



SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

P-02

Approved by:	Full Governing Body
Last reviewed on:	June 2025
Review Date:	June 2026



“Heritage International School, Moldova is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, along with their protection, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.”

Our primary duty is our duty of care. The Purpose of this policy is for all staff:

- Recognise the signs and indicators that may raise safeguarding and child protection concerns;
- Undertake their role and responsibilities in relation to following the safeguarding and child protection procedures for the school;
- Record safeguarding and child protection concerns and report these to the designated safeguarding lead, supported by deputy DSLs (Psychologist-designated Child Protection officer, - DLP coordinator, deputy DSL; Head of Primary, Head of Secondary and Head of Lyceum);
- Demonstrate an awareness of the legislative framework and local procedures as they relate to safeguarding children.
- The safety and protection of children in Heritage International School is a priority, which is reflected in all activities carried out by the school. All school staff must have regard for the Child Protection Policy, DLP (online safety policy), and Health and Safety Policy of HIS.
- It is each staff member's responsibility to read the policies
- Every person in this setting has a responsibility to be aware of and know what to do.
- Each person has a different role to play, and everyone is equally important.
- Children will choose to talk to those they feel they can trust and listen to them.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- Ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Responsibilities of all school staff:

All staff have a responsibility to:

- Consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the pupil.
- Maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ where safeguarding is concerned.
- Provide a safe environment in which students can learn.
- Be prepared to identify pupils who may benefit from early help.
- Be aware of the school's systems that support safeguarding, including any policies, procedures, information, and training provided upon induction.
- Be aware of the role and identity of the DSL and deputy DSLs.



- Undertake safeguarding training, including online safety training (which, , includes an understanding of the expectations and responsibilities relating to filtering and monitoring), during their induction – this will be regularly updated.
- Receive and understand child protection and safeguarding (including online safety) updates, e.g. via email, as required, and at least annually.
- Be aware of the local early help process and understand their role in it.
- Support social workers in making decisions about individual children, in collaboration with the DSL.
- Be aware of and understand the procedure to follow when a child makes a safeguarding and child protection disclosure. Be aware that a pupil may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused or neglected, and/or may not recognise their experiences as harmful.
- Promote dialogue and understanding, and ensure all students feel listened to and understood.
- Empower students and allow them to understand their rights to safety and privacy, and to help them understand what they can do to keep themselves protected from harm.
- Avoid victim-blaming attitudes, and challenge them in a professional way if they occur.
- Maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality when dealing with individual cases.
- Assure victims that they are being taken seriously, that they will be supported, and that they will be kept safe.
- Speak to the DSL if they are unsure about how to handle safeguarding matters.
- Be aware of safeguarding issues that can put students at risk of harm.
- Be aware of behaviours that could be a sign that a student is at risk of harm.

Teachers, including the headteacher, have a responsibility to:

- Safeguard pupils' wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties, as outlined in the 'Teachers' Standards'.
1. Provide a safe environment in which children can learn productively and safely.
 2. Behave as a professional, responsible adult at all times; maintain clear boundaries as an adult in a position of care.
 - 3.
 4. Be aware of school systems that support safeguarding.
 5. Be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect.
 6. Maintain an attitude of "it could happen."
 7. Follow the referral process of the school.
 8. Respond appropriately if a child makes a disclosure to them. Do not promise confidentiality. Presume the disclosure is true.
 9. Always act in the best interest of the child.



The Role of Safeguarding Governor

The safeguarding governor plays a critical oversight role in a school's Child Protection policy, acting as the governing board's lead on ensuring compliance with statutory safeguarding duties. They monitor the effectiveness of policies, liaise closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to review practices and training, and challenge leadership on resource allocation and incident responses, without handling operational cases directly. The Safeguarding Governor should meet with the DSLs and DDSLs at least once per term. The meetings should have an agenda and be minuted. This strategic focus helps maintain a culture of child safety and accountability across the organization

1. Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Moldova Ministry of Education (MECC) statutory guidance, UNICEF's "Rights of Children," and our Governance Handbook (written in conjunction with the UK's NGA & COBIS guidance).

We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our local safeguarding partners. This policy is also based on the legislation, which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of students:

- Protecting children from maltreatment. Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, Child protection and safeguarding
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
- Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.
- Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Neglect is a form of abuse and is 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.
- Sexting (also known as youth-produced sexual imagery) is the sharing of sexual imagery (photos or videos) by children. (see separate Online Safety Policy)
- Children include everyone under the age of 18.

Equality statement:

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We record and monitor discriminatory incidents separately so that we can ensure prompt intervention and additional resources and focus when required. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face. We give special consideration to children who: Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities. Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence, are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, radicalisation, are asylum seekers, are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs, are looked after or previously looked after.

Roles and responsibilities:

Safeguarding and child protection is everyone's responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is consistent with the procedures of our safeguarding partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.



The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. Our DSLs are Inga Chiosa and Larisa Mirza, School Counselor and Head of Pastoral. The DSL, supported by the deputy DSLs (DLP coordinator, Heads of Primary, Secondary and Lyceum) takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding. During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. The DSL can also be contacted out of school hours if necessary via email.

When the DSL is absent, the deputy DSLs will act as cover. If the DSL and deputy DSL are not available, the Director will act as cover (for example, during out-of-hours/out-of-term activities).

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

1. Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
2. Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
3. Contribute to the assessment of children
4. Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly
5. The DSL will also keep the Director informed of any issues and liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate.

Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters.
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or support other staff to do so.
- Contribute to the assessment of children, and/or support other staff to do so.
- During term time, be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. **NB:** Individual schools, working with the DSL, define what “available” means and whether, in exceptional circumstances, availability via phone, videocall, or other media is an acceptable substitution for in-person availability.
- Arrange, alongside the school, adequate and appropriate cover for any activities outside of school hours or terms.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
- Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners.
- Liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the mental health support team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- Promote supportive engagement with parents in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
- Ensure that child protection files are kept up-to-date and only accessed by those who need to do so.
- Ensure that a pupil's child protection file is transferred as soon as possible, and within five days, when transferring to a new school, and consider any additional information that should be shared.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures – this will be discussed during the staff induction process.



- Work with the governing board to ensure the school’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually, and the procedures are updated and reviewed regularly.
- Ensure the school’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is available publicly, and parents are aware that the school may make referrals for suspected cases of abuse or Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings; this includes understanding the difficulties pupils may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and considering how to build trusted relationships that facilitate communication.
- Support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters: specifically, to ensure that staff are supported during the referral processes and to support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.
- Understand the importance of information sharing, including within the school, with other schools, and with safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations, and practitioners.
- neglect, as well as the role the school plays in these referrals.
- Keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of safeguarding concerns, decisions made, and whether or not referrals have been made, and understand the purpose of this record-keeping.

The Governing Board:

The governing board will approve this policy at each review, ensure it complies with the law and hold the Director to account for its implementation. The governing board will appoint a link governor (DGL) to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL.

- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding; this includes ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern, ensure the child’s wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
- Ensure systems are in place for children to confidently report abuse, knowing that their concerns will be treated seriously and they can safely express their views and give feedback; these systems will be well-promoted, easily understood, and easily accessible.
- Ensure that staff have due regard to relevant data protection principles that allow them to share and withhold personal information.
- Put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for pupils who become absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods, to help identify any risk of abuse or neglect and prevent the risk of their disappearance in future.

All governors will read this policy on how governors are supported to fulfill their role.



The Director:

1. The Director is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:
2. Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
3. Communicating this policy to parents when their child joins the school and via the school website
4. Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
5. Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and update this regularly
6. Acting as the ‘case manager’ in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate

Training

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, to ensure they understand the school’s safeguarding systems and their responsibilities and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect. All the staff members should have the Safeguarding training Level 1, the Heads of the Schools- Level 2, and the DSLs -Level 3. This training will be regularly updated and will be in line with advice from our safeguarding partners. Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, through emails, e-bulletins, and staff meetings) as required, but at least annually. Contractors will also receive safeguarding training. Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

The DSL and deputy DSL The DSL and deputy DSL will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every year. In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).



Types of Abuse:

- Neglect
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Physical Abuse

Physical	Emotional	Sexual	Neglect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unexplained injuries ▪ Injuries on certain parts of the body ▪ Injuries in various stages of healing ▪ Injuries that reflect an article used ▪ Flinching when approached ▪ Reluctant to change ▪ Crying/ instability ▪ Afraid of home ▪ Behavioural extremes ▪ Apathy/depression ▪ Wanting arms and legs covered even in very hot weather ▪ Unusual responses to witnessing violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Failure to thrive ▪ Attention seeking ▪ Over ready to relate to others ▪ Low self esteem ▪ Apathy ▪ Depression/self harm ▪ Drink/drug/solvent abuse ▪ Persistently being over protective ▪ Constantly shouting at, threatening or demeaning a child ▪ Withholding love and affection ▪ Regularly humiliating a child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Age inappropriate sexual behaviour/knowledge/ promiscuity ▪ Wary of adults/ running away from home ▪ Eating disorders/depression/ self harm ▪ Unexplained gifts/ money ▪ Stomach pains when walking or sitting ▪ Bedwetting ▪ Recurrent genital discharge ▪ Sexually transmitted diseases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tired/listless ▪ Unkempt ▪ Poor hygiene ▪ Untreated medical conditions ▪ Medical appointments missed ▪ Constantly hungry or stealing food ▪ Over eats when food is available ▪ Poor growth ▪ Poor/late attendance ▪ Being regularly left alone or unsupervised ▪ Dressed inappropriately for the weather condition ▪ Having few friends and/or being withdrawn ▪ Ill equipped for school

Where Abuse happens:

- In the home
- In public places
- In the community
- In Institutions
- Online e.g. social media

People that may cause Abuse:

- Family/Carers
- Relatives/Friends
- Professionals
- Peers
- Strangers

Responding to Safeguarding concerns:

- Stay calm.
- Do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment.
- Reassure the child. Tell her/him you are pleased that s/he is speaking to you.
- **Never enter into a pact of secrecy** with the child. Let the child know that you will have to tell other people in order to keep her/him safe.



- Tell her/him that you believe them. Children very rarely lie about abuse, but she/he may have tried to tell others and not been heard or believed.
- Encourage the child to talk **but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information.**
- Listen and remember.
- Check that you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you.
- Do not tell the child that what s/he experienced is dirty, naughty or bad.
- As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the child’s own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations.
- Write up a report using the template for reporting an incident and pass it onto the designated safeguarding lead (Head of Lower/Psychologist School/Head of Pastoral and Wellbeing) **IMMEDIATELY.**

Confidentiality:

Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding
 Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children
 Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child’s best interests

DESIGNATED CONTACTS FOR HERITAGE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL				
	NAME	POSITION	CONTACT No.	CONTACT EMAIL
DSL 1	Larisa Mirza	Head of Pastoral and Wellbeing support	+37368330038	pastoral.head@heritage.md
DSL 2	Ciornaia Natalia	Co-founder	natalia.ciornaia@heritage.md	
DSL 3	Chiosa Inga	Academic Director	+37362022216	inga.chiosa@heritage.md

Out of hours contact information		
Social Services or equivalent	(+37322) 24-27-02	Strada Alexandru Vlahuță 3, Chișinău 2005

Referral:

Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue. Please note – in this and subsequent sections, you should take any references to the DSL to mean “the DSL (or deputy DSL)”.

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

Listen to and believe them.

Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions

Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset

Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you.

Do not tell them they should have told you sooner. Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on.

Do not promise to keep it a secret



Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child’s own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgment on it. Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL.

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children’s social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral. If early help is appropriate, the DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to local authority children’s social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed. The DSL must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

Notifying parents:

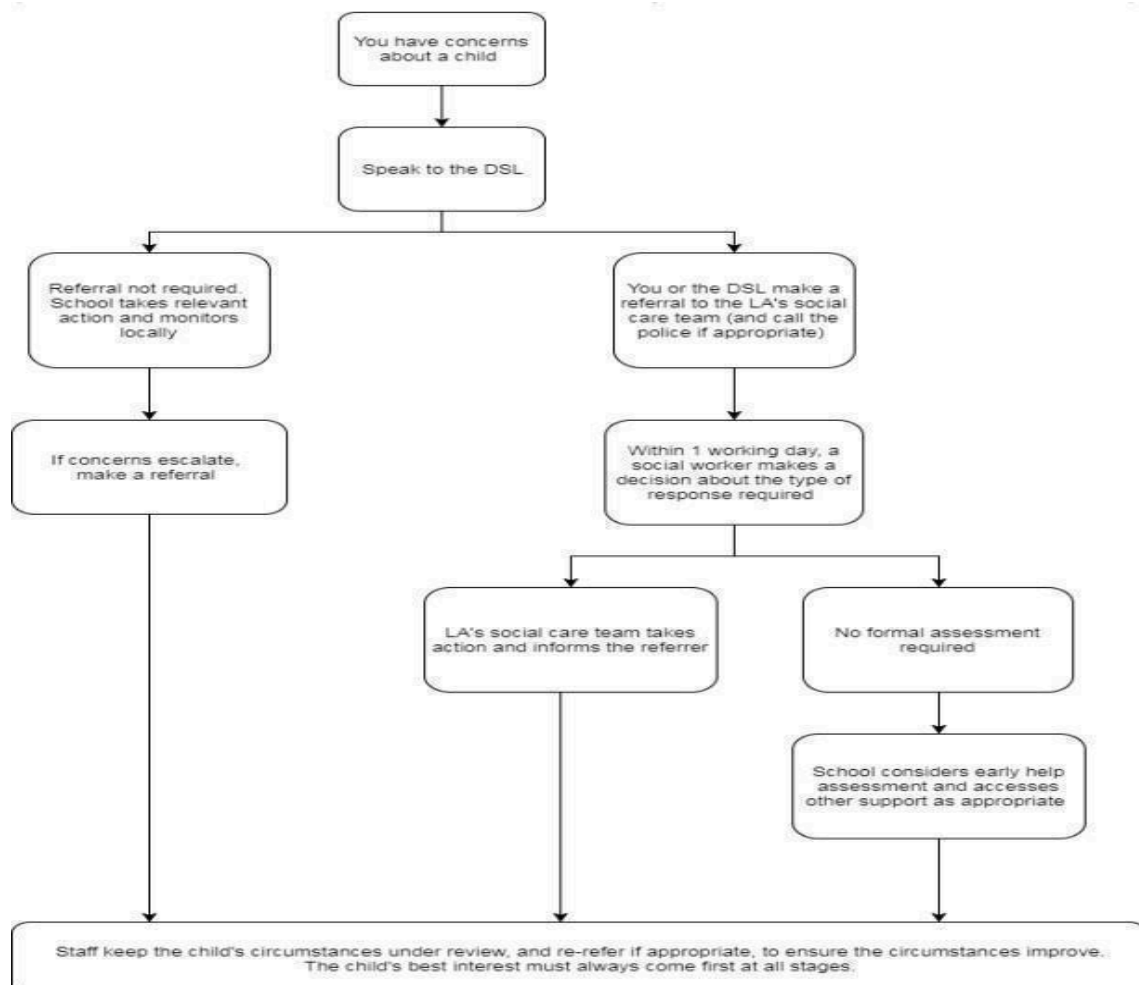
Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child’s parents. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure. Other staff will only talk to parents about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

Confidentiality:

Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding

Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children

Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child’s best interests





Staff Conduct:

1. If a student decides to confide in you about the abuse of themselves or of another student, encourage them to talk, take notes, explain that you might need to share the information with other adults to keep them safe, reassure the child that s/he did the right thing, and finally, report the case to the designated safeguarding lead/Child Protection officer immediately.
2. If you are ever in a compromised position - for example, an allegation is made against you - make a detailed written report and notify your line manager.
3. If you are alone with a student, make sure that a colleague knows the plan and ensure the door is open.
4. Verbal communication (don't give personal views to the class, including religious or political views; don't discriminate against any group of people; don't give personal information; don't use negative language.)
5. Body language (don't act in a threatening manner, such as standing over students or blocking the way; act calm and in control)
6. Social interaction (maintain the professional relationship at all times)
7. Physical contact
8. It is sensible to observe a no-touch policy most time (esp. in Upper School)
9. Know your data and your students. The more you know about them, the more you will understand about how best to care for them.
10. You are already in a position of power in the classroom; do not speak or act in a way that could seem threatening to a child.

Storage of Safeguarding Records

We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule. All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions must be recorded in writing. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL. Non-confidential records will be easily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and will only be available to those who have a right or professional need to see them. Child protection and safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school. If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded promptly and securely, and separately from the main student file. In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school. If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school or country, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded promptly and securely, and separately from the main student file. In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

Most of our safeguarding records are now stored electronically. We believe that using electronic files and records helps to prevent unauthorized access. All information stored in this way can be shared with Specialist Children's Services, police and health professionals as appropriate, where there is a concern that a child is at risk of significant harm.



If you have any concerns about the welfare of a child:

- Never ignore it - Notice
- Always record it - Check
- Always share it - Share

You are as accountable for what you do as well as what you choose not to do.

Mental Health

All staff will be made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a pupil has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse or neglect.

Staff will not attempt to make a diagnosis of mental health problems – the school will ensure this is done by a trained mental health professional. Staff will, however, be encouraged to identify pupils whose behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem or are at risk of developing one. Staff will also be aware of how pupils' experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

Staff who have a mental health concern about a student who is also a safeguarding concern will act in line with this policy and speak to the DSL or deputy DSLs.

The school will access a range of advice to help them identify students in need of additional mental health support, including working with external agencies.

Further Info

1. Lex.justice.md <http://lex.justice.md/viewdoc.php?id=311654&lang=1%20>
2. UNICEF.org.Moldova <https://www.unicef.org/moldova/en/child-protection>
3. Gov.uk
4. NSPCC
5. Home Office Prevent eLearning Course
6. Prospero Teaching CPD <https://prosperoteaching.com/free-accredited-online-safeguarding/>
7. Future Learn <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses>

DISCLAIMER:

The information contained in this document and all attached documents is strictly confidential. It should not be copied, distributed or reproduced in whole or in part, nor passed to any third party. These guidelines may be amended or modified at any time by Heritage International School.



Signed		Date	
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Further action required	Date of action	Action taken by	Signature

Date given to DSL		Time given to DSL	
Name of DSL		DSL Signature	



Appendix 2: Acronyms

This policy contains several acronyms used in the education sector. The following acronyms are listed below, along with these acronyms are listed below alongside their descriptions.

Acronym	Long Form	Description
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead	The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is a member of the senior leadership team who is responsible for overseeing safeguarding and child protection throughout the entire school.
DDSL	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	The deputy designated safeguarding lead (DDSL) is a member of the senior leadership team who is responsible for overseeing safeguarding and child protection throughout the entire school.
DLP	Distance Learning Plan	A Distance Learning Plan (DLP) is a planned framework created by educational institutions to guarantee that teaching and learning continue when in-person instruction is disrupted—for example, during crises, school closures, or in blended/remote learning contexts.
SEN	Special Educational Needs	SEN stands for Special Educational Needs. It refers to the challenges some children and young people face in their learning that require additional support and resources beyond what is typically provided in a mainstream educational setting. These needs can encompass a wide range of difficulties, including learning difficulties and disabilities, as well as social, emotional, and behavioural challenges.
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund	It is a United Nations agency focused on providing humanitarian and development aid to children worldwide. It works to protect children's rights, meet their basic needs, and expand opportunities for them to reach their full potential.
UK's NGA	National Governance Association	In the UK, NGA refers to the National Governance Association, a membership organisation for school and trust governors in England.
COBIS	Council of British International Schools	COBIS stands for the Council of British International Schools. It's a global membership association that represents and supports over 450 British international schools and organizations worldwide