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# *Institute for Research In Schools*

## Safeguarding Policy

Version	Main Changes	Version Date
0.1	First Draft issued by LT	6 June 2018
0.2	With amendments from ER	10 September 2018
0.3	With amendments from TE	03 January 2019
1.0	With amendments from LT	28 January 2020
2.0	With amendments from JF and SG	5 April 2020
3.0	With further amendments from JF	12 May 2020
3.1	Amendments following Trustees meeting of 19 May	9 June 2020
4	Updates to format, Safeguarding Officer and Child Protection Officer details tbc	28 September 2021
5	Safeguarding Officer and Child Protection Officer change	11/03/22



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## **Our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

- Staff – members of staff directly employed by IRIS
- Stakeholders – other people that work with IRIS, but not directly employed by IRIS, and may come into contact with students through IRIS including (but not limited to) Trustees, research associates, consultants, academics, employees from external organisations such as scientific organisations, industry, the media and promotional organisations
- Students – students who have undertaken an IRIS project and are aged 18 and under
- DSL – IRIS designated safeguarding lead
- DCPO – IRIS designated child protection officer

This policy applies to all staff and stakeholders.

### **1 Policy purpose and framework**

#### **The purpose of this policy is:**

- To keep children safe in education
- To protect children and young people who receive IRIS's services. This includes children of adults who use our services
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection

IRIS believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practise in a way that protects them.

#### **Legal framework**

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Scotland Act 1995
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998Po
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0 to 25 years – Statutory guidance for organisation which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities; HM Government 2014
- Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents, carers; HM Government 2015
- Working together to safeguard children; a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; HM Government 2015



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- Keeping children safe in education; Statutory guidance for schools and colleges (2019)

**This policy should be read alongside our policies and procedures on:**

- Role of the designated safeguarding officer
- Anti-bribery
- Bullying and Harassment (Investigations)
- Bullying and Harassment (Complaints)
- Diversity
- Equal opportunities and dignity at work
- Disciplinary
- Grievance
- Gifts and Hospitality
- Social Media and Digital Comms
- E-safety
- Whistleblowing

**IRIS values are:**

**Aspiration**

Our activities help to inspire students and lead them to aspire to a future in research or STEM

**Opportunity**

Opportunities through IRIS are open to all, regardless of background

**Collaboration**

We support students, staff and stakeholders to work together, reflecting a real research community

**Effective action**

We rigorously evaluate our work and can demonstrate the difference it makes

**Teamwork**

We work together to effectively support teachers, schools and each other

**We recognise that:**

- The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989 and the Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- All children regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues



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- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

**We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:**

- Recognising that Safeguarding children is the responsibility of everyone involved with the organisation.
- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSL) (England) and Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) (Scotland) for children and young people
- The DSL and DCPO and lead board member will undergo specialist training every two years
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding practices through procedures<sup>1</sup>, <sup>2</sup> and a code of conduct<sup>3</sup> for all staff
- Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures<sup>4</sup>
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through catch ups, support, annual training, appraisals and keeping a register of training and quality assurance measures
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely, and sharing information about safeguarding and child protection and good practice with children, their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters, one-to-one discussions
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately.
- Using our procedures to manage an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance

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<sup>1</sup> Safeguarding and Child Protection procedure for IRIS staff, the Board of Trustees, consultants, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students, freelancers and anyone working on behalf of IRIS

<sup>2</sup> Safeguarding and Child Protection procedure for the DSL and DCPO

<sup>3</sup> Code of conduct for all staff

<sup>4</sup> E-safety policy and procedures for all staff



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## 2 Contact details

All concerns in England must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Martin Keat, [martinkeat@researchinschools.org](mailto:martinkeat@researchinschools.org)

All concerns in Scotland must be reported to the Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO): Martin Keat, [martinkeat@researchinschools.org](mailto:martinkeat@researchinschools.org)

If the DSL / DCPO is unavailable, you should contact the lead board member for Safeguarding: **Humphrey Battcock**, [hbattcock@hotmail.com](mailto:hbattcock@hotmail.com)

**If you have any concerns about the actions or response of the DSL or DCPO** then you must report your concerns to the lead board member for Safeguarding.

If the disclosure or concern is related to a child in school or college education, the IRIS DSL and DCPO should immediately pass the concern on to the DSL or DCPO within the school, as well as taking their own action to report to the relevant authorities where necessary.

**If you have any concerns about how a workplace child protection issue is being handled**, then you can call the following NSPCC whistleblowing advice line – **0800 028 0285** or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

**If you think a child is in immediate danger do not delay** – call the police on **999** or call the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000 straight away.

**If you are worried about a child, but unsure**, contact the NSPCC helpline to speak to a trained counsellor on 0808 800 5000.

To access further guidance about child exploitation please contact CEOP: [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

The FGM Act 2003 (as amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015) made it a legal duty to report Female Genital Mutilation. The law requires teachers in England and Wales (and other health and social care professionals) to make a report to the police when they have reasonable concerns or suspect FGM.

If you are worried that a child may be at risk of FGM you can make an anonymous call to the NSPCC free 24-hour FGM helpline on 0800 028 3550 or email [fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk)

## 3 Allegations against IRIS staff and stakeholders

An allegation may relate to any member of IRIS staff or stakeholder who works with children who has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

**Three strands for consideration**



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1. A police investigation of a possible criminal offence
  2. Enquiries and assessment by children's social care about whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services; and
  3. Consideration by an employer/organisation of disciplinary action in respect of the individual

### **Supporting the child**

- In cases where a child may have suffered significant harm, or there may be a criminal prosecution, children's social care services, or the police as appropriate, should consider what support the child or children involved may need.
- In the case of a false allegation by the child against a member of IRIS staff, the child will continue to be supported throughout, and after, the investigation without prejudice.

### **Managing allegations**

- Where the allegation is in relation to a member of staff, then in the first instance, the DSL or DCPO will act as the case manager and should immediately discuss the allegation with the designated officer(s) within the local authority (the LADO in England or Social Services in Scotland). When the DSL and DCPO are unavailable, or where the DSL or DCPO are the subject of an allegation, the board lead, should act as the case manager.
- Where the allegation is in relation to a stakeholder, the DSL or DCPO will refer this to the stakeholder's employer's DSL/DCPO immediately.

### **Supporting employees**

- IRIS has a duty of care to its employees. IRIS will provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation and the case manager should provide the employee with a named contact (a staff member that's not the DSL and DCPO) if they are suspended.
- Suspension should be carefully considered and is not automatic. However, IRIS will immediately withdraw that member of staff from any contact with children until the allegation is fully investigated.
- It is essential that any allegation is dealt with very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

### **Managing allegations**

- All options to avoid suspension should be considered prior to taking that step.

Where it is clear that an investigation by the police or children's social care services is unnecessary, the designated officer(s) from the local authority should discuss the next steps with the appointed case manager (usually the DSL or DCPO).



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## Definitions when determining outcomes

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

## Next steps for IRIS staff

If a substantiated outcome is determined, the IRIS staff member will be subject to IRIS' Grievance and Disciplinary procedure.

If a malicious, false or unsubstantiated outcome is determined, the school will be notified and the IRIS staff member will be supported after the investigation without prejudice.

## Supporting parents

- Parents or carers, the child's school DSL or DCPO should be told of any allegations if they are not already aware, unless a strategy discussion is required where advice should be sought first.
- Parents or carers and the child's school DSL or DCPO should be kept informed about progress, and told the outcome where no criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process.

## 4 Recording concerns

Staff and stakeholders should use either the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Disclosure form** (for recording a disclosure made by a child), or the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Concern form** (for recording concerns about a child) to make written records.

Templates are included in this policy<sup>1, 2</sup> and are also stored on the IRIS shared drive. Staff should always keep an open mind when recording and distinguish between fact and opinion, considering carefully which details to include or omit. If possible the direct words of the child should be included, and it should be indicated when words are a direct quote.

- Records should be made as soon as possible after the event/concern is raised and within 24 hours.
- Records should contain the date, time, people present, anything said (verbatim if possible) and any action taken.
- Records should include observations of parents and carers and details of family circumstances where possible.
- Professional opinion should be set apart from factual observations and labelled as such. Judgemental language should be avoided.



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- Staff should be encouraged to ask open questions when seeking the facts of an event or concern, and not come too quickly to an (adult) conclusion which could be seen as 'leading the witness'.
  - Discussion should take place between the person with the concern and the DSL or DCPO where possible to reduce the chances of something being missed/misinterpreted. Staff need to share their observations, concerns, any action already taken and what action they think should be taken next.
  - This record should be passed on to the DSL of the child's school or college at the earliest opportunity, and within 24 hours of the allegation.
  - All electronic records will be stored in a password protected file and all paper records will be stored in a locked filing cabinet at the home address of the DSL or DCPO.

### **Referring to the correct person**

It is important that child protection concerns are handled sensitively and only shared with others on a need to know basis. Once the concern is shared with the DSL or DCPO more advice may need to be sought from another DSL or DCPO, the Local Authority or the NSPCC helpline as to whether a further referral is necessary to protect the child.



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# Institute for Research In Schools

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Disclosure Form

**STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**

### Disclosure form details

Student's name

School name

Staff member's name

Day, date and time of disclosure

Reference (Create reference using the following format D[dd/mm/yyyy]\_[your initials], i.e. D28/09/2021\_AB)

**Precise details of what the student said and what you said** (remember to record the student's own words; note non-verbal behaviour too – tears, hesitation, fear etc):

**Staff member's observations**, including how you reached your decision on the student's capacity to consent to sharing of information, or not:

### Details of action taken (examples in grey):

**Child** *School made aware of 'x'*

**Staff (support)** *Thanks to IRI staff for referring to DSL/DCPO*

**Staff (allegation)** *N/A*

**Organisational learning** *Highlight recognising 'x' in future team meeting*

**Other** *Dealing with the Media – 'The matter's been referred to the police, they'll be an internal investigation and we won't be commenting further'*

Staff member's signature

Staff member's name (PRINT)

Date

**This document must now be passed to the DSL (for disclosures in England) or the DCPO (for disclosures in Scotland)**



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## Safeguarding and Child Protection Concern Form

**STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**

### Concern form details

**Day, date and time**

Table Text (Georgia, Font Size 11)

**Reference**

(Create reference using the following format  
C[dd/mm/yyyy]\_[your initials], i.e. C28/09/2021\_AB)

**Concern:** Include as much relevant detail as possible, including reasons for concern, name(s) of person(s) involved, dates and time, brief outline of the discussion that has taken place.

#### **Details of action taken (examples in grey):**

**Child** *School made aware of 'x'*

**Staff (support)** *Thanks to IRI staff for referring to DSL/DCPO*

**Staff (allegation)** *N/A*

**Organisational learning** *Highlight recognising 'x' in future team meeting*

**Other** *Dealing with the Media – 'The matter's been referred to the police, they'll be an internal investigation and we won't be commenting further'*

**Decision made** (please tick):

**No further action**

**Continued monitoring**

**Formal Referral**

**Details of formal referral** (to include agency to which the case is being referred and a contact name, date of referral):

**Notes**

**Name of DSL/DCPO**

**Signature**

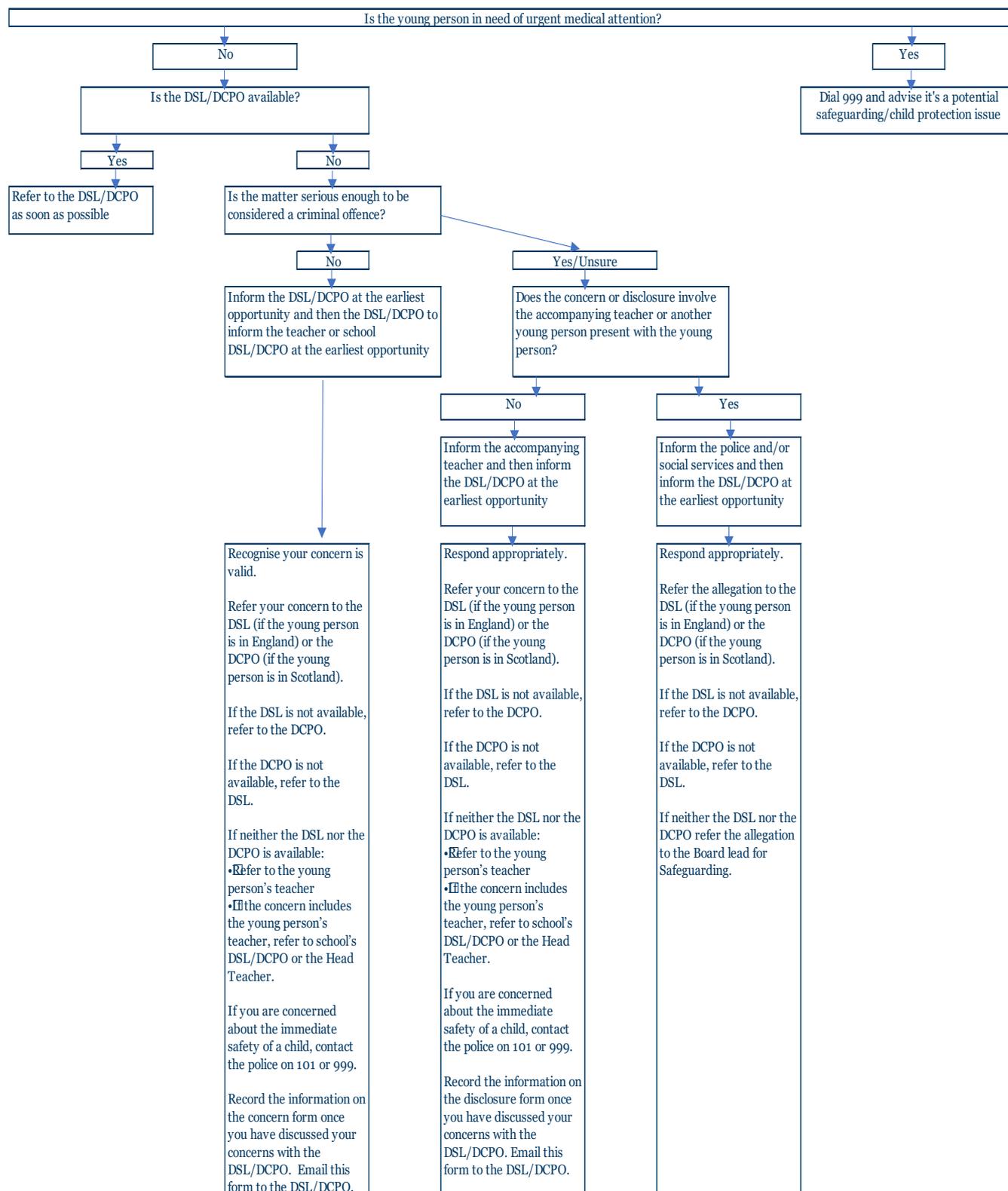
**Date and time**

**This document must now be passed to the DSL (for concerns in England) or the DCPO (for concerns in Scotland)**



# A. Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures

## For IRIS Staff



# B. Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures

## For the DSL and DCPO

**\*Staff is defined as: IRIS staff, the Board of Trustees, consultants, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students, freelancers and anyone working on behalf of IRIS**

<p>You are concerned for the safety or welfare of a young person</p>	<p>Staff or stakeholder refers a concern or disclosure to you or a student refers a concern or makes a disclosure to you</p>	<p>An allegation is made against a member of IRIS staff</p>	<p>An allegation is made against a stakeholder</p>
<p><b>Recognise</b> your concern is valid.</p> <p><b>Refer</b> your concern to the DSL/DCPO and young person's teacher.</p> <p>If the concern includes the young person's teacher, refer to school's DSL/DCPO or the Head Teacher.</p> <p>If you are concerned about the immediate safety of a child, contact the police on 101 or 999.</p> <p><b>Record</b> the information on the concern form once you have discussed your concerns with the DSL/DCPO and the teacher. File the form, update the Safeguarding and Child Protection log. Follow up as agreed in the form.</p>	<p><b>Discuss the concern or disclosure</b> with the referrer.</p> <p><b>Refer</b> your concern or disclosure to the DSL/DCPO and young person's teacher.</p> <p>If the concern includes the young person's teacher, refer to school's DSL/DCPO or the Head Teacher.</p> <p>If you are concerned about the immediate safety of a child, contact the police on 101 or 999.</p> <p><b>Record</b> the information on the concern form once you have discussed your concerns with the DSL/DCPO and the teacher. File the form, update the Safeguarding and Child Protection log. Follow up as agreed in the form.</p>	<p><b>Discuss</b> the allegation with the designated officer(s) within the local authority and <b>refer</b> to the child's school DSL or DCPO.</p> <p>Withdraw the member of staff immediately from contact with children pending investigation.</p> <p>Appoint a member of staff to support the staff member and ensure the school is supporting the child.</p> <p>Conduct the investigation</p>	<p><b>Refer</b> the allegation to the stakeholder's employers and notify the child's school DSL or DCPO.</p> <p>Withdraw the stakeholder immediately from contact with children pending investigation.</p> <p>Ensure the school is supporting the child.</p>



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## C. Code of conduct for Staff and Stakeholders

### **In the classroom:**

- Always familiarise yourself with the school behavioural policy and stick to it
- Under normal circumstances never be on your own with a student
- If you cannot avoid the above, have the classroom door open and seek the attention of others (teachers or students)
- If you find yourself in a one-to-one situation within a classroom, do not place yourself between the student and the door
- Never block an exit
- Under normal circumstances there should not be any physical contact with students (e.g. a hand on the shoulder could be misconstrued by some students)
- If an incident does occur when you are in school, you should first write notes of the event for your reference to help you remember what happened. Report the incident to the school, then to the DSL/DCPO
- Social/personal contact with students outside school – never give out personal details or request them – e.g. telephone numbers, email addresses. Do not contact or respond to students via social networks. Report any attempts to contact to the DSL/DCPO immediately. The best way to protect yourself on social networks is to assume that all information you post is public and act accordingly in relation to your job and associated status. As a minimum, in order to protect yourself, it is best to ensure that you are in control of who can see your account details and content. Also be careful if you comment on a friend's page/post - their profile settings may be different to yours and make your comment public.
- If you are required to use the internet during your time at a school, ensure you know and follow the school internet policy
- Unless by prior arrangement and with appropriate permissions in place, do not take photographs (via any method including phone cameras) of students, students' work, events or any part of a school's premises. Instead, you can request the teacher takes any required photos and forwards them to you in accordance with the school's safeguarding policies
- Harassment/verbal misconduct includes any action(s) and practice(s) by an individual or group which are directed at others and which may comprise of remarks or actions associated with a person's gender, race, disability, sexuality, class, age, HIV/Aids status, personality or other aspect of them. Humiliation and belittlement towards a student with comments or actions are also included under harassment/verbal misconduct



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**In general:**

All IRIS staff and stakeholders should be assertive, not passive or ambivalent, regarding Safeguarding and Child Protection matters.

The role of IRIS staff and stakeholders is to raise concerns or disclosures with the DSL or DCPO.

The role of the DSL or DCPO is to act as a first point of contact for staff concerned about the safety or welfare of a child and to manage and refer all cases of suspected abuse or neglect to the school or appropriate agency.



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## D. E-safety Policy and Procedures for All Staff

The guidance is for all staff working with children and young people and is designed to ensure staff keep themselves safe online and act appropriately at all times.

Individual agencies will have their own professional codes of conduct, which this guidance does not intend to replace. It is guidance that relates specifically to helping professionals put safeguards in place to minimise the risk of any allegations of professional misconduct related to the use of digital, social media or interactive technology.

You should always be mindful not to put yourself in a situation that may comprise you or be misinterpreted either by the child or young person, their friend, parent or carer, other professionals or any other person. This includes both personal and professional situations. It should be remembered that careless and inappropriate action in a personal setting, whether intended or not, could have significant implications for your professional life. Ill-judged comments made on social media may reflect poorly on your professional integrity.

There are few professionals who have allegations of professional misconduct related to digital and interactive technology made against them, or who are the victims of cyberbullying from children, young people, their friends or families. However, the impact of either an allegation or cyberbullying can be significant, both personally and professionally. Taking a few steps to be pro-active in minimising any risk to yourself, whilst you may think it unnecessary, is worth taking to avoid future complications.

Remember: as a professional working with children and young people, or their families, you may be vulnerable to have an allegation made against you or being the victim of cyberbullying. Sometimes this is a result of communication or a situation being misconstrued (and this also relates to communications with adults, friends and colleagues). Other times this may be an act of revenge taken against you for an incident that has resulted through your professional practice. It may also be that someone, through having complex needs of their own, may develop an unhealthy interest in you as a person.

Therefore, the following steps are recommended to all professionals, who work with children, young people or their families.

### Ten Steps to Minimise Professional Risk

1. As a professional you should fully appreciate that the onus is upon you and not the child or young person to distance yourself from any potentially inappropriate situation
2. Review all content about yourself on social networking sites, such as Facebook, Instagram etc. Particularly consider removing any personal information or photographs. These could be manipulated and used against you



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3. Do not give personal information such as email addresses or mobile telephone numbers to anyone who is, or has been, a service user or is a member of their family
  4. If you wish to keep in contact with any child or young person under the age of 18, or their family, who has been a user of your service, ensure that you only use work emails or telephone numbers to communicate with them
  5. If there is any incident, related to this guidance, which involves a child, young person or their family, that causes you concern, report it immediately to your line manager. Document it as soon as possible, according to your workplace procedures
  6. Ensure you adhere rigidly to the Acceptable Use Policy of your workplace. If you breach any part of the AUP, report it immediately as per your workplace procedures
  7. Do not access any illegal or inappropriate websites on your personal computer or mobile phone. This includes illegal or inappropriate images of children, certain other types of pornography or extremist websites. It is illegal to access or download material that promotes or depicts criminal behaviour
  8. Be very careful when liaising with others in contact / web cam internet sites (for example chat rooms, message boards, social networking sites and newsgroups). Avoid inappropriate communication with individuals under 18, or with who you may be in a position of trust. Avoid inappropriate communication with those who you do not know. Adults can pose as children using interactive technology; likewise some children can pose as adults
  9. Use your common sense and professional judgement and expertise at all times to avoid circumstances which are, or could be, perceived to be of an inappropriate nature. This relates particularly to social networking sites and mobile phone technology. This includes communications you make which are directed at or seen by friends, colleagues, other professionals or the wider public
  10. Remember, digital and interactive technology may be the virtual world, but it has an impact on our real world. Do not treat people any differently through electronic communication than you would on a personal basis

#### Guidance for Acceptable Use

##### All staff should:

- Demonstrate honesty and integrity, and uphold public trust and confidence in respect of anything placed on social networking web sites.
- Ensure that any content shared on any social networking web site, at any time, would be deemed as appropriate i.e. staff are personally responsible for ensuring that any privacy settings meet this requirement.
- Ensure appropriate language is used, at all times, for any comments placed on social networking sites.
- Ensure that any comments and/or images, at any time, could not be deemed as defamatory or in breach of any relevant legislation.

##### Staff must not:



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- Have contact with children or young people where there is a relationship developed as part of their 'professional' role on any social networking website
  - Use social networking sites as forum to make derogatory comments which could bring the organisation into disrepute, including making comments about children and young people, parents, other staff members or the wider community. Any breaches of this policy could result in disciplinary action and may result in dismissal.

