

## Safeguarding for Parents – Information Booklet

Date	Review Date	DSL	Member/s of the Board of Governors with Safeguarding Oversight
Oct 2021	31 March 2022	Ms. Rachel Abundo	Mrs. Ghada Amin – Parent Representative Dr. Carlo Ferrario – Chairman of the Board

### Introduction

'We at EGIS recognise our moral duty and legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. We will endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We will be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and will follow procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and care.'

We have put together this booklet to give you some information about how we meet our safeguarding and child protection responsibilities. We have also included some tips to help you to keep your child safe.

Our **School Principal** is Ms. Maha Shenouda  
Email [Maha.Shenouda@elgounaschool.net](mailto:Maha.Shenouda@elgounaschool.net)

Our **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** is Ms. Rachel Abundo - Deputy Principal  
Telephone: 065 3580080, Extension 33  
Email [Rachel.Abundo@elgounaschool.net](mailto:Rachel.Abundo@elgounaschool.net)

Our **Assistant Designated Safeguarding Lead** for FS/KS1 (**FS1-Y2**) is Ms. Bronwen Mary Botes - FS and KS1 Coordinator - Email [Bronwen.Mary@elgounaschool.net](mailto:Bronwen.Mary@elgounaschool.net)

Our **Assistant Designated Safeguarding Lead** for **KS2 (Y3-6)** is Ms. Laura Connolly – KS2 Coordinator - Email [Laura.Connolly@elgounaschool.net](mailto:Laura.Connolly@elgounaschool.net)

Our **Assistant Designated Safeguarding Lead** for **KS3 (Y7-Y9)** is Ms. Gina Martin – Head of Secondary - Email [Gina.Martin@elgounaschool.net](mailto:Gina.Martin@elgounaschool.net)

Our **Assistant Designated Safeguarding Lead** for **KS4-5 (Y10-Y12)** is Ms. Zana Fathi – IGCSE Physics/Biology Teacher - Email [Zana.Fathi@elgounaschool.net](mailto:Zana.Fathi@elgounaschool.net)

Our **Assistant Designated Safeguarding Lead** for **the National Section** is Ms. Ghada Abdel Sattar – Email: [Ghada.AbdelSattar@elgounaschool.net](mailto:Ghada.AbdelSattar@elgounaschool.net)

If you have any questions about this booklet or if you would like to see our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, please contact: Ms. Rachel or check the school website:  
<https://elgounaschool.net/index.php/policies-and-safeguarding/>

### **School's Mission**

*"We challenge, inspire and empower each other to succeed in realising our fullest potential, by pursuing opportunities to become passionate life-long learners, prepared to contribute in this rapidly changing world."*

### **School's Vision**

*"EGIS aims to provide a world-class education enriched by international approaches in an atmosphere that empowers everyone to be self-critical, recognising the need for growth and change whilst constantly striving for excellence."*

At EGIS we are passionate about the safety and wellbeing of our pupils and we take this responsibility seriously. We understand the importance of the trust you put in us to look after your children whilst they are in our care. We are mindful that the complex needs of our pupils can make them more vulnerable to safeguarding risks. As such, EGIS is committed to providing a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, emotional, physical and moral development of the individual child or young person. We actively promote working together with staff, parents and pupils to create a safe and caring community.

Safeguarding children is defined by these four areas:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment;
- preventing harm to children's health or development;
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

We have a number of policies and procedures in place that contribute to our safeguarding commitment, including our child protection and online safety policies all of which can be viewed on the school's website. Parents and carers are welcome to hard copies of the policies on request. We have a dedicated safeguarding team who will be happy to discuss any safeguarding queries further.

EGIS takes a comprehensive whole-school approach to embedding effective safeguarding practice within its community. The ways in which we aim to keep our community safe include:

- creating a positive and open culture based on mutual trust and respect;
- actively developing British values such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect for and tolerance of others, in addition to our school values of Excellence, Loyalty, Grit/Growth mindset, Optimism, Unity, Nurturing and Achievement;
- celebrating diversity, promoting equality and encouraging kindness and charity towards others;
- valuing each and every member of the community and empowering the children to 'find their voice' by developing their confidence and providing opportunities to express themselves (such as Student Council);
- developing safe and positive attachments with trusted adults to whom they feel able to turn for support. One-to-one mentoring sessions provide pupils with an

opportunity to raise any concerns privately;

- developing positive relationships and working in collaboration with parents and carers is essential to promoting the welfare of our pupils and their families;
- small school and excellent in-depth knowledge and observation of pupils allows staff to be aware of and respond to any worrying changes or behaviours a pupil may display;
- meaningful opportunities to empower and educate pupils on recognising and managing safeguarding issues is embedded within the curriculum and whole-school events;
- providing information and support to parents and carers on safeguarding issues;
- having meaningful and effective up to date child protection policies and other policies such as anti-bullying and online safety that are available to the whole community;
- checking the suitability of all our staff to work with children;
- ongoing monitoring, development and support provided to all staff;
- providing a safe and secure environment and adhering to health and safety regulations;
- rigorous and regular training all our staff to recognise and respond to child welfare Concerns;
- appointing a team of designated safeguarding leads who have additional training in child protection;
- responding effectively and promptly to early warning signs and referring to other supporting agencies, as well as sharing information and working collaboratively with appropriate outside agencies when needed.

### **Who is responsible for safeguarding children?**

Everyone in our school community who work with or may come into contact with children has a responsibility to protect them; including parents, Board of Governors, teachers, support staff, housekeeping, administration staff, caterers, outside-service providers, volunteers, etc. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is therefore **everyone's responsibility**.

### **What we will do if we have a concern about your child**

If we are concerned that your child may be at risk of abuse or neglect, we must follow the procedures in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The policy can be viewed on on the school's website. The procedures have been written to protect all pupils and those who work with them. They comply with our statutory responsibilities and are designed to support pupils, families and staff. The procedures are based on the principle that the welfare of the child is the most important consideration.

In almost all circumstances, we will talk to you about our concerns and we will also tell you if we feel we must refer our concerns to outside authorities. We will ask your consent to make a referral, but in some circumstances we may need to make the referral against your wishes. We will only do this if we genuinely believe that this is the best way to protect your child, and the fact that you did not consent to the referral will be recorded.

If we think that talking to you first might in some way increase the risk to your child, we will report our concerns to authorities and take advice from them. We will normally tell you that a referral is being made and we will record the reasons why we decided to follow this course of action.

All child protection records are kept separate from your child's general school file. Records are stored in a secure place and/or password-protected. The only staff who have access to the

records are those who need to know about the concerns in order to protect and support your child.

Child protection is a very sensitive issue and it raises many questions and a range of strong emotions. We will do everything we can to support our pupils and you can be assured that any action we take will be in the best interests of your child.

### **Complaints Procedure**

There may be an occasion when you need to tell us that something has gone wrong. If you have a serious concern about the safety or welfare of your child or another pupil it may be dealt with under our child protection procedures. All other complaints, including those that may point to poor practice by a member of staff, will be dealt with firstly through the complaints procedure. Please see the Complaints Policy for further details.

### **Keeping your Child Safe at Home**

Be alert to possible signs of concern. No parent wants to think about the possibility of their child becoming a victim of abuse, and most children are never abused. Even so, it is important for parents to be aware of the possibility and to know that help is available if the unthinkable does happen.

Although there is always a lot of media focus on 'stranger danger', the abduction of children is rare and the threat from strangers is quite small. You should still ensure that your child knows the rules about keeping safe when they are out alone. Most children know their abusers. They may be family members or friends of the family, someone who works with the child or someone who lives in the community.

There are **FOUR TYPES of abuse: 1) physical, 2) emotional, 3) sexual abuse and 4) neglect.**

If you notice anything that concerns you, talk to your child to see if you can find out what is happening. Remember that if your child is being harmed, she or he may be too frightened to tell you. If your child becomes distressed or you are not happy with the explanations, you could talk to an adult you trust or call a helpline or children's social care services. Our designated safeguarding lead at school, Ms. Rachel Abundo, will also be happy to help.

#### **Some of the following signs may be indicators of physical abuse:**

- children with frequent injuries/bruises, pain or discomfort;
- children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones;
- children with unexplained: bruises or cuts; burns or scalds; or bite marks;
- a change in behaviour – from quiet to loud, or from happy-go-lucky to withdrawn;
- children shy away from being touched or flinching at sudden movements.

#### **Some of the following signs may be indicators of emotional abuse:**

- children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong;
- parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder';
- parents or carers blaming their problems on their child; and
- parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.

**Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual abuse:**

- Children who display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age;
- Children who use sexual talk or knowledge beyond their years;
- Children who ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games;
- children with physical/sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital areas (signs of Female Genital Mutilation - FGM);
- children who show fear of a particular person, or a reluctance to be alone with them;
- having secrecy around a relationship with a particular person;
- reluctance to discuss where they go, or who they are with;
- being watchful, or always on edge;
- losing interest in their appearance, hobbies or family life;
- having money and refusing to say where it has come from ;
- wetting the bed;
- becoming clingy.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation (a form of sexual abuse):

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who are on drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or don't take part in education.

**Some of the following signs may be indicators of neglect:**

- children who are left dirty with consistently poor hygiene (for example: ill-fitting or dirty clothing, unkempt teeth/nails/hair, not taking a shower);
- children who are left hungry (no food, no money to buy food, failing to provide children breakfast before coming to school, or always eating unhealthy food);
- suddenly lacking concentration at school or appearing to be tired, always sleepy;
- young children who are left home alone for extended periods of time (or left to roam around outside the home by himself/herself);
- poor attendance/punctuality: frequently absent from school with no valid reason given; always late, or frequently picked up late from school;
- children who are left without adequate clothing, e.g. not having a winter jacket;
- children who are living in a home that is dirty or unsafe;
- children who are living in dangerous conditions, i.e. around alcohol, violence/constant fighting, drugs;
- children who are often angry, aggressive or do self-harm;
- children who fail to receive basic health care; and
- parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or are injured.
- parents dismissing school concerns or not responding to them
- alcohol or substance misuse of parents; for example, collecting their children from school when drunk or under the influence

**NOTE:** Neglect is not always deliberate or may not always be intentional that is why many are simply unaware...

## **Internet and mobile phone safety**

Mobile phones and computers are a part of everyday life for many children and young people. Used correctly, they are an exciting source of communication, fun and education, but used incorrectly or in the wrong hands they can be threatening and dangerous.

The risks include:

- cyber-bullying, where hurtful texts or emails are sent to children;
- children accidentally or deliberately accessing violent or sexually-explicit websites either on a computer or a mobile phone;
- children are vulnerable to sexual exploitation via mobile phone or online. This may involve enticing them to engage in sexual conversations, photographs, video or actual meetings;
- exposure to extremist views and potential radicalisation.

You may be alerted to question your child's online activity if they are:

- spending more and more time on the internet;
- being secretive – reluctant to talk about their internet activity, closing the screen page when you are close by;
- spending less time with the family or giving up previous hobbies and interests;
- losing interest in their schoolwork, regularly failing to complete homework;
- starting to talk about 'new friends' that you have not met and who do not visit your home;
- overly possessive of their mobile phone or computer, perhaps overreacting if someone picks it up or asks to borrow it;
- showing fear or discomfort when their phone rings or quickly turning it off without answering;
- undergoing a change in personality that you cannot attribute to any obvious cause.

Remember that none of these signs prove that your child is at risk in any way, but if you notice anything that confuses or worries you try talking things over with them. In any case, think about their demeanour and attitude as well as what they say. If you are still concerned contact the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, Ms. Rachel, or one of the support agencies listed in this booklet.

Children also need to learn how to manage the risks in the use of technologies. Younger children will be much easier to supervise and you will decide if and when they should begin to use these technologies. **Note that students are not allowed to use mobile phones while on the school premises.** If a mobile phone is found with a student in school and it is not switched off, it will be confiscated and not returned for a designated period, and/or until parent can attend school to collect it.

## **Here are some tips to help you to manage the risks.**

- Try to put the computer in a family room where it will be easier for you to supervise your child's online activity.
- Ensure that your child knows they should never give their full name, address and contact details to people they chat to on the internet.
- Gently explain that some people they talk to on the internet may not be who they say they are and might say or do unpleasant or hurtful things.

- Investigate whether the 'parental controls' available from some internet service providers will be helpful.
- Consider installing software that can filter out inappropriate material.
- Talk to your child about their internet use. Ask them which sites they enjoy most and why. Show you are interested, while understanding their need for some privacy.
- Reassure your child that they can talk to you if they are worried about something that has happened during their internet use.
- Make it very clear that your child must never arrange to meet someone they have chatted to online without your permission. Their new 'friend' might well be a local young person of similar age, but they might equally not.

### **If your child is being bullied**

We define **bullying as behaviour that is deliberate, repeated more than once and is designed to be hurtful**. Bullies tend to pick on children who they think are unable to defend themselves. Bullying is not only about hitting or fighting. It also includes name calling, threats, taking belongings, intimidating and making unkind or abusive remarks. Children may try to hide the fact they are being bullied because they are afraid or ashamed. However, you may notice some signs, for example, your child might:

- exhibit a dramatic change in behaviour;
- come home with torn clothing;
- ask for extra money;
- try to avoid going to school;
- complain regularly of headaches or stomach aches;
- have unexplained cuts and bruises.

EGIS does not tolerate bullying and has anti-bullying procedures in place that help to identify and deal with any case of bullying in school. However, bullying does not only take place in school, indeed it is as likely to take place in the home or in the community.

Bullying can be serious and cause a lot of distress. If your child tells you that they are being bullied in school, ask for their permission for you to tell us. They may not have told us themselves because they are afraid that the bully will find out and the bullying will get worse. Try to help them understand that the bullying will not stop while it is kept secret. As soon as we know it is happening we will follow our anti-bullying procedures to stop it.

It is also distressing to suspect that your child might be bullying other children. Our anti-bullying procedures include trying to support children who bully to change their behaviour, so please talk to us if you think your child needs some help.

You will find some useful sources of information and support at the end of this booklet.

### **Looking after your own wellbeing**

We understand that being a parent is one of the most rewarding, but challenging roles. In order to take care of others we must first ensure we are taking care of ourselves. The demanding nature of our modern world can often mean we are on the receiving end of a multitude of pressures, whether they be related to finance, relationships, physical or emotional demands. EGIS is just as committed to supporting our parents as we are our pupils and would encourage you to get in touch if you have any welfare concerns of your own. We are more

than happy to help you where we can or signpost you to more appropriate sources of support if needed. Please see our 'sources of support and information' contacts below for further guidance.

**IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE SAFETY OR WELFARE OF YOUR CHILD, OR A CHILD YOU KNOW, YOU SHOULD ACT WITHOUT DELAY.**

**YOU CAN REPORT YOUR CONCERN and/or ask for advice** from any of the following who provide legal and psychological services:

**Safe Kids Egypt Helpline:** 01204575909 <http://safekidseg.org>

**Child Helpline:** 16000 (National Council for Childhood and Motherhood)

**Abuse Helplines:** 02 257 87089 or 02 257 76792

**UNICEF Egypt:** 02 252 65083 [infoegy@unicef.org](mailto:infoegy@unicef.org)

Many people worry that their suspicions might be wrong or that they will be interfering unnecessarily. If you wish, you can telephone for advice without identifying the child. If the conversation confirms that you are right to be concerned you can then give the child's details. You will be asked for your name and address too, but the agencies will take anonymous calls, so if you really do not want to say who you are, you do not have to. Remember: it is always better to be safe than sorry. Please see below for further sources of support and guidance.

**Domestic Violence Hotline:** 01011910917 - Nazra for Feminist Studies

**Al Nadeem Center for Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence**

<https://www.alnadeem.org/en>

02-25776792 02-25787089

[info@elnadeem.org](mailto:info@elnadeem.org)

**Association of the Egyptian Female Lawyers** - For Sexual violence, Trafficking

<https://www.aeflwomen.com/en/>

[aefl2008@yahoo.com](mailto:aefl2008@yahoo.com) 01065524255

Police Telephone: 122

Ambulance: 123 (Mobile phone: 112)

Tourist Police Telephone: 126