# The Winstedt School

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Policy reviewed – 26 June 2026
Policy agreed by Governing Body – August 2026
Date for next review – August 2027

### Important Safeguarding Contacts

| Role | Name | Contact |
|---|---|---|
| Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) | Ms. Jen McCarthy (Director of Therapy & Pastoral Care) | jkatherine@winstedt.edu.sg |
| Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSP) | Ms. Alison Moore (Director of Operations, Admissions & Marketing) | amoore@winstedt.edu.sg |
| Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSP) | Ms. Rhonda Tan (Primary School Teacher) | rtan@winstedt.edu.sg |
| *Managing Director | Ms. Sharon Solomon | ssolomon@winstedt.edu.sg |
| Designated (Advisory) Board Member for Child Safeguarding (DBMS) | Ms. Sharon Walker | sharonw@winstedt.edu.sg |

**Should the Designated lead and persons be unavailable, staff should contact a member of the Leadership Team.*

The Winstedt School

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## 1. Purpose

The Winstedt School is committed to the safeguarding of all students at the School. The policy aims to create a culture of vigilance whereby all adults are aware of how we safeguard our students and for all adults to promote the child's welfare at all times. This policy provides staff guidelines by which to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of abuse and neglect, and to understand their role in keeping children safe.

### 1.1. Reference to the Statutory Framework

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is written with due regard to the following documents:

- The Children and Young Persons Act, 2020, Singapore
- National Standards for Protection of Children, 2002, Singapore
- The Penal Code, 2008, Singapore
- The Employment Act, 2020, Singapore
- Convention on the Rights of the Child, 2017, United Nations

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be reviewed at least annually and updated regularly in the light of any changes in the school operations and/or environment and, in line with any subsequent guidance issued by relevant legislation.

## 2. Scope

This Policy covers all staff of The Winstedt School including voluntary personnel, external vendors, agencies and third parties who visit the school at any given time.

Other documents which uphold this policy include:

1. Staff Code of Conduct
2. Employee Handbook

## 3. Definitions

### 3.1. Safeguarding
Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the processes of protecting students from harm, preventing the impairment of their health and development, ensuring that we seek to improve the general health and well-being of all students in our care and enabling every student to have the optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.

### 3.2. Child Protection
Child Protection is the core element of safeguarding and is defined as the responsibility to protect children who are suffering or likely to suffer from harm as a result of abuse or neglect.

### 3.3. Child and Young Person
For the purpose of this Policy, “Child” means any person under the age of 14 years, “Young Person” means any person over the age of 14 years but under 18 years; but does not include any person who is or has been married or in a civil union (Children and Young Persons Act, 2001 Singapore).

### 3.4. Staff
For the purpose of this policy, “Staff” means individuals working at The Winstedt School and includes employees, consultants, students, associates, and volunteers whether working on a full time, part time, casual, or temporary basis.

### 3.5. Child Abuse
The Children and Young Persons Act, (2001, Singapore) defines child abuse as "…the harming (whether physically, emotionally, sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person”.

### 3.6. Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSP)
The Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSP) in The Winstedt School are the School Counselor/s, who work with the DSL in receiving and recording reports of any issues that may be deemed as child safeguarding within the school.

### 3.7. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the person appointed to take lead responsibility for child safeguarding issues in school. The person fulfilling this role must be a senior member of the school's leadership team.

### 3.8. Designated (Advisory) Board Member for Safeguarding (DBMS)
The Designated (Advisory) Board Member for Safeguarding (DBMS) is a School Advisory Board member who undertakes responsibilities related to this policy including but not limited to process management of child safeguarding issues, policy decisions related to The Winstedt School Safeguarding Policy, and strategic decisions regarding child safeguarding within The Winstedt School community.

In the event that the Designated Safeguarding Persons at The Winstedt School are unavailable, staff should confer with the DSL or Managing Director.

## 4. Principles

This Safeguarding Policy confirms the commitment of The Winstedt School to the protection of children and proceeds to:

- outline the standards and principles by which all staff and stakeholders will abide
- outline the action to be taken by staff where any form of abuse or ill-treatment is known or suspected
- establish what action is required when allegations are made against staff
- explore the implications for staff and stakeholders training

The Winstedt School will ensure that:

- staff are carefully selected/vetted/hired with the principles of this policy in mind
- staff are appropriately trained in issues of child protection
- staff are aware of the safeguarding and accompanying procedures and/or guidelines

The Winstedt School recognises that all staff have a full and active part to play in protecting students from harm. Overall responsibility and review of this policy rests with the DSL, School Board and the Managing Director of the organization.

All services provided by The Winstedt School for the safety and wellbeing of children adhere to the principles of partnership, protection, and participation; and the rights and responsibilities accorded by the local government.

## 5. Roles & Responsibilities

### 5.1. Investigative Responsibility

The statutory responsibility to investigate allegations of child abuse rests with Child Protection Services of the Ministry of Social and Family development (MSF) and the Singapore Police.

### 5.2. Staff

Any member of staff, paid or voluntary, may directly witness child abuse or have allegations, made by a child or an adult, relayed to them. There may also be disclosures of abuse that have occurred prior to attending The Winstedt School. Sustained abuse and neglect of children, wherever it occurs, can have major long-term effects on all aspects of children's health, development and well-being and their ability to sustain stable and meaningful relationships in the future. It is the intention of The Winstedt School to ensure that all staff understand their roles and responsibilities in ensuring the safety of children within the school environment. This is achieved through consistent and agreed protocols regarding child protection, as well as the regular undertaking of training.

Each staff must:

- read and enact this policy
- adhere to the Staff Code of Conduct
- maintain the safeguarding of students wherever they are educating the students (including off-site educational visits)
- attend safeguarding training on an annual basis
- be aware of, and alert to, potential indicators of abuse or neglect.
- immediately or within 24 hours record a factual account of any concerns they have, or that are brought to their attention.
- appropriately seek advice and support from the Designated Safeguarding Person(s) and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead who will then contact external agencies if appropriate
- work in co-operation with the Management, parents and caregivers, unless this compromises the safety of the child

It is the primary responsibility of staff to be vigilant, have knowledge and awareness of the indicators or neglect, potential or actual abuse and to report any concerns, suspicions, or allegations of suspected abuse immediately and, ensure that the concern is taken seriously and reported.

Staff are expected to have read ALL the following policies in conjunction with this policy:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Employee Handbook
- Safe Touch Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy*

*The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** is responsible for implementing the Safeguarding Policy, including ensuring staff *know* that whistleblowing is a protected and appropriate action if they're concerned, although the Whistleblowing policy itself is owned by the HR lead.

### 5.3. School Board and Managing Director

***School Board***

The School Board oversees safer recruitment, ensuring the school site is safe and secure and checking that safeguarding training for staff is regular and thorough. The School Board is also responsible for appointing a School Board Member (DBMS) to be the safeguarding link member. This person will meet with the DSL regularly to review policies and procedures at the school.
In showing support of the Safeguarding Policy, the School Board acknowledges legal responsibility to ensure that Safeguarding Policy is complete and adhered to and for ensuring that all staff are trained in the application of this procedure. Everyone has responsibility for implementing this procedure.

The named board member for safeguarding is **Sharon Walker** who can be contacted via email at sharonw@winstedt.edu.sg and via telephone at 6715 5373.

***Managing Director***

The Managing Director is responsible for managing the school's DSL and ensuring they fulfil all their duties fully and competently. The Managing Director ensures all records are stored confidentially and all staff receive training relevant to their role within the school. In fulfilling the objectives of this policy, the Managing Director is committed to regular consultation with the members of the Leadership Committee to ensure that the policy operates effectively and that Safeguarding issues are regularly reviewed.
The school's Managing Director can be contacted via the school office on +65 6950 5920 or via email at ssolomon@winstedt.edu.sg

### 5.4. Child Safeguarding Committee

The role of the Child Safeguarding Committee to:

- Ensure the needs and rights of children come first i.e., the safety and wellbeing of each child is paramount.
- Receive information that suggests potential or actual risk of harm to a child who attends The Winstedt School, irrespective of whether the alleged abuse is current, past or likely to occur. The lead will advise and support staff and, based on the initial details, will decide as to whether to delegate to the Designated Safeguarding Persons for further action.
- Delegate to the Designated Safeguarding Persons appropriate action and responsibilities as concerns are raised.
- Ensure that all allegations are managed appropriately. No investigation will occur without appropriate consultation.
- Ensure that the Safeguarding Policy is effectively implemented throughout The Winstedt School.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of, and have access to, full copies of the procedures for reporting child abuse.
- Ensure that all staff receive safeguarding training.

**The Child Safeguarding Committee comprises:**
***Designated Safeguarding Person ('DSP')***

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Person is to:

- Ensure the needs and rights of children come first i.e., the safety and wellbeing of each

child is paramount.
- Ensure and safeguard clear, confidential, detailed, and dated records on all child protection cases. These must contain all available information relating to the cause for concern and any subsequent action taken, including when it has been decided not to make a notification to Child Protection Services or the Police. These records will be kept separate from student's records for the purpose of confidentiality.
- Establish a close link with the relevant local agencies to ensure clear and effective communication and be a recognised contact within The Winstedt School for agencies to contact regarding concerns.
- Work closely and effectively with the Managing Director of The Winstedt School, ensuring information is appropriately shared to effectively safeguard the child.
- Ensure that all staff are supported appropriately when dealing with child protection concerns.
- Maintain a current awareness of the children identified as "At-Risk", and regularly highlight these children to the appropriate staff.
- Consult with the DSL, Principal, and the Managing Director regarding all child protection concerns.

***Designated Safeguarding Lead ('DSL')***

- The DSL is responsible for drafting and reviewing the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, recognising issues which may impact students at The Winstedt School, making referrals to social services where necessary, and working with families.
- The DSL along with the DSP is the first point-of-call for staff who have safeguarding concerns.
- The DSL has a responsibility to liaise with external agencies with regards to the most vulnerable students such as children subject to child protection plans.
- In the absence of the DSL, the Designated Safeguarding Persons ('DSP') will fulfil these roles and responsibilities.

## 6. Child Protection Procedures

All staff will respond to concerns of child abuse by following the identified procedures, consulting appropriately, and collaborating with external agencies.

The procedures set out below will help staff with:
- the identification of abuse
- handling disclosures, whether verbal or behavioural, from a child
- reporting procedures

### 6.1. Identification of Abuse

The Winstedt School has a Designated Safeguarding Team, made up of: Designated Safeguarding Persons and the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who are available for advice and guidance. Should they not be contactable please reach out to a member of the School Leadership Team.

All staff will receive annual training in the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. All staff are aware that our students face additional safeguarding challenges. Staff are to monitor our students closely and frequently meet with parents to discuss any concerns or arising issues. The definitions, signs and symptoms of abuse are detailed in the **Safeguarding Handbook.**

### 6.2. Handling Disclosures from a Child

If a child makes a verbal disclosure to staff member it is important that staff take what the child says seriously. This applies irrespective of the setting, or the staff's own opinion on what the child is saying.

When dealing with a disclosure, all staff must be responsible for:

a) listening to what a child is saying without interruption and without asking leading questions respecting the child's right to privacy but without promising confidentiality.
b) reassuring the child that she/he has done the right thing in telling them.
c) explaining to the child that in order to keep him/her safe from harm the information that has been shared must be passed on
d) reporting what has been disclosed to the DSP and/or DSL in the school as soon as possible and following up all verbal conversations in writing as quickly as possible.
e) recording in writing, as soon as is practicable, what was said using the child's actual words. Staff must alert the DSP and/or DSL of their concern, filling in the required forms which can be found in the **Safeguarding Handbook.** The form needs to be handed or emailed directly to the DSP and/or DSL.

Under no circumstances should staff attempt to investigate or deal with concerns regarding child abuse alone.

Further information regarding responding to a disclosure is included in **the Safeguarding Handbook**.

### 6.3. Action to be Taken by the Designated Safeguarding Person

- Concerns regarding alleged or suspected abuse will first be raised to the Designated Safeguarding Person, who will consult the relevant manuals of practice and inform the DSL of the concern raised. If further guidance is required, then consultation will occur with the DSL. A decision will be made whether this information needs to be escalated to Child Protection Services.

In the case of pupils who are subject to child protection plans, the DSL will report absences on the same day to the named social worker for that child. If absences for any student are prolonged and frequent, the family will be referred for support or, in cases where there are additional concerns, to social services.

***Action following a report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment***

Sexual violence and sexual abuse can happen anywhere, and all staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'.
The school is aware of and will respond appropriately to all reports and concerns about sexual violence and/or sexual harassment both online and offline, including those that have happened outside of the school. The designated safeguarding lead or DSP is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the initial response by the school.

Important considerations will include:

a) the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered. This will however need to be

balanced with the school's duty and responsibilities to protect other children.

b) the nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed
c) the ages of the children involved
d) the developmental stages of the children involved
e) any power imbalance between the children. For example, is/are the alleged perpetrator(s) significantly older, more mature, confident and well-known social standing? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
f) if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse (sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature)
g) that sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between children
h) importance of understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents
i) are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school staff, and
j) other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

As always when concerned about the welfare of a child, all staff should act in the best interests of the child. In all cases, the school will follow general safeguarding principles as set out throughout this policy. Immediate consideration should be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) and any other children involved/impacted.

Irrespective of whatever decisions are made, even if the concern does not require notifying Child Protection Services, this must be recorded in writing and kept securely in a Child Protection File with the reasons clearly identified and explained.

**6.4. Record Keeping**

At The Winstedt School, all safeguarding concerns are logged securely online. All paperwork and files pertaining to safeguarding and child protection are stored digitally and securely, accessible only to DSP and/or DSL. Records are structured with a clear and comprehensive summary of any concerns, details of follow-up, resolution, actions taken, and the outcome for the child. Where records need to be transferred to the local authority or other schools, they are sent securely, separately from other files and an acknowledgement is obtained from the receiving school or office.

## 7. Training of Staff

All staff will receive certified child protection training at the level appropriate to their role. The DSPs and DSL will undertake more intensive training. The DSP and DSL will be accessible to staff to provide advice and support.

All staff will be given appropriate training covering basic awareness of child protection. This will include an overview of signs and indicators of abuse, and the procedure for responding to actual or suspected abuse. This training will include:

- roles and responsibility of staff regarding child protection
- recognising and responding to the signs and indicators of actual or suspected abuse
- ensuring staff understand the Safeguarding Policy and can follow the Child Protection Procedures for reporting a concern.

All staff will receive updated training every two years as a minimum with a refresher course conducted annually.

All new staff will receive child protection training as part of their induction.

All new staff will be given a copy of this Policy as part of the induction process. A certificate of participation acknowledging the hours completed will be given to all participants.

## 8. Safe Working Practices

A relationship between an adult and a child or young person cannot be a relationship between equals. There is a potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people. Adults have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Adults should maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. Adults who work with children must therefore act in a way that is safe practice.

### 8.1. Duty of Care

Staff are expected to have a high duty of care to children in The Winstedt School. Staff must act to ensure that the physical and emotional wellbeing of students is safeguarded, and that their own behaviour is guided by this duty of care.

There are also legal requirements to report harm/abuse of students and children. There may be instances where the suspected conduct of a member of staff may not trigger a mandated legal report but may be concerning to other staff.

Staff must:

- understand that behaviour that may appear to be tolerant to one individual may not be deemed tolerable to another.
- be aware of any staff who may be too close to a particular student.
- be aware of any staff who shows excessive attention towards a particular student or who is too solicitous towards a particular student.
- be prepared to consult a trusted Supervisor or colleague concerning conduct/behaviour of colleagues.
- maintain up-to-date knowledge and understanding of safeguarding policies as they apply in their workplace
- implement and comply with safeguarding policies as they apply in their workplace; and
- be prepared to report any apparent boundaries violations by teachers to their Heads on the Leadership Team, and other relevant professional agencies, internal or external.

## 9. Allegations or Concerns regarding Adults working with Students

The School recognises its duty of care to protect students and ensure that any concerns regarding the conduct or actions of adults working with students are taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

All staff, volunteers, contractors, and representatives of external agencies have a responsibility to maintain professional boundaries, uphold safeguarding expectations, and report any concerns regarding the behaviour of another adult working with students.

Concerns or allegations may arise through a range of sources, including:

- Direct observation by a member of staff
- Disclosure by a student
- Reports from parents/carers, colleagues, or external agencies
- Written, indirect, or anonymous reports

All concerns relating to potential harm, abuse, inappropriate behaviour, or breaches of professional conduct must be reported promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP), and/or relevant member of the Leadership Team.

Concerns relating to members of the Therapy and Pastoral Care team or safeguarding leadership should be escalated to the Managing Director or designated senior leader.

Staff must not investigate allegations themselves. The DSL, in consultation with relevant leadership personnel and HR, will determine appropriate next steps, including whether external agencies or statutory services need to be informed.
The School will cooperate fully with any external investigations or assessments undertaken by relevant authorities. Internal processes will be managed carefully to ensure that safeguarding responsibilities are prioritised and that external investigations are not compromised.

Concerns regarding adult conduct may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical, sexual, emotional, or psychological harm
- Neglect or failure to meet safeguarding responsibilities
- Inappropriate relationships or breaches of professional boundaries with students
- Misuse of substances or illegal activities involving students
- Inappropriate access to or possession of harmful material
- Serious breaches of professional standards, school policies, or expected conduct

The School recognises that concerns may relate to a single incident or a pattern of behaviour over time. All concerns will be reviewed objectively and managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures, employment processes, and relevant legislation.

***Procedure for dealing with complaints and allegations about staff, including relief teachers, volunteers and contractors***

Staff at The Winstedt School understand that students may make allegations against a member of staff and are aware of the procedures that manage these allegations. If an allegation is made, the member of staff who receives the allegation must refer it to the DPCP and/or DSL immediately.
Low-level concerns about a member of staff, agency staff, volunteer or contractors should also be reported to the DSP and/or DSL.

The DSP will be the decision maker in respect of all low-level concerns, although it is recognised that depending on the nature of some low-level concerns and the role of the DSL, the DSP may wish to consult with the DSL and take a more collaborative decision-making approach. Low-level concerns which are shared about supply staff and contractors will be notified to their employers, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified. The DSL will be kept informed of all low-level concerns.

If the DSP is in any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, they will consult with the DSL.

**Procedure for dealing with complaints and allegations about the Principal**

Any allegation against the Principal needs to be reported to the Managing Director immediately. The Managing Director will discuss the allegation and seek further advice from the Chair of the School Board.

## 11. Safer Recruitment Procedures

As part of Safer Recruitment Procedures, The Winstedt School is expected to obtain written notification from any external vendor, agency, or third-party organization that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks which, the school would otherwise perform. The Winstedt School will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

All staff and volunteers working with children at The Winstedt School will be recruited safely. More information on Safer Recruitment Procedures can be found in the Safeguarding Handbook.

## 12. TWS Child Safeguarding Commitment

***Note: This is a document that all TWS staff read and agree to each school year.***

**I WILL**

- Provide for a physically safe learning environment for all students.
- Treat everyone with respect, integrity, courtesy, and dignity.
- Always maintain appropriate physical boundaries and touch children only when appropriate and necessary, in ways that are public and non-sexual.
- Comply with the TWS Reporting Requirements as indicated in the TWS Safeguarding & Child Protection Handbook to report suspected child abuse.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of students.

**I WILL NOT**

- Be alone with students, outside of normal professional responsibilities, at school or during non-school activities on weekends or evenings without a Management Committee member being notified or parental consent.
- Hit, physically assault, or physically or psychologically abuse children.
- Use facilities such as toilets that are specifically designated for use by students.
- Have relations with a child, or act in a way, that can be considered sexual, exploitative, or abusive.
- Use language, make suggestions, or offer advice that is abusive.
- Behave or speak in a manner that is sexually inappropriate or sexually provocative with students.
- Comment on the appearance of a child with any reference to sexuality or sexual attraction or repulsion.
- Sleep in the same room as students without parental consent, without another adult present, and without the advanced authorization of school leadership.
- Provide transport in my car to a student alone, outside of my professional role, without parental **and** administrative permission (except in the case of an emergency).
- Condone or participate in behaviour by children that is abusive or endangers their safety.
- Act in ways that shame, humiliate, or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse.
- Smoke or use tobacco products, or possess, drink, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs/substance *in the presence of students* while acting in a professional capacity or at a school-sponsored event.
- Accept gifts exceeding S$50 or give private gifts to students without the knowledge of their parents/guardians or a member of the Management Committee.
- Engage in private communications with students using social media or other means in ways that are outside my professional relations with students.
- Accept student requests to follow/friend/join my personal social media profile(s) until after they graduate from high school.

I have read, understood, and will abide by the TWS Child Safeguarding Policy/Commitment.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Name of Staff, Position** | |
| **Date** | |
| **Signature** | |