

CHILD SAFEGUARDING AT A GLANCE



SHANGHAI
AMERICAN
SCHOOL

SASHINA.ORG

Illustration by Seoyoon Kim '25

INTRODUCTION FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear SAS Community,

Pablo Casals, a world class musician, teacher, and thinker in the twentieth century, articulated the moral mission of educators and parents alike: “You must work, we must all work, to make the world worthy of its children.” That work begins by ensuring that all our children are, first and foremost, safe. Safety is a precondition for children’s wellbeing and success. When children are safe, they are more likely to learn, to grow, and to thrive. At Shanghai American School, your child’s safety is our highest priority.

Shanghai American School, in keeping with our mission, vision, and core values, has a Child Protection Policy that guides our staff and families in matters related to health, safety, and care of children in attendance at our school. By enrolling your child at SAS, you agree to work in partnership with the school and abide the policies adopted by the SAS Board of Trustees.

The SAS Child Protection Policy defines the standards by which all students should be treated—with dignity and respect, at all times. The policy is based on international law and on the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Children, of which China is a signatory. Along with the UN Convention, SAS follows Chinese law. Under Chinese law, schools must report all cases of domestic abuse to local law enforcement agencies. We wish to draw your attention to two key UN articles regarding the rights of children that guide our policy and practices:

Article 19 - Protection from abuse and neglect

The State shall protect the child from all forms of maltreatment by parents or others responsible for the care of the child and establish appropriate social programs for the prevention of abuse and the treatment of victims.

Article 34 - Sexual exploitation

The State shall protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse, including prostitution and involvement in pornography.

At SAS, we work with families to ensure that our children are safe and knowledgeable about their rights and responsibilities. Your support is essential. Should you have any questions regarding our Child Protection Policy or related protocols, please contact a school counselor or your child’s principal.

Sincerely,



James L. Nelligan
Head of School

1. DUTY OF CARE

Shanghai American School is committed to building and maintaining a culture of respect, care, and safety for all members of our community. Our priority at SAS is to maintain a school environment for our entire community that is free from abuse of any kind. We believe that schools fill a special institutional role in society as protectors of children, where all children in their care are afforded a safe and secure setting in which to grow and develop. Educators have a professional and ethical obligation to identify children who are in need of help and protection. It is the duty of every educator to take steps to ensure that the child and family avail themselves of the services needed to remedy any situation that constitutes child abuse or neglect.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), child abuse constitutes “all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.”

Shanghai American School endorses Amnesty International’s Convention on the Rights of the Child, adheres to the statutory provisions of the Chinese government, and seeks to be a safe haven for students who may be experiencing abuse or neglect in any aspect of their lives. Shanghai American School communicates these policies and procedures annually to all employees and will provide ongoing training for all members of our community. SAS has implemented rigorous hiring practices which make every effort to ensure the safety of children.

2. CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Definitions and Indicators

For the purposes of this document a child is defined as any person enrolled at SAS as a full-time student. A detailed explanation of the different forms of treatment considered child abuse by SAS are designated below.

TYPES OF ABUSE:

Physical Abuse – is inflicting or allowing to be inflicted physical injury on a child by other than accidental means, causing skin bruising, burns, disfigurement, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function, or death.

Sexual Abuse - is committing or allowing to be committed any sexual offense against a child as defined in either the criminal code of the host country or school policy, or

intentionally touching, either directly or through clothing, the genitals, anus, or breasts of a child for other than hygiene or childcare purposes.

Neglect – is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may involve a parent or caregiver failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing, and/or 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 caregivers);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Neglect may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

Emotional Abuse – is a pattern of actions such as: inattention to a child’s emotional needs, failure to provide psychological care, or permitting the child to use alcohol or other drugs. Specific examples may include verbal humiliation, refusing to acknowledge presence of child, invasion of privacy for no specific reason, violent threats, etc.

Reporting

WHEN TO REPORT?

Responsibility to Report

The SAS Child Safeguarding Policy sets forth the steps any SAS community member should take if abuse is observed, suspected, and/or disclosed, to minimize the threat of child abuse in our community and to ensure the response is prompt and effective.

When there is reasonable suspicion to suspect child abuse or neglect, SAS community members will report this suspicion to the divisional counselors or principals. All reports are confidential.

TO WHOM DO YOU REPORT?

All reports are directed to the counselors or divisional principals as soon as possible. After the initial report, the divisional team will immediately share the report with the Child Safeguarding Team (CST).

Disclosure → report to divisional counselors/principals → report to CST → inquiry & follow up by CST.

If the suspected abuse involves a school employee, the report must be made directly to the Head of Campus and Head of School who will lead the inquiry.

FAMILY CONSULTATION

The nature of any family consultation will vary, depending on the individual report and circumstances.

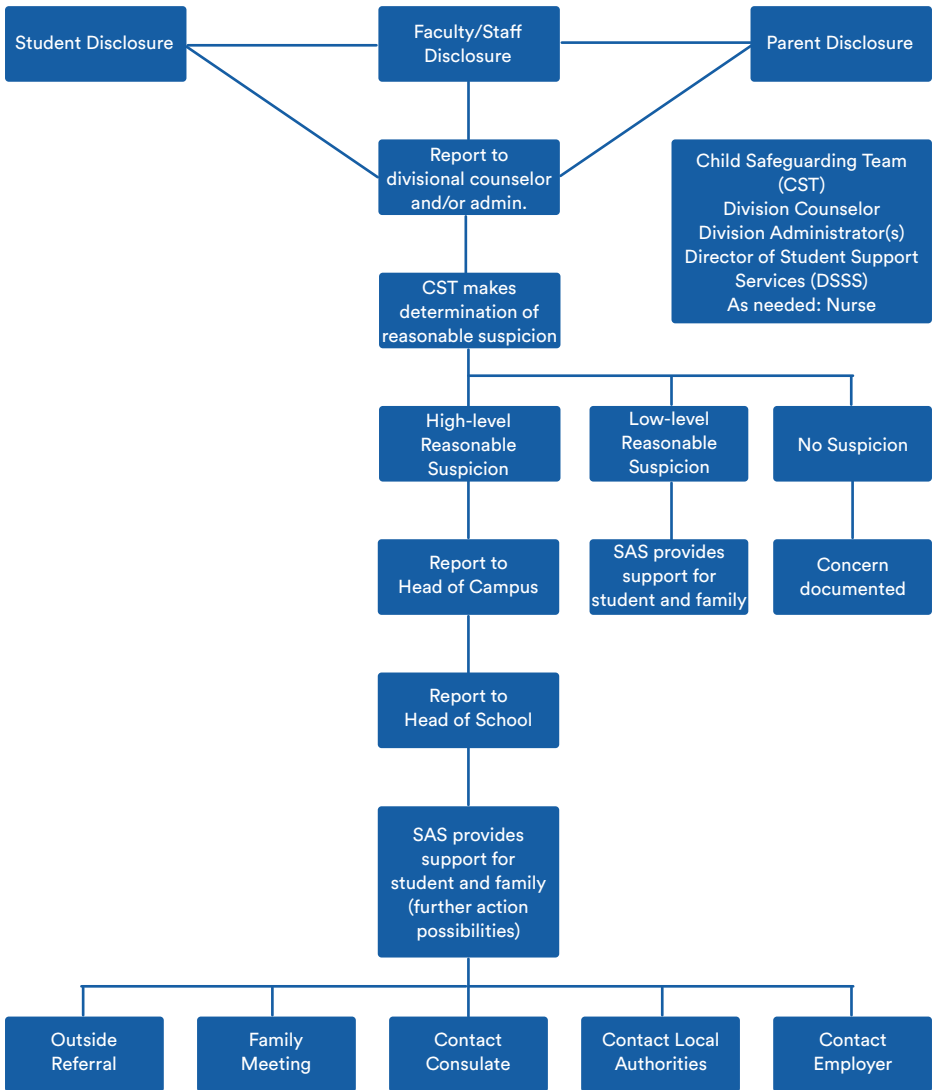
POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

The primary focus is on connecting the child and/or family to resources and materials to support them. Potential outcomes are also listed on the bottom of the flowchart.



Illustration by PXHS student

FLOWCHART



Child Safeguarding Team (CST)
 Division Counselor
 Division Administrator(s)
 Director of Student Support Services (DSSS)
 As needed: Nurse

Note

- In all instances there will be a follow up with the reporter by a member of the Child Safeguarding Team (CST).
- Instances where a suspicion or allegation of abuse involves an employee(s) of SAS, the report should be made directly to the Head of Campus, who leads the CST.

3. STUDENT EDUCATION

Research shows that age-appropriate personal safety and abuse education and prevention programs for children are successful when they are based on the most current research.

Student protection education aims to assist students to develop skills to:

- Recognize abuse and tell a trusted adult about it;
- Understand what is appropriate and inappropriate touching;
- Understand ways of keeping themselves safe.

Given the importance of child protection, all students at SAS participate in this curriculum. We encourage parents/caregivers to seek further clarification if required. Depending on grade level, students will receive personal safety and abuse education instruction during their homeroom class, health class, home-base or advisory block.

4. “SAFE SPACE FOR ALL” GUIDELINES

Studies have shown that students who are perceived not to conform to prevailing sexual and gender norms, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or asexual (LGBTQIA+) are more vulnerable to discrimination, harassment and/or bullying in school. Furthermore, creating a supportive environment for diverse students improves educational outcomes for all students, not just those who may identify as LGBTQIA+. As such SAS has specific guidelines to support this community in the Child Safeguarding manual.

5. TEMPORARY GUARDIANSHIP

Neglect includes failure to provide proper adult guardianship such as leaving children unsupervised at home for any extended period of time. One possible indicator of this kind of abuse is that both parents or legal guardians are absent from Shanghai for a period of 24 hours or greater, without appropriate provision made for child’s care, and a temporary guardian named.

SAS requires one parent or guardian be a full-time resident of Shanghai. Should parents/guardians leave the city or country for any reason, then the responsibility for informing the school of all appropriate contact details for Temporary Guardian lies with the parent or guardian. Temporary Change of Guardianship can be updated through PowerSchool. This is expected to be completed prior to parents/guardians leaving Shanghai.

