

## SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

For school year 2018-2019  
Date of approval: 20.08.2018

### 1. Purpose

This policy highlights the conceptual framework needed to understand child protection issues and the procedures designed to keep children safe in Avenor.

### 2. Overview

The policy has been developed in accordance with:

- The principles established by the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\) 1989](#);
- The [Romanian law No. 272/2004 on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of the Child](#);
- The statutory guidance for schools and colleges [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2018\)](#);
- The guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#);

“Art. 6 – Observing and guaranteeing the rights of the child should be conducted in accordance with the following principles:

- Observing and primarily promoting the best interests of the child;
- Equal opportunities and non-discrimination;
- Raising the awareness of the parents on the exercise of their rights and on the fulfilment of parental duties;
- The primordial responsibility of the parents to observe and guarantee the rights of the child;
- The decentralisation of the child protection services, the multi-agency intervention and the partnership between the public institutions and the authorised private institutions;
- Providing individualised and personalised care for each child;
- Observing the dignity of the child;
- Hearing the opinion of the child and giving it due weight, in accordance with the age and maturity of the child;
- Providing stability and continuity in caring, raising and educating the child, taking into account the child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background, in the case of undertaking a protection measure.
- Celerity in making all decisions concerning the child;
- Providing protection against child abuse and neglect;

- Interpreting each legal act concerning the rights of the child in correlation with the entire collection of regulations in this filed.”

At Avenor College, we are taking seriously our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. A child is defined as someone who has not reached 18 years of age.

We understand that all staff members and the management team must contribute actively in protecting children from harm, as well as the fact that each child’s welfare is of paramount importance. To facilitate this, Avenor College will provide a safe, caring, positive and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and emotional well-being of each individual child.

**Part of our mission of “co-creating the best possible future” is ensuring that each child is and feels safe within our school’s premises.**

The aim of this policy is to:

- Enable each child’s development in ways that will promote safety and confidence;
- Provide an environment in which children feel safe, secure, valued and respected, feel confident and know how to approach adults if they experience distress;
- Raise awareness of all the teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibility in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse;
- Provide a monitoring system for children known/presumed to be at risk of harm, and ensure that we, as a school, support these children;
- Acknowledge the need for effective and appropriate communication between all staff members in relation with safeguarding children;
- Develop a structured procedure within the school that will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.

### **3. When to Be Concerned**

Safeguarding and child protection is everyone’s responsibility. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all staff members should make sure their approach is child-centered. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is the best interest of the child.

Avenor College together with all its staff members is part of a wider system of the Romanian safeguarding and child protection. The Romanian social assistance and child protection system is based on the principle of providing help for families to stay together where it is safe for the children to do so, and looking for alternatives where it is not, whilst acting in the best interests of the child at all times.

#### **Children Who May Require Early Help**

All staff members should be aware of the early help process and understand their role in identifying emerging problems, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessments of a child’s needs. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating.

This also includes staff members monitoring the situations and feeding back to the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DSLs) any ongoing / escalating concerns so that consideration can be given to a referral to Direcția Generală de Asistență Socială și Protecția Copilului, if the child's situation does not appear to be improving.

All staff members should be alert to the potential need for early help for children who are also more vulnerable, such as:

- Children with disability and/or specific additional needs;
- Children with special educational needs;
- Children who are acting as a young carer;
- Children who are displaying anti-social behaviours;
- Children whose family circumstances present challenges, such as substance abuse, adult mental health or learning disability or domestic violence;
- Children who are showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect.

All staff members should be aware of the main categories of maltreatment: **physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.**

Staff members should also be aware of the indicators of maltreatment and **specific safeguarding issues** so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

### **Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children.

This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour; including for example ADHD or other specific behavioural problems/diagnosis, mood and injury relate to the child's impairment without further exploration;
- Assumptions that children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing any signs;
- Communication barriers and difficulties;
- Reluctance to challenge carers, (professionals may over empathise with carers because of the perceived stress of caring for a disabled child);
- Disabled children often rely on a wide network of carers to meet their basic needs and therefore the potential risk of exposure to abusive behaviour can be increased;
- A disabled child's understanding of abuse;
- Lack of choice/participation;
- Isolation.

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

Education settings are an important part of the inter-agency framework not only in terms of evaluating and referring concerns to Direcția Generală de Asistență Socială și Protecția Copilului

and the Police, but also in the assessment and management of risk that the child or young person may pose to themselves and others in the education setting.

Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. The Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) should ensure their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and set out how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with. The policy should reflect the different forms peer on peer abuse can take, make clear that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. It should be clear as to how victims of peer on peer abuse will be supported.

If one child or young person causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be dealt with as abuse. When considering whether behaviour is abusive, it is important to consider:

- Whether there is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned);
- Whether the perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children;
- Whether there are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

Peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways and different gender issues can be prevalent. Severe harm may be caused to children by abusive and bullying behaviour of other children, which may be physical, sexual or emotional and can include gender-based violence/sexual assaults, sexting, domestic abuse, peer-on-peer exploitation, serious youth violence, sexual bullying or harmful sexual behaviour.

#### **4. Child Protection Procedures**

- All members of the staff will receive training from a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in order to develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse every year;
- All members of the staff know how to respond to a child who discloses abuse and the procedure to be followed in appropriately sharing a concern of possible abuse or a disclosure of abuse;
- The child protection procedures will be annually reviewed and updated by the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) together with the Strategic Leadership Team;
- Children’s rights will be represented by two members of the staff, currently the Counsellors;
- Adults should respect the children’s rights as they are presented in the Romanian law;
- In the event of a member of the staff having a Child Protection concern, he/she will immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL);
- A Safeguarding Concern Box is placed under the Safeguarding and Child Protection displays from Avenor Nursery and Avenor College to allow any member of the community to leave an anonymous note communicating child protection-related concerns.

#### **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

At Avenor College, we understand that our responsibility to safeguard children requires that we all appropriately share any concerns that we may have about children.

#### **Staff with Advanced Child Protection Training:**

Avenor College

Name	Role	Position	Date of Course
Anda Costache	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Avenor College & Avenor College International High School	Counsellor	17/03/2017
Cristina Bumboiu	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) – Avenor College & Avenor College International High School	English Language Teacher & Primary English Curriculum Leader	Will attend an online L3 Advanced Child Protection Course
Ioana Botez	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Avenor Nursery	Counsellor & Club Coordinator	17/03/2017
Veronica Burtea-Koter	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) – Avenor Nursery	Reception Blue Teacher, Health and Safety Officer & Compliance Coordinator	Will attend an online L3 Advanced Child Protection Course

Apart from the Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputies, the staff members invested in the following professional roles have safeguarding and child protection responsibilities:

- The General/Executive Director;
- The Director of Learning;
- The Compliance Coordinator/ Coordinator & Health and Safety Officer;
- The PSHE & Club Coordinator;
- The Medical Staff.

## 6. Types of Abuse and Neglect

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Abuse or neglect can imply inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children can be abused by an adult / more adults or by another child/other children.

**Physical abuse** is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

**Emotional abuse** is 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 as long 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 exploring and learning, or preventing the child to participate in normal social interaction;
- It may involve seeing or hearing the ill – treatment of another;
- It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger.

**Sexual abuse** is forcing and enticing a child 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.

**Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in a serious impairment of the child’s health and development.

- It may involve failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter;
- It may involve failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- It may involve failing to ensure adequate supervision;
- It may feature not ensuring access to appropriate medical care or treatment;
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

## 7. Supporting Children

At Avenor College, we recognise that a child who is abused, who witnesses violence or who lives in a violent environment, or may suffer emotional abuse or neglect, may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame him/herself, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.

We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.

We accept that studies show that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

Avenor College will support all children by:

- Encouraging the development of self-esteem and resilience in every aspect of school life including through the curriculum;
- Promoting a safe, caring and positive environment within the school;
- Having access, or being referred, to the counsellors in school who will offer on-the-spot individual or family support, as well as make recommendations for long-term counselling or psychotherapy outside of school;

## 8. Information Sharing

Confidentiality

- We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential;
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DSLs) will disclose personal information about a child to other members of the staff on a need to know basis;
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share child protection relevant information with the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DSLs) in order to safeguard children;
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being or that of another;
- All staff should not disclose any information on a child to a third party (e.g.: nanny, driver, uncle, family friend etc.), unless there is an authorisation from the parent or legal guardian of the child;

#### Estranged parents

- Unless there is a legal document limiting access to a child by one parent, or special circumstances deemed to put the child at risk by the school staff, the school will inform both parents on the progress and welfare of the child and information on the school;
- Confidential information about a child will not be disclosed to only one of the parents, especially when there is an impending legal process (e.g.: divorce, custody);

#### Informing the appropriate authorities and agencies

- Where it has been discovered that a child is in danger or risk of being abused or neglected, the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DSLs) will inform the PSHE Coordinator and contact the parents of the child within 24 hours to schedule a meeting;
- During the meeting, the parents will receive assistance and guidance aimed to stop right away any form of abuse towards the child, informing them of the school's responsibility to notify the local authorities in case they fail to do so;
- In the absence of cooperation from the child's parents to stop any form of abuse towards the child, the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) will inform the PSHE Coordinator, Director of Learning and The General/Executive Director that a referral will be made to the authorities and will contact the local welfare authorities => the nearest branch of Direcția Generală de Asistență Socială și Protecția Copilului to the child's declared residence address (included in the Registration File of each child);

## 9. Dealing with Disclosure

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff/volunteer should:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is being said
- Allow the child to talk freely

- Reassure the child, but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep
- Never promise a child that they will not tell anyone - as this may ultimately not be in the best interest of the child.
- Assure the child that you will tell someone about the issue who can provide more help, but in a confidential manner.
- Reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell
- Listen, only asking questions when necessary to clarify
- Not criticise the alleged perpetrator
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told
- Make a written record
- Pass the information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay.

## **10. Record Keeping**

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

When a child has made a disclosure, the member of staff/volunteer should:

- Record as soon as possible after the conversation. Use the school record of concern sheet wherever possible.
- Do not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court.
- Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour (e.g. avoiding eye contact, shaking, talking about it without showing emotions, crying, etc.) and the words used by the child.
- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any injuries.
- Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions.

All records need to be given to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) promptly. No copies should be retained by the member of staff or volunteer.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will ensure that all safeguarding records are managed in accordance with the existing national legislation and the UK guidelines.

If a child who is or has been the subject of a child protection plan changes school, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will inform the social worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the receiving school in a secure manner and separate from the child's academic file.

## **11. Supporting Staff**

At Avenor College, we acknowledge that staff in the school who have become involved in working with a child who has suffered harm or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

We will support each staff by providing an opportunity to talk about their stressful experiences with the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DSLs).

We also feel confident that each staff member is able to assess their own well-being and can contact the counsellors of the school in order to receive support after upsetting experiences in the classroom.

## **12. Allegations against Staff**

All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for activities with individual children or meetings with parents to be conducted in the view of other adults.

All staff should be aware of the school's Code of Conduct and respect it.

We understand that a child may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DSLs), if the Educational Coordinator is not present.

Suspension of the member of staff against whom an allegation has been made needs careful consideration. Any disciplinary investigation should be carried out once the child protection investigation in school has been completed.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. Concerns should be raised directly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DSLs) or PSHE Coordinator.

## **13. Prevention**

We recognise that Avenor plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to children by providing them with effective lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and a safe and caring environment.

The Avenor community will:

- Establish and maintain a safe, caring and positive environment, which is understood by all staff, which enables children to feel secure and encourages them to talk knowing that they will be listened to;
- Ensure that all children know that there are counsellors in school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- Provide, across the curriculum, opportunities to equip children with the skills they need to keep safe from harm and to know whom they should turn for help.

### **Physical Intervention**

Staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort when interacting with children (e.g.: when a child is endangering him/herself or others). At all times this must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.

### **Child Protection in the Curriculum**

The delivery of the curriculum in general will take into account the needs of all children. The curriculum will include materials and activities, especially within Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Personal, Social and Health Education which are designed to help children to be less vulnerable to abuse. The aim of these activities will be to raise awareness of Child Protection issues and equip children with the skills needed to keep them safe.

### **Health & Safety**

The Avenor Health & Safety Guidelines reflect the consideration we give to the protection of our children both physically within the school environment and when away from the school on educational visits.

## **14. Policy Review**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DSLs) are responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy in accordance with the changes in the Romanian law, as well as with any UK safeguarding and child protection guidelines.

Any found deficiencies or weaknesses in the child protection arrangements should be remedied without delay.

## **15. Implementation Plan**

- The PSHE Coordinator together with the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DSLs) will draw attention to the amendments brought to Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy to all staff members in August 2018, during Inset Days;
- Staff will be made aware of the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DSLs), as well as of the official child protection authorities;

- The PSHE Coordinator will ensure that all staff receive training annually, and that new staff are thoroughly inducted when joining the School or Nursery;
- The SLT will check the plan and amend or approve it after each annual process of review;
- All the students will be made aware of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy according to their level of understanding, as well as of the people who they can talk to for any child protection-related issue;
- Displays with the pictures of the DSLs and DDSLs are placed in the lobbies of Avenor Nursery and Avenor College in order for all the members of the community to have access to this information.