PHOENIX SCHOOL
FOUNDED 1977

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

2026

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Designated Safeguarding Lead KS2:	Deputy Head/ Head of KS2
Designated Safeguarding Lead KS1 & EY:	Head of Early Years and KS1

1. Definitions

1.1 **'Safeguarding'** is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

1.2 **'Child Protection'** is the intervention that occurs when children have been significantly harmed or are at risk of significant harm.

1.3 **'Child'** refers to everyone under the age of 18.

1.4 **'Parent'** refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role, for example, adoptive parents, stepparents and foster carers.

1.5 **'Staff'** or **'members of staff'** refers to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, contract staff, volunteers and trustees working in or on behalf of Phoenix International Primary School.

2. Introduction

2.1 **Phoenix International Primary School** recognises that safeguarding and child protection are an essential part of our duty of care to all pupils and all staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. We understand that safeguarding, child protection and promoting the welfare of all children is everyone's responsibility and everyone has a role to play in protecting children.

We recognise that our school is part of a wider safeguarding system for children and, where possible, work with other agencies/organisations to promote the welfare of children. We maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and will consider the wishes of, and at all times, what is in the best interests of each child. All staff are aware of the importance of early help/early intervention to safeguard the welfare of children.

Phoenix International Primary School recognises the necessity of a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. This policy, whilst based on UK practice and procedures, acknowledges the need for sensitivity to cultural norms and an awareness of cultural differences.

2.2 **Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote safeguarding and child protection and to demonstrate Phoenix International Primary School's commitment to keeping children safe.
- Provide all members of staff with the information required to meet their safeguarding duty and protect children from harm.
- Provide stakeholders with clear information relating to Phoenix International Primary School's safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- Ensure that staff understand, can recognise and can respond to the indicators of abuse.
- Ensure that children are protected from maltreatment or harm.

2.3 **Principles:** Phoenix International Primary School is committed to the following principles:

- All children have the right to be protected from harm.
- Children should feel safe and secure and cannot learn unless they do so.
- All staff are responsible for keeping children safe and have a responsibility to act if they think a child is at risk of harm.
- Early help and providing support to families and/or children as soon as a problem emerges is essential to improving outcomes for children and families.

2.4 Safeguarding aims

The safeguarding aims of Phoenix International Primary School are to:

- work to identify children who are suffering or likely to suffer harm or abuse and act to protect them.
- provide a learning environment for children which is safe and secure.
- teach children how to keep themselves safe and provide structures for them to raise concerns if they are worried or at risk of harm.
- ensure that we adhere to safer recruitment guidance, deal promptly with allegations of abuse against staff and take bullying and harassment seriously.
- train staff effectively in all safeguarding issues and in their responsibilities for identifying and protecting children who are or may be at risk of harm.
- recognise that all children may be vulnerable to abuse, but be aware that some children have increased vulnerabilities due to special educational needs or disabilities.
- maintain a recording system for any safeguarding or child protection information.
- ensure that everyone at Phoenix International Primary School understands the safeguarding procedures.
- regularly review policies and procedures to ensure that children are protected to the best of our ability.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Role of the Headteacher as Chief Designated Safeguarding Lead and Child Protection Officer:

- Ensure that Phoenix International Primary School has an effective child protection policy and that it is published on the Phoenix International Primary School website or available by other means.
- Ensure that this policy is reviewed annually.
- Ensure that this policy and associated procedures are adhered to by all staff.
- Ensure that all staff are made aware of who the designated safeguarding leads are.
- Decide whether to have one or more safeguarding leads and ensure they are trained to a high standard.
- Appoint a lead for online safety: Chimwemwe Mhango.
- Adopt a whole school approach to online safety as a core component of our safeguarding strategy through the PSHE/RHE curriculum and all teaching staff and not just the Computing and DSL staff.
- Respond to allegations of abuse against all other members of staff.

- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required.

- Safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (Phoenix Teaching Code of Conduct).

3.2 The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Leads

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for KS1 and EY
The Designated Safeguarding Lead for KS2

Each designated safeguarding lead will:

- Take overall lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection in Phoenix International Primary School.

- Act as a source of support and expertise on matters relating to safeguarding and child protection within their designated key stage and learning years to ensure that other members of staff can carry out their safeguarding duty.

- Be best placed to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.

- Identify if children may benefit from early help.

- Be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

- Ensure all staff have read and understood Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025).

- Update their knowledge and skills regularly and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

- Provide staff in school with the knowledge, skills and support required to safeguard children.

- Take responsibility for the accurate and timely recording of safeguarding and child protection concerns and take overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection files.

- Attend or ensure an appropriate representative attends multi-agency safeguarding or child protection meetings.

- Work closely with other relevant education professionals (e.g .Learning Support, Specialist and Class Teachers) to ensure children with additional vulnerabilities are safeguarded.

- Regularly review the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring systems on school devices at least once every academic year

- Promote a 'culture of safeguarding', in which every member of the Phoenix International Primary School community acts in the best interests of the child.

- Liaise with the headteacher and the other DSL regarding safeguarding cases and issues.

3.3 The Role & Responsibilities of all Staff within School

School staff play a particularly important role because they are in a position to identify concerns early in order to provide help for children. All staff in Phoenix International Primary School:

- Have a responsibility to provide a safe environment, where children can learn.

- Should know what to do if a child tells them that he/she is being abused or neglected.

- Will be able to identify indicators of abuse.

- Will be made aware of the safeguarding and child protection policy, procedures and identified DSL.

- Will have access to a copy of Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2022) and receive training on their safeguarding roles and responsibilities.
- Should know what to do if a child makes a disclosure of abuse and never promise confidentiality when a child makes a disclosure.
- Will be made aware of the early help process and understand their role in it.
- Should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help and will discuss early help requirements with the safeguarding lead.
- Should always seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Leads if they are unsure.
- All teachers should safeguard children's well-being and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (Phoenix Teaching Code of Conduct.
- Should report concerns about a child carrying a weapon, using a weapon, or expressing intent to use one to the DSL.
- Should be aware of indicators of a child involved in serious violence.
- Should understand that "Mental Health" in some cases can develop into safeguarding concerns, including self-harm or risk of suicide and be aware that mental health problems can sometimes indicate a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

3.4 Roles and Responsibilities of Trustees

- Liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure the safeguarding training for all staff is carried out annually and the safeguarding policies are reviewed and revised as needed on a yearly basis.
- Be familiar with the school safeguarding and child protection policy and changes which are required to remain up-to-date with Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- The Chair of the Board of Governors will be the contact person for whistleblowing by a staff member concerning the Head Teacher or any member of the Senior Leadership Team.

4. Types of abuse

4.1 **Staff will be trained** (Educare and staff safeguarding training) in indicators of abuse and should be able to recognise signs of abuse. Abuse can take many forms and can involve directly inflicting harm on a child or failing to protect a child from harm.

The main types of abuse that staff are trained to recognise are:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Domestic Abuse
- Neglect

4.2 Types of abuse (Taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015)
**Updated with each KCSIE 2022 -2025*

Type of abuse	Information
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 (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or 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 persistent 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, though 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. Females can also be abusers as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as child-on-child abuse) in education.

Type of abuse	Information
Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child sexual exploitation (CSE)	**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who: have older boyfriends or girlfriends; suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant. **Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE)** We know that different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation. In some cases, the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator. Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim. Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children: appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions; associate with other children involved in exploitation; suffer from changes in emotional well-being; misuse alcohol and other drugs; go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late, and regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Type of abuse	Information
Domestic Abuse	*Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship 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.

(See Appendix A for Indicators of abuse)

4.3 **Child on Child Abuse**
Child on child abuse is where children abuse other children and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm.

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- **Bullying** (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based, sexualized or discriminatory bullying).
- **Abuse in intimate personal relationships** between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse') including coercion, threats, humiliation or body rating.
- **Physical abuse** which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm and unwanted touching.
- **Sexual violence,** such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault such as forcing someone to engage in sexual activity.
- **Sexual harassment,** such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, misogyny, pornography, and online sexual harassment.
- **Consensual and non-consensual sharing of self-generated intimate images and /or videos** including those generated by AI eg "Deepfakes".
- **Upskirting** (now recognised as a criminal offence in the UK).
- **Misogyny in any form** is recognised as a form of sexual behaviour as well as sexual violence and harassment.

4.3.1 **Phoenix International Primary School recognises that safeguarding issues can manifest as child-on-child abuse** and will ensure staff understand what is meant by child-on-child abuse and include this in the annual safeguarding training.

4.3.2 **Phoenix International Primary School will work to prevent child-on-child abuse** by following the Whole School Behaviour policy & Anti-bullying policy, focusing on positive relationships in our PSHE/RHE curriculum, monitoring and being vigilant.

4.3.3 **If an allegation of child-on-child abuse is made,** Phoenix International Primary School will investigate this in accordance with the Whole School Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy and keep a record of the incident in the child's personal file as well as the Child Welfare/child protection file.

4.3.4 **If an allegation of child-on-child abuse is made,** victims and alleged perpetrators will be supported by teachers, the DSL team /or a child welfare counsellor, to be decided on a case-by-case basis.

4.3.5 **Phoenix International Primary School will never pass off child-on-child abuse as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.**

5. Responding to signs of abuse

REPORTING

5.1 If a member of staff, parent or member of the community is concerned about a child's welfare, they should report it to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible.

5.2 All staff will be alert to indicators of abuse and will report any of the following to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediatel.

- Any concern or suspicion that a child has sustained an injury outside what is reasonably attributable to normal play.
- Any concerning behaviours exhibited by children that may indicate that they have been harmed or are at risk of harm, including unusual changes in mood or behaviour, concerning use of language and/or concerning drawings or stories.
- Any significant changes in attendance or punctuality.
- Any significant changes in a child's presentation.
- Any concerns relating to people who may pose a risk of harm to a child.
- Any disclosures of abuse that children have made.

DISCLOSURES

5.3 There will be occasions where a child discloses abuse directly to a member of staff. If this happens, the member of staff will:

- Listen carefully to the child and believe what they are saying.
- Not promise confidentiality, as information may need to be passed on so the child and family can receive additional support.
- Only ask for clarification if something is unclear and will not ask 'leading' questions.
- Report disclosure to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible, certainly by the end of the day.
- Only discuss the issue with colleagues who need to know about it.
- Will write up the disclosure and pass it to the designated safeguarding lead. They will likely have a discussion with the DSL prior to this.

ACTION

5.4 The designated safeguarding lead in conjunction with the head teacher, will decide on the action that needs to be taken following a member of staff raising a concern about a child, or following a direct disclosure.

6. Record-keeping

6.1 A written record of all safeguarding and/or child protection concerns, discussions and decisions made will be kept. This will be separate from the main school file and will only be accessed by the relevant safeguarding staff.

6.2 Staff will submit concerns in writing to the DSL at the earliest opportunity. This may be after having a verbal conversation, but conversations will also be followed up in writing.

6.3 If a child moves school, relevant safeguarding information will be, wherever possible, shared with the relevant authority in the new school.

6.4 Class teachers will keep a record of any incidents or occurrences they have noticed regarding a child's behaviour, circumstances, home situation etc which are not yet child welfare concerns but are worth noting. These will be shared with the DSL on a termly basis as they help to determine patterns.

7. Photography and images

7.1 Consent from parents to photograph children at school events for promotional reasons will be sought at the start of each school year.

7.2 Parents can withdraw consent at any time and must notify Phoenix International Primary School if they do not wish their child's photographs to be used.

7.3 Photographs of children used publicly will not be displayed with their name or other personal information.

8. Early Help

8.1 Phoenix International Primary School is committed to supporting families as soon as a possible problem arises. It is more effective to support a family through early help than reacting to a problem later. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. Phoenix International Primary School works closely with its families to improve outcomes for children.

9. Staff training

9.1 For staff to be able to understand and discharge their safeguarding and child protection duties, Phoenix International Primary School has committed to providing annual safeguarding training for staff as well as the provision of learning opportunities by providing access to Educare. All staff members will be made aware of Phoenix International Primary School's safeguarding processes and structures and will receive training on these as part of their annual professional development training and refresher. They will also receive and have digital access to:

- This 'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy'
- Copies of Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025)
- Educare safeguarding courses

10. Safer Recruitment

10.1 Phoenix International Primary School is committed to providing children with a safe environment in which they can learn. We take safer recruitment seriously and follow safer recruitment practices at all times.

10.2 Any volunteer visitor to Phoenix International Primary School who has not been subject to the necessary checks will sign our volunteer declaration form and will be supervised at all times.

11. Allegations of abuse against staff

11.1 **Phoenix International Primary School takes all allegations against staff seriously** and will investigate all such concerns.

11.2 **If a concern or allegation of abuse arises against the Headteacher**, it must be reported to the Chair of Governors without delay.

11.3 **If a concern or allegation of abuse arises against any member of staff other than the Headteacher**, it must be reported to the Headteacher without delay.

11.4 **Allegations of abuse against staff** must be reported to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors as appropriate and not discussed directly with the person involved.

11.5 **A referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service** will be made if a member of staff is dismissed or removed from their post as a result of safeguarding concerns, or would have been removed if they had not resigned.

11.6 Whistleblowing

11.6.1 Phoenix International Primary School operates a culture of safeguarding, and all staff should report any concerns about poor or unsafe practice or Phoenix International Primary School's safeguarding processes to the senior leadership team.

11.6.2 The senior leadership team will take all concerns seriously.

11.6.3 In the event that a member of staff is unable to raise an issue with senior leadership in school, they should refer to the Chairman of the Board of Governors.

12. Promoting safeguarding and welfare in the curriculum

12.1 Phoenix International Primary School recognises the importance of teaching children how to stay safe and look after their mental health, and are committed to equipping children with the skills and knowledge to have successful and happy lives.

12.2 Children at Phoenix International Primary School will receive RHE/PSE curriculum and training in relationship, health, and safety in our daily lives and online as part of our promotion of safeguarding across the curriculum.

12.3 Phoenix School is a child phone (and personal device) free school. Children are not allowed to bring any personal devices such as phones, smart watches or tablets to school for any reason.

12.4 Phoenix School is committed to keeping children safe online while they are at school and to helping children make safe choices while online on any devices outside of school.

12.5 Parents at Phoenix School will be invited to attend parent forums to learn about and discuss issues relevant to the ongoing safety and well-being of their children, both online and in day-to-day living at home and at school.

12.6 Phoenix School has in place filtering and monitoring systems to control access to the internet while at school and filter harmful content being accessed on school IT equipment.

13. Safeguarding in Malawi

Phoenix International Primary School will adhere at all times to the laws governing safeguarding and child welfare in Malawi and liaise with the appropriate social welfare, law enforcement and legal institutions as necessary. **See Appendix B.*

14. Summary

Phoenix International Primary School is committed to safeguarding children and will always make safeguarding decisions that are in the best interests of each child.

Appendix A

Indicators of abuse
(Taken from What to do if you are worried a child is being abused, 2015)

- Children whose behaviour changes – they may become aggressive, challenging, disruptive, withdrawn or clingy, or they might have difficulty sleeping or start wetting the bed.
- Children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty.
- Children with consistently poor hygiene.
- Children who make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason.
- Children who don't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities
- Children who are having problems at school, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry.
- Children who talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers.
- Children who reach developmental milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, late, with no medical reason.
- Children who are regularly missing from school or education.
- Children who are reluctant to go home after school.
- Children with poor school attendance and punctuality, or who are consistently late being picked up.
- Parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to practitioners' concerns.
- Parents who collect their children from school when drunk, or under the influence of drugs.
- Children who drink alcohol regularly from an early age.
- Children who are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why.
- Children who talk about running away.
- Children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements.

Appendix B

The Malawi Context

- Malawi has passed a Childcare, Protection and Justice bill (2010).
- There is a Social Welfare Department, Child Protection Officers and Social Welfare Officers; there are limited resources.
- A One Stop Centre for those sexually abused is now operational at QECH, with trained counsellors.
- There are options within the private sector for professional counselling. Concerned parents may be guided to seek help from these counsellors.

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