at regular intervals.
- That all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers who work with children, are made aware of the establishment's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and their responsibilities for that.
- Policies for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and procedures that are in accordance with guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures.
- Arrangements to work effectively with other organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including arrangements for sharing information.
- A culture of listening to, and engaging in, dialogue with children - seeking children's views in ways that are appropriate to their age and understanding, and taking account of those views in individual decisions and in the establishment or development of services.
- Appropriate whistle-blowing procedures and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed.
- Senior Leaders who understand the context of Federal Law 3 of the UAE, the guiding Law for Safeguarding and Child Protection, and any relevant country-specific legislation.

Principles upon which the Safeguarding Children Policy Statement is based:

- The welfare of a child or young person will always be paramount.
- The welfare of families will be promoted.
- The rights, wishes and feelings of children, young people and their families will be respected and listened to.
- Keeping children safe from harm requires people who work with children to share information.
- Those people in positions of responsibility within the organisation will work in accordance with the interests of children and follow the policy outlined in the GEMS Policy Manual.

We recognise that for these commitments to be effective, senior leaders, employees, volunteers, services and students throughout the GEMS network must play their part in the creation of a safeguarding culture.

**Signed: Sir Christopher Stone, Global Chief Education Officer**

## 1. Status of the document and how to use it

This document is part of a group of policies intended to keep children, staff, other adults and the wider organisation of GEMS safe. This document outlines specific operational arrangements for the items listed in the contents. It should be read in conjunction with the guidance contained in the appendices of this Policy manual and other associated safeguarding policies found in <https://portal.gemseducation.com/Policies/Pages/default.aspx>. This document has been compiled from a wide range of international and best practice guidance, all of which is intended to ensure the safety of all parties. The document outlines the principles as highlighted in the UAE inspection framework <https://www.moe.gov.ae/Ar/ImportantLinks/Inspection/PublishingImages/frameworkbooken.pdf> whilst ensuring the rights of the child legislation found in Federal Law no. 3 of 2016 also known as Wadeema's law <https://www.government.ae/en/information-and-services/social-affairs/children>. ***In all situations which require human judgement, a policy or procedure is there as guidance. Wherever a matter of legal responsibility is relevant to the text in this policy, this is clearly highlighted.***

## 2. Relevant UAE Safeguarding legislation and guidance

- Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 on students' rights (Wadeema's Law)
- Cabinet Resolution No. (52) of 2018 Governing the Executive Regulations of Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 on Child Rights Law (Wadeema)
- Department for Health, School Health Guidelines for Private Schools 2011
- The UAE School Inspection Framework 2016.
- Executive Council Resolution No. (2) of 2017 Regulating Private Schools in the Emirate of Dubai
- Abu Dhabi Education Council Private Schools Policy and Guidance Manual 2014
- Abu Dhabi Education Council Organising Regulations of Private Schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi The Chairman of the Executive Council Resolution No. (26) of 2013
- Law No. (26) of 2015 on the Organisation of Dubai Data Publication and Sharing
- Federal Law No. 5 of 2012 on Combatting Cybercrimes.

Without exception, GEMS will adopt the relevant law governing the jurisdiction of the operating locality of the school. We understand that in different regions of the Emirates, and in the different countries in which we operate, subtlety of legal interpretation may exist. Throughout our safeguarding policies, we have broadly accepted the principles and ethos of UK safeguarding legislation, as we believe this to be some of the most robust legislation internationally. Keeping Children Safe in Education commissioned and developed by the Department for Education England and Wales in 2019, is debatably the most robust educational safeguarding resource in circulation.

## **Roles and responsibilities – See Appendix 2**

The **GEMS Safeguarding Board/Global Chief Education Officer** is responsible for corporate governance and oversight of the effective delivery of the GEMS Safeguarding Strategic plan and Safeguarding policy manual. The Board/CEdO ensures that GEMS' safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations procedures take into account the advice and guidance contained in the GEMS Safeguarding Strategic Plan, Policy Manual and any national legislation and guidance.

The **GEMS Head of Safeguarding** is responsible for the development and strengthening of all activities relating to safeguarding and Child Protection across GEMS Education. This includes leading the overall development, implementation and monitoring of organisational safeguarding strategy, policy and practice, providing real-time advice and guidance to country safeguarding teams on casework and embedding safeguarding throughout all GEMS work.

The **School Local Advisory Board** is responsible for monitoring and advising schools on the central

responsibilities of governance. This includes arrangements for safeguarding for which an appointed, named Governor has responsibility for contributing to the strategic discussions at LAB meetings, which help determine the vision and ethos of the school and clear strategic priorities and targets for the school's safeguarding and child protection responsibilities.

The **Principal/CEO** is responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the GEMS Safeguarding Policy Manual are delivered effectively in their school. The Principal/CEO ensures that staff, volunteers and students understand and implement the policy to safeguard students.

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead** is a member of the school Senior Leadership Team who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection in the school. This responsibility may be delegated to an appropriately trained Deputy in the absence of the DSL.

## **GEMS Safer Working Practice Guidance/Staff Code of Conduct: Appendix 9**

GEMS Guidance on Safe Working Practice is attached as Appendix 9. This provides practical guidance to all adults on which behaviours potentially constitute safe practice and what behaviours should be avoided. The document seeks to ensure that the responsibilities of senior leaders of educational settings towards students and staff are discharged by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe, unprofessional and unwise behaviour. It should assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice and reduce the risk of allegations being made against them.

### **Abuse of a position of trust**

As a GEMS employee tasked with the responsibility of supervising/educating students you provide care, supervisory and educational support to students from a 'position of trust.' The position of trust carries with it certain expectations and responsibilities. Breaches of these expectations and responsibilities are likely to lead to disciplinary action and possible dismissal.

'Positions of trust' exist in professions where the professional is in a position of authority or status over a child or vulnerable person, e.g. teachers, doctors, social workers, therapists etc.

You are employed in a 'position of trust' in respect of all young people connected to GEMS. All relationships developed with students will be as agents of the company and as such no personal relationships will be permitted outside the remit of the service.

This means that adults should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviours, which might be misinterpreted by others. They should report and document any incident with this potential.

### **Students who may be particularly vulnerable**

Disadvantaged and Students of Determination/SEND.

All schools in the GEMS network must be clear that there is sometimes a need to provide additional support to students that have SEN or Disabilities, or are disadvantaged in other ways. This applies to all of our students, and may present in a number of ways, including:

- Communication difficulties – young people may need to support to articulate their feelings and/or report concerns. The safeguarding information or procedures may need to be presented in an accessible way.
- Presenting behaviours (mood, injury, behaviour that challenges) may be a way of communicating harm or impact of abuse. Staff to be aware of the need to look beyond the behaviour to the possible root cause and explore this with the young person at an appropriate time.

- These students may be more vulnerable to bullying or peer-on-peer abuse.

## **7. Attendance / Students Missing from Education**

GEMS Education recognises that regular attendance and punctuality at school is important to the well-being and safety of all of our students and enables them to access the opportunities made available to them at school. Attendance is monitored closely and action is taken where concerns are raised. Every school must have an attendance policy that is reviewed regularly by the school leaders, and Governors should monitor the impact of the policy in securing good attendance and punctuality.

Where a student has 10 consecutive school days of unexplained absence and all reasonable steps\* have been taken by the school to establish the whereabouts without success, the school will make an immediate referral to the GEMS Head of Safeguarding and ensure this is recorded on the Phoenix HSE online reporting system.

\*Reasonable steps may include:

- Telephone calls to all known contacts
- Emails to parents
- Contact with other schools where siblings may be registered.
- Enquiries to friends, neighbours etc. through school contacts.

## **8. Empowering students to keep themselves safe**

GEMS Education ensures that students are taught about elements of safeguarding, including online safety, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a 'broad and balanced curriculum.' Where they exist, this is supported by the school inspection frameworks and legislative frameworks in the various countries in which GEMS operates. GEMS expects senior leadership teams to ensure a curriculum that is relevant, and is sensitive to social, cultural and moral principles, exists in all schools and for all age ranges. Any area of safeguarding which explores aspects of life which could be perceived as 'culturally sensitive' must be married against relevant departmental advice and signed off by the school's local governing body. Should senior leaders have questions about the appropriateness of content to be included in the curriculum, these questions should be directed to the GEMS Head of Safeguarding who will liaise with relevant content specialists before content is implemented into the curriculum.

## **9. Support for students, families and staff involved in a child protection issue**

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved.

GEMS expects senior leaders to ensure that everyone involved in a child protection issue follows the procedures laid out in this policy and any other relevant policy including Whistleblowing and allegations management where appropriate. Senior leaders will ensure that all suspicions and disclosures are taken seriously.

The DSL will act as a central point of contact, offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support where necessary, seeking advice and guidance from GEMS SSC as appropriate.

## **10. Complaints procedure**

Complaints whether directly made to the school or through the GEMS Speak Up Hotline are managed by the Principal/CEO, other members of the Senior Leadership Team and Governors (where appropriate.)

Complaints which escalate into a child protection concern will automatically be managed under the school's child protection procedures.

## **11. Whistleblowing**

Whistleblowing is any disclosure of information that is made in the public interest and, in the reasonable belief of the individual that relates to suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work. This could be happening at the present time, have taken place in the past or is likely to happen in the future. This may include:

- ✓ a criminal offence e.g. manipulation of accounting records and finances, or inappropriate use of school assets or funds
- ✓ a miscarriage of justice
- ✓ an act creating risk to health and safety
- ✓ an act causing damage to the environment
- ✓ a breach of any other legal obligation
- ✓ a concern relating safeguarding children or adults, or
- ✓ the deliberate concealment of any of the above matters

GEMS expect all Senior Leaders to have disseminated the company's 'Whistleblowing Policy' to all employees. The school's leadership team through the DSL must have allocated a proportion of induction or orientation to highlighting the key principles of whistleblowing.

Whistle blowing policy: <http://www.gemslearningtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/GLT-whistle-blowing-policy-2018.pdf>

## **12. Allegations against adults – Appendix 10**

All GEMS schools should have appointed at least two members of the SLT to act as managers for allegations against staff. The exact detail of process can be found in the Appendix 10: Allegations Management Policy 2019.

Employees with specific questions about the Allegations Management Policy or who have been subject to an allegation can access support through the Designated Allegations Manager, or if they feel this is a conflict of interest they can raise their queries with the Principal or [sara.hedger@gemseducation.com](mailto:sara.hedger@gemseducation.com), GEMS Head of Safeguarding.

## **13. Staff training: Appendix 4**

There is an expectation that minimum training is in place for the following delegations in all GEMS Schools and any associated service including the School Support Centre:

The minimum expectation for a Designated Safeguarding Lead in a GEMS school or service is that they have undertaken the GEMS-specific DSL Level 3 training and receive regular practice updates throughout the year through the DSL Regional Safeguarding Forums, which are mandatory. See Training Matrix Appendix 4.

## **14. Safer recruitment of adults working in GEMS**

It is the expectation that all schools adhere to the concepts of the policy and procedure for safer recruitment in education. GEMS will audit the compliance with its safer recruitment policy periodically via review of the individual Single Central Registers (SCR).

Should Senior Leaders have questions about the detail of any of the GEMS safer recruitment checks these should be directed through individual school HR Business Partners. Please reference GEMS Safer Recruitment Policy for the detail relevant to your individual schools, see below.

For specific details relating to safer recruitment in GEMS, schools we ask all employees to direct these questions through the school's HR Manager. However, the exact detail and expectations of all pre-employment checks can be found in the Safer Recruitment policy found on GEMS SharePoint <https://portal.gemseducation.com/Policies/Pages/default.aspx>. Employees will also be subject to ongoing checks through the government in the schools' locality.

### **15. Site security**

Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given an identity badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure students in school are kept safe.

The Principal/Manager of School Operations will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site. Where possible and practical, contractors will be engaged before or after regular school hours.

### **16. Behaviour management**

Every school in the GEMS network must have a specific Behaviour Management Policy that is reviewed and ratified by the school SLT/Governors annually. Employees must have access to this document through a common ICT drive and be inducted in its relevance through induction and orientation. Any staff members with pastoral or supervisory support for children who present with challenging behaviour have a responsibility to work with individual SLTs to establish relevant training for themselves and the whole school staff team.

GEMS does not recognise restrictive physical intervention as a means to manage behaviour under any circumstances. Individual employees have a responsibility to ensure they familiarise themselves with the relevant Behaviour Management Policy for the school they work in. Failure to adhere to this policy could result in disciplinary action.

### **17. Record keeping**

It is essential that any concern about a child protection issue and any discussions with students or others are accurately documented as soon as possible, and are clearly signed and dated. Any such records may be required as part of a subsequent investigation, and they could be used as evidence in court if there is a criminal prosecution. Consequently, it is vital that all written records are accurate and factual. Any allegations or statements made by a child or by any other person should be documented verbatim - documenting the exact words used - wherever possible. The person, who made the allegation or statement, and any witness who was present, should countersign the written record.

This information should then be uploaded into the Phoenix HSE system by attaching a PDF of the original disclosure documentation. The original information should always be filed and stored securely with the DSL.

As soon as a child protection issue or concern has been raised, a timely and accurate record must be made by the DSL of all events, reports and notifications made, and reports circulated. This should be inputted into Phoenix HSE online reporting system.

On some occasions, it may be deemed necessary to obtain photographic evidence of suspected injuries to a child or young person. This evidence will be obtained by the police or medical professionals or child protection services. School staff may document details in writing of any visible injuries, or illustrate the position and extent of the injuries on a 'body map' type of diagram, but must not take any photographs of a child or young person in these types of circumstances.



The need for these types of documents to be confidential is taken very seriously. All records of such discussions and any documents concerning safeguarding and child protection issues are kept in confidential files in each student's folder and/or on the GEMS Phoenix HSE online reporting system. Only GEMS senior managers, the Principal/CEO's and DSL's in individual schools should and will have access to these files. These same end users will also make decisions about with whom they are to be shared.

The GEMS Phoenix HSE Online Safeguarding Platform should be used as the primary way to report, document, escalate, review and evaluate outcomes of cases.

### **18. Confidentiality and information sharing**

Throughout any investigation of a student welfare concern, the appropriate information sharing guidance must be followed. When working with confidential, personal information of a very sensitive nature, staff should be aware at all times of the GEMS current guidance on information sharing and data protection. See above for how records are kept confidentially. Appendix 5 contains a standard format for requesting or sharing relevant information between GEMS schools to ensure an effective transfer for any vulnerable student.

### **19. Extended school and off-site arrangements including Educational Visits**

All extended and off site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. When GEMS students' attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities, the school is responsible for checking that effective child protection arrangements are in place. Residential trips are managed through a GEMS third party provider, Camps International, who are responsible for vetting and managing safety and safeguarding requirements.

Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, the school's child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on the school site, the school will check that those organisations have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

### **20. Online safety**

Online communication between staff and students should not happen other than for the purposes of coordinating an aspect of education. All communications should be made on school devices through GEMS approved mail servers. All communications should be available on request to the SLT team of the specific school. For further information, please see GEMS Safer Working Practice Guidance Appendix 10.

Youth Produced Sexual Imagery (Sexting) See Appendix 3 for detailed information

#### **Relevant legislation:**

- Law No. (26) of 2015 on the Organization of Dubai Data Publication and Sharing
- Federal Law No. 5 of 2012 on Combatting Cybercrimes.

All incidents of youth produced sexual imagery (YPSI) will be dealt with as safeguarding concerns. The primary concern at all times will be the welfare and protection of the young people involved. Students who share sexual imagery of themselves or their peers are breaking the law. However the school believes it is important to avoid criminalising young people unnecessarily. The school will therefore work in partnership with parents and external agencies with a view to responding proportionately to the circumstances of any incident.

All incidents of YPSI should be reported to the DSL as with all other safeguarding issues and concerns. Staff will not make their own judgements about whether an issue relating to YPSI is more or less serious enough to warrant a report to the DSL. What may seem like less serious concerns to individual members of staff may be more significant when considered in the light of other information known to the DSL, of which the member of staff may not be aware.

If, at any point in the process, there is concern that a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to the relevant agency-

## **21. Child protection procedures**

Dealing with a disclosure or allegation by a child, a young person, or another person:

Students in school may feel safe and secure enough to make a disclosure of past abuse or neglect, or an allegation of current abuse or neglect to a member of staff whom they feel they can trust. A disclosure of this kind can arise at any time, and may have been anticipated by staff or equally be totally unexpected. In these situations, school staff should:

- Demonstrate that they are willing to listen to what the child or young person has to say;
- Be prepared to listen impartially to the child or young person, giving appropriate support, but without introducing their own opinions or judgement;
- Be aware of documenting requirements;
- Remember that they are working as part of a team, and must never make an unconditional promise of confidentiality to a child or young person;
- Report any concerns without undue delay to the DSL or the Deputy/SLT member in their absence.
- Be aware that what the child or young person has to say may be uncomfortable or distressing to them, and make clear to them that they may seek support, help or advice for themselves if required.

If a disclosure or allegation is made by any other person (parent, family member, another professional, etc.) with regard to a safeguarding or child protection issue, the same principles regarding documenting and evidence will apply. Adults should be offered the opportunity to make a written statement, which should be signed and dated by them, and by any witness(es) to the statement.

The DSL or Principal must be notified immediately of any allegation or disclosure that calls into question the competence or suitability of another professional person (whether or not they are an employee of GEMS Education). Such information must be treated as being strictly confidential. Verbal notifications of this kind that are made to the DSL, or to other senior staff, must be followed up formally in writing, and delivered electronically through the Phoenix HSE system

### **Acting on a current child protection issue:**

If after discussion with a DSL there is still cause for concern about a child or young person, then the safeguarding children procedures will be followed. The DSL or a named deputy or another person acting on his or her behalf will take the lead role in any safeguarding or child protection issue.

The GEMS Head of Safeguarding, Sara Hedger [sara.hedger@gemseducation.com](mailto:sara.hedger@gemseducation.com) is the contact point for any referral and is the person responsible for keeping the school informed of the process and outcome from GEMS perspective. If this has not been done already, a decision will be reached as to whether any immediate action is necessary to secure the child or young person's safety and welfare, and on any subsequent investigation or action to be taken.

GEMS schools should hold at least two emergency contact numbers for each student, usually both parents, and if it is deemed appropriate, (i.e. if there is not an allegation against one of those contacts) these people will be contacted in the event of any safeguarding concern or incident at school without undue delay.

If a child protection concern, allegation or incident relates to an allegation or evidence of a member of staff or a professional person working with students, then GEMS Head of Safeguarding must be notified on the same

day the allegation is raised, once the allegation is substantiated. See Management of Allegations policy. Appendix 10.

Discussions with the child or young person's parents, or any other person who has been, or may be, implicated in the safeguarding concern must not take place without the agreement of the Head of Safeguarding and Child Protection and/or Principal/CEO.

Where a child or young person has made a specific statement, it may be necessary to clarify what they have said, and it is vitally important to document this information accurately together with the circumstances in which the statement was given. The relevant person in the school should meticulously document all observations, concerns, discussions and actions; inclusive of the date and time they were noted, this forms the safeguarding chronology. These records could provide crucial information that may be needed for an external referral or in any subsequent legal proceedings.

## **22. Engaging with students**

When engaging with students who already have, or may be about to, make a disclosure of abuse, staff should be aware that the student will probably need to make a formal statement to external agencies and the police in the near future.

However, the reality is often that they will choose to disclose initially to a member of staff they feel that they can trust, and who will listen to them sympathetically. Therefore, the following points should be kept in mind:

- Any discussion should be carried out in a way that minimises distress to the student concerned, and maximises the likelihood that the information they provide is accurate and complete. Where the discussion takes place – so that they feel safe, they are assured of privacy, and they are not distracted or interrupted.
- Asking *'leading questions'*, or *'putting your own words as the child's'* must be avoided. Similarly, staff must not pass any opinions, or express their own feelings about what the child or young person is telling them. It is acceptable for staff to reassure them that it is safe for them to tell staff, but it must be made clear that anything they say will have to be passed on to the DSL and possibly other people who work in child protection so that we can keep them safe.
- Be aware that the child or young person may need more time and more than one opportunity to speak before they feel safe to fully voice all of their concerns.
- The child or young person may wish to retract a statement they have made earlier, or contradict a statement they have already made, or even refuse to speak at all. In these circumstances, it is not appropriate for staff to put any pressure on them, but their reactions and comments should be accurately documented, with times and dates.
- It is important that in addition to a factual written statement of the disclosure, any member of staff who has been involved, or who was present at the time, should make a written record of the circumstances in which the disclosure came about. The GEMS cause for concern form includes this information. Appendix 6.

It is important that all staff are aware of their own ability to deal with any safeguarding situation or issue. If a member of staff finds themselves in a situation where a student feels sufficiently comfortable to disclose information of a sensitive nature, the member of staff must consider very carefully how confident they feel about continuing to engage the child or young person in this discussion.

If the member of staff/volunteer feels that they need support from a more experienced staff member, they should carefully explain to the child or young person that they need to seek help from someone else. A more experienced member of staff may be able to help, or alternatively the child or young person may wish to speak to the DSL.

However, if nobody else is available, and the child or young person insists on talking, then the member of staff should continue to listen carefully, so that they do not feel that they are being rejected or ignored. As soon as possible, any disclosure made or information given by the child or young person must be carefully recorded, using the child or young person's own words wherever possible.

### **23. Bullying**

Every school in the GEMS network must have a policy that addresses anti-bullying. This may be part of a wider group of linked policies including behaviour, online safety, complaints etc. This should be regularly reviewed and students' should be involved in its creation, implementation and review.

It is the responsibility of:

- GEMS Corporate Governance to ensure schools have effective anti-bullying policies in place.
- The Principal/CEO to communicate the anti-bullying policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that there is an effective route for concerns to be raised without delay.
- LAB Governors to take a lead role in monitoring the impact of this policy and reviewing it regularly.
- All staff, including: governors, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Students to abide by the policy.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: Safeguarding Definitions and Guidance

**The following information can be used in the school's literature/website to inform parents of the expectations of the school staff regarding UAE child protection legislation:**

'Under UAE governmental guidance, schools must make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of students. Parents/carers should know that the law requires all school staff to pass on information, which gives rise to a concern about a child's welfare, including risk from neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse. Staff will seek, in general, to discuss any concerns with the parent/carer and discuss the need to make a referral to UAE agencies if that is considered necessary, however, this discussion will only take place where such discussions will not place the child at increased risk of significant harm or cause undue delay.

The school will seek advice from UAE agencies when they have reasonable cause to suspect a child may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Occasionally, concerns are passed on which are later found to be unproven. Parents/carers will appreciate that the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead carries out their responsibilities in accordance with the law and acts in the best interests of all students.

## APPENDIX 2: Roles and Responsibilities

### The Governing Body (GEMS) ensures that schools:

- Appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken DSL training at level 3, in addition to basic child protection training.
- Ensures that the DSL role is explicit in the role holder's job description and that safeguarding responsibilities are identified explicitly in the job/role descriptions of every member of staff and volunteer.
- Have Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures, including a staff code of conduct, that are consistent with GEMS, and statutory, requirements, reviewed annually and made available publicly on the school's website or by other means.
- Have procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff and volunteers including allegations made against the Principal/CEO and allegations against other students.
- Follow safer recruitment procedures that include statutory checks on the suitability of staff to work with students and disqualification by association regulations
- Develop an induction strategy that ensures all staff, including the Principal/CEO, and volunteers receive information about the school's safeguarding arrangements, Safer Working Practice (Code of Conduct) and the role of the DSL on induction and before they start work at the school.
- Develop a training strategy that ensures all staff, including the Principal/CEO, and volunteers receive appropriate and regularly updated safeguarding and child protection training and updates as required (at least annually) to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard students effectively in line with any requirements of GEMS. The training strategy will also ensure that the DSL receives refresher training and regular updates as defined under the DSL's duties below, these include mandatory attendance at GEMS Regional Safeguarding Forums.
- Contribute to inter-agency working.
- Teach students about safeguarding and how to keep themselves safe at all times, including when online, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure that the school's safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations procedures take into account the procedures and practice of the country, GEMS and any national guidance/legislation.

### The Local Advisory Board:

See Appendix 7 for detailed guidance on LAB and school Governance.

### The Principal/CEO:

- Ensures that the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures are understood and implemented by all staff
- Allocates sufficient time, training, support and resources, including cover arrangements when necessary, to enable the DSL and Deputy/s to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of students and attendance at any external agency discussions and other necessary meetings as necessary.
- Ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistleblowing procedures and allegations management policy.

- Ensures that students are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding and how to keep themselves safe at all times, including when online, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Refers all allegations that a child has been harmed by or that students may be at risk of harm from a member of staff or volunteer to the Head of Safeguarding & Child Protection in GEMS on the day of the allegation and documents it as an allegation on the Phoenix HSE Online Safeguarding platform.
- Appoints a member of the senior leadership team (if not themselves) to investigate allegations concerning members of staff and volunteers and/or act as a point of contact for the member of staff/volunteer against whom the allegation is made.

### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):**

- Is a senior member of staff from the school's leadership team and therefore has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff.
- Takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection in the school, which will not be delegated. The activities of the DSL may be delegated to appropriately trained deputies in their absence.
- Is appropriately trained, receives refresher training at two-yearly intervals and regularly (through attendance at the GEMS Regional Safeguarding Forums) updates their knowledge and skills to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.
- Acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community.
- Encourages a culture of listening to students and taking account of their wishes and feelings.
- Is alert to the specific needs of students in need, including those with special educational needs or other vulnerabilities.
- Has a working knowledge of relevant local law, education inspection process, and inter- agency support.
- Keeps detailed records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged, but kept separate from, the student's general file. This may be in electronic format.
- Refers cases of suspected abuse to the local Child Protection Services or the Police as appropriate.
- Attends and/or contributes to any external child protection meetings and chairs regular school Safeguarding Committee meetings.
- Co-ordinates the school's contribution to any meetings with external agencies, attending and actively participating in all relevant discussions
- Develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies.
- Ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy manual and Safer Working Practice guidance (Code of Conduct).
- Has a working knowledge of relevant national safeguarding guidance.
- Ensures that the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy manual and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated annually, in collaboration with the whole school community of students, parents, staff, volunteers and LAB Governors.
- Liaises with, and keeps informed, the Principal/CEO (where the DSL role is not carried out by the Principal/CEO), GEMS School Support Centre as appropriate for any Child Protection issues.
- Keeps a record of staff attendance at Safeguarding/Child Protection training, which is signed by individual staff members.

- Makes the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy manual available publicly for staff, i.e. on the school's website, central area or by other means.
- Ensures parents are aware of the school's role in safeguarding and that referrals about suspected abuse and neglect may be made (see Appendix 1). The GEMS Safeguarding and Child Protection statement should be freely available as a link or PDF document on the school website for easy access for parents and is annually updated.
- Ensures that the Principal/CEO is aware of the DSL responsibility under relevant law and keeps them informed of any relevant safeguarding and child protection issues.

**The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)**

Is/are appropriately trained to the same level as the DSL and, in the absence of the DSL, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of students. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.



## APPENDIX 3: Child Protection Procedures

### Recognising abuse

To ensure that our students are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect. This is covered in GEMS Level 1 Basic Awareness face to face and online training.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or matches within reach of an unattended toddler. Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other students and young people.

### Abuse and neglect

Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. **All** staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. If staff are unsure, they should **always** speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy).

**All** school staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

### Indicators of abuse and neglect

**Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

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

**Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

**Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is

happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education (see peer on peer abuse.)

**Neglect:** 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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Safeguarding issues**

**All** staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger.

### **Peer on peer abuse**

**All** staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery – see below)
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

**All** staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse.

### **Youth Produced Sexual Imagery (Sexting)**

If staff become concerned about a YPSI issue in relation to a device in the possession of a student (e.g. mobile phone, tablet, digital camera), the member of staff will support the student to take the device immediately to the DSL. Staff will not look at or print any indecent images.

The DSL will discuss the concerns with appropriate staff and speak to any students involved as appropriate. Parents/carers will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process after the DSL has discussed the issue with the Principal and/or GEMS Head of Safeguarding & Child

## Protection.

If, at any point in the process, there is concern that a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to the relevant external agency.

The DSL will make a judgement about whether a reported YPSI incident is experimental or aggravated.

Aggravated incidents involve criminal or abusive elements beyond the creation, sending or possession of sexual images created by young people. These include possible adult involvement or criminal or abusive behaviour by young people such as sexual abuse, extortion, threats, malicious conduct arising from personal conflicts, or creation or sending or showing of images without the knowledge or against the will of a young person who is pictured.

Review of what response is necessary will facilitate consideration of whether:

- There are any offences that warrant a police investigation
- Child protection procedures need to be invoked
- Parents/carers require support in order to safeguard their children
- Any of the perpetrators and/or victims require additional support.

Examples of aggravated incidents include:

- Evidence of adult involvement in acquiring, creating or disseminating indecent images of young people (possibly by an adult pretending to be a young person known to the victim)
- Evidence of coercing, intimidating, bullying, threatening and/or extortion of students by one or more other students to create and share indecent images of themselves
- Pressure applied to a number of students (e.g. all female students in a class or year group) to create and share indecent images of themselves
- Pressurising a student who does not have the capacity to consent (e.g. due to their age, level of understanding or special educational needs) or with additional vulnerability to create and share indecent images of themselves
- Dissemination of indecent images of young people to a significant number of others with an intention to cause harm or distress (possibly as an act of so-called 'revenge porn', bullying or exploitation)
- What is known about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts
- Sharing of indecent images places a young person at immediate risk of harm, for example the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming

The DSL will make a judgement about whether or not a situation in which indecent images have been shared with a small number of others in a known friendship group with no previous concerns constitutes an aggravated incident, or whether the school is able to contain the situation in partnership with all parents of the students involved, arrange for the parents to ensure that all indecent images are deleted and that the young people involved learn from the incident in order to keep themselves safe in future.

**Viewing the Imagery** – As a rule, adults should **not** view youth produced sexual imagery. Wherever possible, the DSL's responses to incidents will be based on what they have been told about the content of the imagery.

Any decision to view imagery will be based on the DSL's professional judgement. Imagery will never be viewed if the act of viewing will cause significant distress or harm to a student or has the potential to be viewed as a criminal activity in country in which the school operates

If a decision is made to view imagery, the DSL will be satisfied that viewing:

- Is the only way to make a decision about whether to involve other agencies (i.e. it is not possible to establish the facts from the young people involved)
- Is necessary to report the image to a website, app or suitable reporting agency to have it taken down, or to support the young person or parent in making a report
- Is unavoidable because a young person has presented an image directly to a staff member or the imagery has been found on a school device or network

If it is necessary to view the imagery then the DSL will:

- Never copy, print or share the imagery; this is illegal
- Discuss the decision with the Principal and GEMS Head of Safeguarding & Child Protection, Students'
- Ensure viewing is undertaken by the DSL or Deputy DSL with delegated authority from the Principal
- Ensure viewing takes place with another member of staff present in the room, ideally the Principal another DSL or a member of the senior leadership team. The other staff member does not need to view the images
- Wherever possible ensure viewing takes place on school or college premises, ideally in the Principal or DSL's office
- Ensure wherever possible that images are viewed by a staff member of the same sex as the young person in the imagery
- Document the viewing of the imagery in the student's safeguarding record, including who was present, why the image was viewed and any subsequent actions; and ensure this is signed and dated.

**Deletion of Images** - if the school has decided that other agencies do not need to be involved, then consideration will be given to deleting imagery from devices and online services to limit any further sharing of the imagery, this will be in consultation with parents.

**Definitions taken from *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, Department for Education, (2019).**

### **Indicators of abuse**

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as students may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For those reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

**It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.**

A child who is being abused or neglected may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries;
- show signs of pain or discomfort;

- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather;
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming;
- look unkempt and uncared for;
- change their eating habits;
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships;
- appear fearful;
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety;
- self-harm;
- frequently miss school or arrive late;
- show signs of not wanting to go home;
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy to withdrawn;
- challenge authority;
- become disinterested in their school work;
- be constantly tired or preoccupied;
- be wary of physical contact;
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol; and/or
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age and/or stage of development.
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends' or adults recently acquainted with the child's family

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed.

**It is very important that staff report all of their concerns, however minor or insignificant they may think they are – they do not need 'absolute proof' that the child is at risk. Any concern, may be part of a bigger picture for that student which if known, could give context to a situation and help to protect them.**

### **Impact of abuse**

The impact of child abuse, neglect and exploitation should not be underestimated. Many students do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some students, full recovery is beyond their reach and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

### **Taking Action**

**Any child in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "It could happen here".**

Key points for staff to remember when taking action are:

- In an emergency take the action necessary to help the child
- Report your concern to the DSL as quickly as possible – immediately when there is evidence of physical or sexual abuse and certainly by the end of the day
- Do not start your own investigation
- Share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- Seek support for yourself if you are distressed or need to debrief

### **If a member of staff or volunteer is concerned about a student's welfare**

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a student may be at risk but have no 'real' evidence. The student's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress or physical but inconclusive signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the student the opportunity to talk. The signs they have noticed may be due to a variety of factors, for example a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill or an accident has occurred. It is fine for staff to ask the student if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Staff should report these concerns to the DSL as per any other concern about a child's welfare, it might be part of a wider picture.

Concerns which do not meet the threshold for child protection intervention will be managed through the Safeguarding/welfare process.

### **If a student discloses to a member of staff or volunteer**

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual. Their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell. They may have lost all trust in adults. Or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a student talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will need to let the student know that they must pass the information on** – staff are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which they tell the student this is a matter for professional judgement. If they tell the student immediately the student may think that they do not want to listen but if left until the very end of the conversation, the student may feel that they have been misled into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During their conversations with students, staff will:

- Allow them to speak freely
- Remain calm and not overreact – the student may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting their listener
- Give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'
- Not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how hard this must be for the student
- **Under no circumstances** ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the student's mother think about all this (**however**, it is reasonable to ask questions to clarify understanding and to support a meaningful referral if that is required, e.g. when did this happen, where did this happen?)
- At an appropriate time tell the student that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on
- **Not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused**
- Avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about this when it started' or 'I can't believe what I'm hearing' may be the staff member's way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- Tell the student what will happen next
- Let them know that someone (either you or another named person, e.g. the DSL) will come to see them before the end of the day

- Report verbally to the DSL
- Write up their conversation as soon as possible
- Seek support if they feel distressed or need to debrief

**Notifying parents**

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a student with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will be sought first from the Principal/GEMS Head of Safeguarding and Child Protection.

**Making a referral to an external agency**

The DSL will make a referral to the relevant agencies, and the police, if it is believed that a student is suffering or is at risk of suffering harm

The student (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child or create undue delay. Advice and guidance may be sought from the GEMS Head of Safeguarding.

**GEMS Phoenix HSE Online Safeguarding Reporting Platform**

All concerns relating to any aspect of a child's safety must be logged in Phoenix HSE. Where there is concern about the immediate welfare of child, the DSL should contact GEMS Head of Safeguarding and Child Protection for advice and guidance immediately. Any inter-agency involvement with statutory, and public bodies, including the Police/Social Services/regulatory bodies, must be notified to the GEMS Head of Safeguarding.

## APPENDIX 4: GEMS EDUCATION SAFEGUARDING TRAINING MATRIX

### School Staff:

#### 1. Every 2 years

- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL Level 3 Safeguarding (Designated Safeguarding Lead course)
- Schools may elect to train pastoral team members or other key staff at Level 3, including the members of the Safeguarding Committee.

#### 2. Annually – All staff

- Face to face Level 1 Basic Awareness safeguarding training for all staff including LAB members.
- Training register completed and maintained to ensure total attendance.
- Signed return slip to acknowledge read, understood and will comply with Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Manual, Code of Conduct, Health & Safety, Acceptable Use.
- Online Safeguarding training with assessment through GEMS Learning Management System.
- Safer recruitment online training for staff involved in recruitment and interviewing.

#### 3. Termly

- Safeguarding training (subject-specific according to school context) f2f by DSL.

#### 4. Induction

- Any new starters during the year receive f2f and online training on or before their first working day.

#### 5. Meeting schedules

- Safeguarding as standing agenda item in every SLT, HSE and pastoral meetings – feeding into the Safeguarding committee work.

### Site Users including SSC/Outside providers/Services/Therapists/ESM/ Cover Teachers

Any new starters during the year receive f2f and online training on or before their first working day.

#### Annually

- School provides safeguarding training with register signed before outside providers/SSC staff including therapists begin work on site.
- All SSC staff undertake online Safeguarding training with assessment through GEMS Learning Management System.
- ESM and Services provide Face to face Level 1 Basic Awareness safeguarding training for all staff.
- ESM provide subject-specific safeguarding training eg swimming, gymnastics to relevant providers.
- Training register completed to ensure total attendance.

#### Termly

- Safeguarding updates f2f by DSL for services/ESM/contractors.
- Where contractors are on site without safeguarding training MSO Department or Security Team must supervise at all times.
- Commitment by all that works will be arranged whilst children are not on site if possible.
- Undertaking by all that new staff from agencies on site highlighted to MSO and Designated Safeguarding Lead for on-site training prior to starting.

#### Parents/Volunteers:

- F2f safeguarding training annually with register and policy documents signed.
- As with all working/volunteering in schools – good conduct certificates must be provided.
- Confidentiality agreement and code of conduct/expectation document signed before volunteer commences.



## APPENDIX 5: GEMS Transfer of Information document – non-statutory

Dear Designated Safeguarding Lead,

**Re: Name of Student:**

**Date of Birth:**

**Current Year/Grade:**

**Male/Female:**

The above student has recently joined Gems (insert school name) from your school. As part of our Safeguarding procedures we would be grateful if you could complete the following form and return it as soon as possible.

Any information will be dealt with confidentially and kept secure. If you have any particular concerns / issues you wish to discuss, please do not hesitate to email me (.....@gemsedu.com) or call me on (.....)

Please complete the form and return to (.....@gemsedu.com)

*In the subject line please write: **Confidential: Safeguarding transfer to DSL** – then detail the initials of child(n).*

Thank you for your help in advance

Yours sincerely

**(Name)**

**Designated Safeguarding Lead**

**GEMS (School)**

**CONFIDENTIAL****SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION – CONTINUITY OF INFORMATION**

GEMS Safeguarding and admissions procedures requires us to collect information relating to Safeguarding/Child Protection issues that have arisen in a student's previous school so that we can effectively support the transition to a new school. We would be grateful if you would complete and return this form in respect of the aforementioned student who has joined GEMS (insert new school name).

Initials of Student and Grade or Year group/ DOB/ Male/Female	e.g. MH G7/Y8 DOB – 19/05/2015 Male
Initials of any siblings and relevant Grade or Year group/DOB/ Male/Female	e.g. SH G4/Y5 DOB Female

Are you aware of any Safeguarding concerns relating to this child? Please circle or highlight **YES** or **NO**

In which category/ies are your concerns? Please circle or highlight relevant category/ies below):

PHYSICAL ABUSE

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

SEXUAL ABUSE

NEGLECT

If you have answered **YES** please contact: (Insert your Name, Designated Safeguarding Lead, insert your school and telephone number.....)

**FORM COMPLETED BY:**

Name	
Position	
Date	
Signature	

School Stamp

## APPENDIX 6: Record of a concern about a child

This form is for use by any adult working in school that has concerns about a child or if a child makes a disclosure to you.

Date and time form was completed:	Date and time of incident:
Full name of child:	Teacher's name and teacher's class:
Where did the incident happen, what was happening at the time?: <i>e.g. classroom, Year 3 playground, swimming pool etc.</i>	
Other adults present (each adult please complete a separate form independently):	
<b>Report:</b> Who did you tell about your concern?	
<b>Record:</b> Details of incident ( <i>e.g. what you heard, what you said, what you saw- no opinions, only facts</i> ) Have there been any previous concerns of which you are aware?	
<b>Follow up:</b> What are you going to do now?	
Signed:	Name and job role/parent volunteer/contractor/services:

**Chronology – DSL or investigation Lead: Detail each action below.**

Action taken (including decision to refer within school or externally, and to whom reported, date and time):

Date and time:	Details of action, sign and print name.

## APPENDIX 7: GEMS Education Governance Overview

### Governance

“Governance describes the means by which organisations are directed and controlled ... Good governance is about making sure that the organisation is well-run and governed with purpose ... This involves planning for the future and preserving the organisation’s values and reputation. It ensures sound financial planning and effective human resources as well as accountability for the organisation’s actions and decisions.

In schools, the key difference between governance and management is the distinct separation between strategic leadership (governance) and the operational running of the school (management). Governance is the role of boards while management is the responsibility of the principal.” *The Gift of Good Governance – A Guide for the Private Schools Community in Dubai*

### GEMS Structures

The outline below sets out the responsibilities of each party involved in the governance of GEMS schools.

	<b>SCHOOLS</b>  ... <b>deliver</b> the central responsibilities of governance	
<b>SCHOOL SUPPORT CENTRE (SSC)</b>  ... is <b>accountable</b> for ensuring that schools deliver the central responsibilities of governance and for ensuring <b>sufficiency and quality of resources</b>	Improvement in students’ outcomes, incl. students of determination Accurate self-evaluation Effective improvement planning and implementation External evaluation visits and recommendations Compliance Human resources Professional development of school leaders and other staff Premises, facilities and educational resources	<b>LOCAL ADVISORY BOARDS (LABs)</b>  ... <b>monitor</b> and <b>advise</b> schools on the central responsibilities of governance
	<b>REGULATORY AUTHORITIES</b> <b>(MOE, DSIB, ADEK, SPEA etc)</b>  ... provide the <b>framework</b> for and <b>evaluate</b> governance	

## Division of Roles and Responsibilities

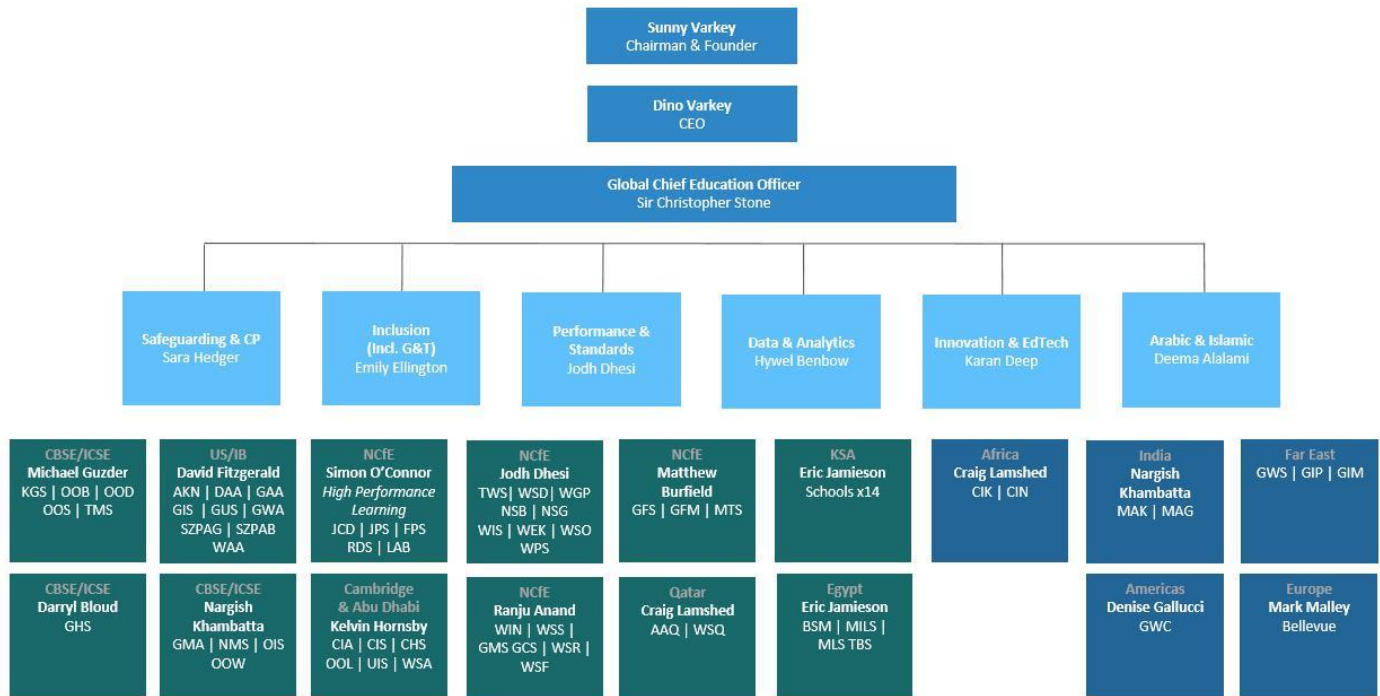
Both the School Support Centre and Local Advisory Boards contribute to governance, but their roles, responsibilities and composition differ, as seen below:

SCHOOL SUPPORT CENTRE (SSC)	LOCAL ADVISORY BOARDS (LABs) (See <a href="#">Local Advisory Board Policy</a> )
<b>Role</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide corporate governance and strategic direction</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure accountability for the school's actions and outcomes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Have influence on and responsibility for the school's performance</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide and manage infrastructure and services</li> </ul>	<b>Role</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Understand and uphold the school's and GEMS vision and values</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Monitor, advise and support the school on matters of strategy and policy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Help monitor the school's standards and performance.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Support the school and the Principal and seek to provide wise counsel</li> </ul> <p>The LAB is not involved in financial matters, appointing staff, the day to day running of the school, admissions, individual issues or grievances, or any other matters which are the remit of GEMS or the school's leadership.</p>
<b>Responsibilities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Provide line management to Principals</li> <li>b. Hold comprehensive and accurate knowledge about the school and ensure that self-evaluation is correct</li> <li>c. Monitor the school's actions and hold senior managers to account</li> <li>d. Hold accountability for the quality of the school's performance through setting and monitoring targets, involvement in development of improvement plans, and use of external evaluation visits</li> <li>e. Ensure the school is well-staffed and well-resourced, with appropriate PD and career development for staff</li> <li>f. Ensure that all statutory requirements are met</li> </ul>	<b>Responsibilities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Contribute to the strategic discussions at LAB meetings which help determine the vision and ethos of the school and clear strategic priorities and targets for the school</li> <li>b. Assist the school in the monitoring of their performance</li> <li>c. Upon request, serve on sub- committees, working parties, panels as appropriate, for example when a new Principal is appointed.</li> </ul>
<b>Composition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chief Education Officer</li> <li>- Vice President – Principal's Line manager</li> <li>- Heads of Data Analytics, School Performance, Safeguarding, Inclusion</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Finance and Procurement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Legal</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Risk and Compliance</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Health and Safety</li> </ul>	<b>Composition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Principal</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> SSC representative</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Another GEMS Principal or Senior Leader</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Parents</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Members of the community</li> </ul>

## School Support Centre Structures

School Principals are line managed by a Vice President (Education) or equivalent, who is the direct representative of corporate governance. The VP calls upon the support and expertise of resources within the Education, Finance, Procurement, HR, Legal, Risk and Compliance, and Health and Safety departments in order to carry out the governance role.

The Education corporate governance structure is set out below:



There are a range of policies provided by School Support Centre to support governance in schools. These are all available electronically on the [GEMS Education Policies](#) section of “GEMSnet”.

HR	HR cont.	HR cont.	Safeguarding and Health and Safety	Legal
Airfares	Relocation	Hiring and Working with Relatives	Health and Safety	Guidelines for Working with Legal
Bereavement	Retirement Age	Housing Allowance and Company-provided	Crisis Management	Related Party Transaction
Business Travel	Salary Advance	Accommodation	Process	<b>Procurement</b>
Company Transport and Transport Allowance	Learning Support Assistant, Shadow Teacher	Joining Expenses (Visas, Labour Permits, Attestations)	Physical Education	Procurement
Continuing Education	Tuition Fee Concession	Leave	Safeguarding Policy and Manual	<b>IT</b>
Reimbursement	UAE National Pension Contributions	Long Service Award,	Safeguarding Statement	New Joiners Technology
Corporate Overtime	Corporate Learning and Development	Farewell Gift	Reporting Safeguarding Incidents	Induction
Entitlements	Performance Development	Medical and Group Life Insurance	Code of Conduct for Child	IT Service Desk
Safer Recruitment	Succession Planning and Talent Management	No Smoking	Protection	Student Passwords
Employee Code of Conduct	Whistleblowing	Phone Entitlements	Lockdown	Acceptable Use
Employee Discipline		Recruitment	Classroom Training	
Employee Grievance			<b>Risk and Compliance</b>	
Employee Social Fund			Conflicts of Interest	<b>Finance</b>
Ex-Gratia Payment for Support Staff			Gift and Hospitality	Timesheet
Front of House Coverage				

## Local Advisory Board Self-Evaluation

It is recommended that Local Advisory Boards conduct an annual self-evaluation. The questions below are adapted from *The Gift of Good Governance – A Guide for the Private Schools Community in Dubai*.

Question	Evidence	R	A	G	Action
How does your LAB contribute to the improvement strategy for the school?					
How does your school source its LAB members to ensure a balance of skills, experience and professional backgrounds?					
How does your LAB reflect the diversity of its community, your school, and its operating context?					
Which different character strengths are important for your LAB members to display?					
How do LAB members uphold ethical leadership and act as good social citizens?					
How does the LAB help to ensure your school's activities and outputs align with UAE Vision 2021?					
How does the LAB promote the wellbeing of all students and adults in the school?					
What is your school's purpose or vision? How clearly is this expressed?					
What are the short-, medium- and long-term priorities for your school?					
What procedures and strategies are in place to ensure a positive relationship between the LAB and school management?					
How does the LAB provide constructive feedback to the school principal?					
How does the LAB evaluate its own performance?					



How well does your LAB use data analysis and reporting to monitor the performance of the school?					
How is your LAB diverse in its representation and perspectives?					
What mechanisms are in place to help the LAB manage conflict?					
How does the LAB manage knowledge transfer over time and ensure continuity?					
What training and mentorship do new and existing LAB members receive?					
What skill sets does your LAB need? How will you fill the gaps?					
How does your LAB distinguish its roles and responsibilities and those of the principal?					
How does the school ensure effective communications between the LAB and the principal?					
How does your LAB ensure it keeps updated with all UAE and specific Emirate regulations affecting education?					
What strategies are in place for your LAB to listen to the views of your school community?					
In which ways are LAB members interacting with each other and the school community outside of LAB meetings?					
How do LAB members represent your school in the broader community?					

## GEMS Schools' Local Advisory Board Code of Conduct

As a Governor I agree to the following:

### Role and responsibilities

- ☐ I understand and accept the purpose of the Local Advisory Board and the roles of the Principal and GEMS Education.
- ☐ I accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Local Advisory Board.
- ☐ I will act fairly and without prejudice.
- ☐ I will maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school. My actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- ☐ In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school I will follow the procedures established by the school. I will report such matters to the school and won't comment or engage in discussion with complainants.

### Commitment

- ☐ I will make full efforts to attend every meeting, prepare in advance and contribute to the best of my ability.
- ☐ I will undertake relevant induction and training.
- ☐ I will get to know the school well.

### Relationships

- ☐ I will strive to work as a member of a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- ☐ I will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all communications.
- ☐ I will support the chair in their role of ensuring due process and appropriate conduct.

### Confidentiality

- ☐ I will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside the school.
- ☐ I will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding the school business arise outside meetings.
- ☐ I will not reveal detail of any Local Advisory Board's decision.

### Declaration of other interests

- ☐ I will record any pecuniary or business interest with the school in the Register of Interests. I will record any interest in other schools.
- ☐ I will declare any conflict of loyalty at meetings should the situation arise.

### Breach of the code

- ☐ If I believe the code to have been breached I will inform the chair immediately, who will investigate. If the chair has breached the code, another governor will investigate.
- ☐ I may expect to be asked to step down should investigation show that I have breached the code.

## Content of Principal's Reports to Local Advisory Boards

The role of the Local Advisory Board in supporting school improvement relies to a great extent on receiving accurate information about the performance of the school. This may be via the Principal's report, but aspects of this information might also form an agenda item. Information and data should include:

- ☐ student progress
- ☐ management of the school's resources
- ☐ progress on the implementation of the school strategic plan

The Principal's report provides a record of aspects of the school's work alongside meeting action points.

Items which could be included in a termly report

- ☐ progress on targets including curriculum developments, staff PD and use of time
- ☐ achievements of pupils and other members of the school community school visits and journeys
- ☐ extra-curricular activities
- ☐ projections for number on roll figures and admissions trends over time staffing structure and responsibilities
- ☐ emerging priorities for school improvement planning
- ☐ review of material resources, premises requirements and concerns policy monitoring information
- ☐ outcomes of curriculum reviews

Items which could be included at least once a year

- ☐ GEMS internal review or external inspection pupil attendance data with trends
- ☐ baseline assessments and a review of key trends public examination results
- ☐ leavers' destinations
- ☐ parental engagement plans and actions community links and use of school facilities health and safety issues, relating to policy
- ☐ SEN policy implementation
- ☐ summary of extra-curricular activities

Items which could be included as and when

- ☐ staff appointments and number of applicants
- ☐ staff changes, resignations, vacancies
- ☐ number of formal complaints with any detail anonymized policy monitoring information
- ☐ maintenance and improvement work to premises

## **APPENDIX 8: Intimate Care and Toileting Guidance Statement**

This guidance is designed to promote best practice and to safeguard children and practitioners. It applies to everyone involved in the intimate care routines of children. The guidance should be read in conjunction with the settings' policies as below:

- Child protection and safeguarding guidance
- Staff code of conduct and guidance on safer working practices
- Health and safety guidance and procedures
- Special educational needs guidance
- Whistle-blowing guidance
- Safer recruitment practices guidance

It is the expectation of GEMS that any child whom requires support with intimate care is provided with a risk reduction plan (a plan to reduce instances of the requirement for intimate care.) This should be created in conjunction with the child's parents and the setting.

## **APPENDIX 9: Safer Working Practice Guidance**

**See separate guidance.**

## APPENDIX 10: Allegations Management Policy

### Introduction

1. All GEMS schools have a duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children who are students.

GEMS ensure there are procedures in place to manage concerns/allegations, against Adult (including volunteers) that might indicate they would pose a risk of harm to children.

The procedure documented within this policy **must** be followed in any case where it is alleged that a teacher or other adult or a volunteer at the school has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children.

**All adults in the school will be made aware of this policy as part of their induction and orientation.**

### How might a concern arise?

2. Concerns about possible abuse of children by an adult will usually arise in one of two ways, either;
  - A direct allegation by a pupil or third party, for example a parent
  - An observation by an adult that the behaviour of a colleague is inappropriate or potentially or actually abusive.

In either case the concern must be documented and reported to the DSL immediately unless the allegations are about the DSL in which case, it must be reported to the Principal and GEMS DSL. If the DSL is absent, the allegation will be reported to the SLT member in charge.

It is expected that all adults in schools in the GEMS Network, where they have concerns, will report them in accordance with this policy.

Adults should also consider GEMS safeguarding procedures and if a child has been harmed a referral should be made.

Once an allegation is made, the Allegations Management Process should be followed. (See Allegations Management Process flow chart **Appendix A**)

### **What initial action should be taken**

3. In order to proceed, the Designated Allegations Manager will ensure that they have a full understanding of the nature of the allegation made by an adult or third party, only speaking to the child if it is unavoidable or it is the child making the allegation.

If there is initial clear evidence the allegation may be substituted it is advisable at this stage to seek advice and guidance from Sara Hedger GEMS Head of Safeguarding. Sara can be contacted on [sara.hedger@gemseducation.com](mailto:sara.hedger@gemseducation.com).

Initially the school should not investigate the incident. Interviewing either, those directly involved or any witnesses could prejudice a fair hearing at a later date.

The Designated Allegations Manager will initially establish that:

- An allegation has been made
- The general nature of the allegation
- When and where the incident is alleged to have occurred
- Who was involved
- Any other persons present

The matter will not be discussed with the person who is the subject of the allegation at this stage. This information can be documented on the Phoenix HSE online recording system (See Appendix B)

Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching at a GEMS school should be referred to the police. Historical allegations of abuse should also be referred to the police. In all cases this should be referred to GEMS Head of Safeguarding before any action is taken by a school.

### **Consultation and Referral to GEMS School Support Centre**

4. Once the nature of the allegation has been established the Designated Allegations Manager should determine if it meets any of the criteria set out in section 1 above. If so, the Designated Allegations Manager should immediately discuss the allegation with the GEMS Head of Safeguarding on the same day.

Sara Hedger GEMS Education Head of Safeguarding can be contacted on [sara.hedger@gemseducation.com](mailto:sara.hedger@gemseducation.com)

At this stage advice should be sought from GEMS Head of Safeguarding with regards to informing the person subject to the allegation, that an allegation has been made. In all cases this is subject to professional judgement which is made in the best interest of the child and adult involved in the alleged incident.

### **The Initial consideration of the allegation**

5. The purpose of the initial discussion is for the GEMS Head of Safeguarding and the Designated Allegations Manager to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action. This will include a discussion to determine whether police involvement is necessary. The discussion may establish that the allegation is not demonstrably false or unfounded.

If the parents/carers of the child concerned are not already aware of the allegation the GEMS Head of Safeguarding will discuss how and by whom they should be informed.

There may be some circumstances where the school may advise the parents/carers of an incident involving their child straight away, for example, if the child has been injured while at school or in a school related activity, and requires medical treatment.

*The initial sharing of information and evaluation may lead to a decision that no further action is to be taken in regard to the individual facing the allegation or concern. In which case this decision and a justification for it should be recorded by both the Designated Allegations manager and the Head of Safeguarding, and agreement reached on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom. The Designated Allegations Manager should then consider with the designated officer (s) what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation.*

The Designated Allegations Manager will usually inform the accused person about the allegation as soon as possible after consulting with the GEMS Head of Safeguarding . **However**, where a strategy discussion is needed, the decision to inform the individual will be deferred until after consultation has taken place, and there is agreement about what information can be disclosed to the person.

### **Strategy Meetings and evaluation with the police**

6. If the allegation is not demonstrably false or unfounded, a meeting and strategy discussion will be convened.

There may be two strands in the consideration of an allegation:

- a police investigation of a possible criminal offence



- consideration by the employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

The Designated Allegations Manager will attend any strategy meeting, unless there are good reasons not to do so, and provide details about the circumstances and context of the allegation and the student and adult concerned.

There are five defined terms used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations.

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation;
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive;
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either to prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.

**Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

### **Considering Suspension**

7. An assessment of the possible risk of harm to children posed by an accused person must be undertaken and managed. This should be considered in relation to the student or students involved in the allegation, and any other children in the accused individual's home, work or community life. Suspension should not be an automatic response when an allegation is reported, all options to avoid suspension should be considered prior to taking that step.

Suspension will be considered in any case where;

- There is cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm
- The allegation appears to warrant formal investigation by the police
- There is a likelihood that evidence may be tampered with, or witnesses intimidated
- The allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal

The Designated Allegations Manager will consider carefully whether the circumstances of a case warrant a person being suspended from contact with the children until the allegation is resolved. In deciding whether to suspend an adult, the Designated Allegations Manager will consider advice given at the strategy meeting and any risk

assessments. However, the decision to suspend any adult must be agreed in collaboration with the GEMS Head of Safeguarding. The GEMS Head of Safeguarding in all cases will seek advice and guidance from GEMS School Support Centre HR and Legal teams before a decision is confirmed. In all cases where a summary of suspension has been concluded, GEMS Head of Safeguarding will confirm this action in a direct email to the Designated Allegations Manager.

*Based on assessment of risk, the following alternatives should be considered by the Designated Allegations Manager before suspending an adult:*

- *Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children*
- *Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children*
- *Redeploy to alternative work in the school so the individual does not have unsupervised access to children*
- *Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the adult, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted; or*
- *Temporarily redeploying the adult to another role in a different location for example to an alternative school within the GEMS network*

#### Action where the police or internal GEMS Strategy investigation is not necessary

8. If the complaint or allegation is such that;

- It is clear that criminal and/or child protection enquiries are not necessary, or
- The strategy discussion or initial evaluation decides that is the case

The Allegations manager will discuss the next steps with the GEMS Head of Safeguarding.

In such circumstances the options open, depend on the nature and the circumstances of the allegation, and the evidence and information available. The possible outcome will range from taking no further action to conducting formal disciplinary action that could lead to dismissal or a lesser formal warning.

#### Action where police or GEMS Central investigation is necessary

9. The Designated Allegations Manager should inform GEMS Head of Safeguarding immediately;

- If the police have decided to close an investigation without arrest or charge, or
- If the police have decided not to prosecute after the person has been charged, or
- If a criminal investigation and any subsequent trial has been concluded

In those circumstances the GEMS Head of Safeguarding will discuss in conjunction with the Designated Allegations Manager, and H.R. representatives whether any further action, including disciplinary action is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed.

### **Referral to Disclosure and Barring Services**

- 10.** If the allegation is substantiated and the person is dismissed, the school ceases to use the person's services, the person resigns, or otherwise ceases to provide his or her services, the GEMS Head of Safeguarding should discuss with the Designated Allegations Manager and their H.R. Business Partner whether a referral will be made to any Barring service associated with the country of origin of the employee involved. This action will prompt consideration if inclusion on the barred list is required.

If the substantiated allegation is in relation to a member of teaching, staff whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) within the country of origin of the teacher to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

### **Supporting those involved**

- 11.** Schools have a duty of care to their employees. They should act to manage and minimise the stress inherent in the allegations process. The Designated Allegations Manager should appoint a named representative to keep the person who is the subject of the allegation informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate for the individual.

It is advisable that access to Occupational Health services including counselling services should be provided and if the person is suspended, the Designated Allegations Manager should ensure the individual is informed about developments at school. The Designated Allegations Manager should seek advice from the school's HR Business Partner in GEMS to support these actions.

In relation to an allegation that has been brought by a child, parent or carer, the deliberations of a disciplinary hearing and the information taken into account in reaching a decision will not normally be disclosed, but the parents/carers should be told the outcome.

In cases where a child may have suffered significant harm, or there may be a criminal prosecution, the school SLT's should work with agencies, or the police as appropriate to ascertain what support the child or children involved may need.

### Confidentiality

12. Any investigation is done in confidence. Every effort is made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

Parents and carers should also be made aware of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against adults whilst investigations are ongoing

If parents or carers wish to apply to the court to have reporting restrictions removed, they should seek legal advice. If there is insinuation of this matter at any stage throughout an allegation process GEMS Head of Safeguarding should be notified immediately.

No one in the school may provide any information to the press or media that might identify an individual who is under investigation. In the event a person is charged with a criminal offence GEMS School Support Centre team will work with all schools to develop external communications relating to the matter.

No one in the school may disclose any information to anyone about the details of an investigation, as this may prejudice the right of the person under investigation to a fair hearing.

The School should make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

*The Designated Allegations Manager should take advice from the GEMS Head of Safeguarding, GEMS Communications Dept, GEMS Legal, GEMS HR, and police to agree the following:*

- *Who needs to know, and importantly, exactly what information can be shared;*
- *How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip;*
- *What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation; and how to manage press interest if, and when, it should arise.*

Following the outcome of any criminal case the Designated Allegations Manager from school must seek advice from the GEMS HR and Communications team in order to manage any media coverage at this time.

### **Resignations and settlement agreements**

13. Where a person under investigation tenders his or her resignation, or ceases to provide their services, the investigation into the allegation will still need to be completed in accordance with the guidance.

It is important that every effort is made to reach a conclusion in all cases of allegations bearing on the safety or welfare of children, including any which the person concerned refused to cooperate with the process.

**The school will not enter into “settlement agreements” by which if a person agrees to resign, the school agrees not to pursue disciplinary action and both parties agree a form of words to be used in any future reference**

### **Record Keeping**

14. If anyone in the school has any concerns regarding the behaviour or conduct of an adult, they must document and report the information to the Designated Allegations Manager or GEMS Head of Safeguarding.

The Designated Allegations Manager or GEMS Head of Safeguarding will ensure that;

A comprehensive summary of any allegation that is made, this should include how the matter was followed up and resolved which should be entered onto the Phoenix HSE online reporting system.

- A note of any action taken is kept on a person’s confidential personnel file.

The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference. At the conclusion of the investigation, if the person under investigation is exonerated, the school will write to the person confirming this, and place a copy on the person’s personnel file.

Details of allegations found to have been malicious should be removed from the personnel records.

**Cases in which an allegation was proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious will not be included in employer references.**

### **Timescales**

15. The school will endeavour to follow the timescales set out in the guidance for such investigations, as long as it is consistent with a fair and thorough investigation. However, it is acknowledged that allegations of a serious and complex nature are unlikely to be resolved quickly.

### **Oversight and monitoring**

16. The school will work closely with the GEMS Head of Safeguarding who has overall responsibility for oversight of the procedures for dealing with allegations.
17. The school will cooperate in supplying statistical information required by the GEMS Head of Safeguarding for GEMS quality assurance purposes and GEMS' Safeguarding Board monitoring purposes.

### **Action on the conclusion of a case**

18. In cases where it is decided in the conclusion of the case that the person who has been suspended can return to work, the school will consider how best to facilitate that.

### **Actions in respect of malicious allegations**

19. In the rare event that an allegation is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious the Designated Allegations Manager or GEMS Head of Safeguarding will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the person who made it, if they are part of the school community.

### **Allegations concerning an adult not directly employed by the school**

20. In some cases, the school will need to consider an investigation case in which normal disciplinary procedures do not apply, and they may need to act jointly with another organisation. For example, an allegation is made against a supply teacher provided by an employment agency or business or against a person employed by a contractor, or a volunteer provided by a voluntary organisation.

In some cases, normal disciplinary procedures may not be appropriate because the person is a volunteer or self-employed.

Although in those cases, the school will not have a direct employment relationship with the individual, the school will cooperate in an investigation, and in reaching a decision about:

- whether to continue to use the person's services
- whether to provide the person for work with children in future

- whether to report the matter to the embassy of the country of origin of the person involved.
- whether to report the person to the police

## Allegations Management Process

