

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Rationale

An effective whole-school child safety and protection policy provides a clear guideline to all school staff about the physical and emotional safety, prevention of illness, prevention and treatment of sickness and the expected behaviour when dealing with child protection and safeguarding issues. An effective policy also makes explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the student.

According to the *National Child Protection Policy in Educational Institutions in United Arab Emirates (2022)* **“Protecting and enhancing children’s welfare is the collective responsibility of everyone; every person who deals with children and their family has a role to play”**.

PPS has a commitment towards the safeguarding the welfare of all students while establishing and maintaining a safe and secure environment for students by:

- Encouraging students to talk and ensure that they are being listened to, whilst remembering that unconditional confidentiality cannot be promised (it may be necessary to seek help from others for the student).
- Ensure students know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities throughout the curriculum for students to develop the skills they need to recognize and stay safe from abuse (including online abuse).
- Ensure that all children are protected against all forms of negligence/exploitation physical and psychological abuse as per the **Federal Law No. 3. 2016 on Child’s Right**.

Aims

This policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. The policy has five main elements:

- Ensuring that we are unified in our commitment towards safeguarding the welfare of all our students, staff and other volunteers.
- Ensuring to practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with students.
- Ensuring that all new staff have undergone the training for child protection and safeguarding.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping the students with the skillsets needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or



- suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting students who have been abused, in accordance with their agreed child protection plan.
 - Establishing a safe and conducive environment where students can learn and develop.

Policy Statement

Child abuse

Refers to the physical abuse, corporal punishment, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and also includes bullying, exploitation, and neglect.

Definitions:

Physical Abuse	Is the deliberate physical injury to a student, or the intentional neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This 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. <i>(refer to appendix 1 for possible signs of physical abuse)</i>
Corporal Punishment	A physical punishment inflicted on a child by a teacher or any adult in authority, such as the guardian, as a form of discipline, and is considered as Physical Abuse.
Emotional Abuse	Is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects to the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children they are worthless, unloved, and inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may cause the child to feel frightened, in danger, or to be exploited or corrupted. <i>(refer to appendix 2 for possible signs of emotional abuse)</i>
Sexual Abuse	Involves but not limited to forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether they are aware of what is happening. It may involve physical contact, penetrative or non- penetrative acts and also includes children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual images, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. <i>(refer to appendix 3 for possible signs of sexual abuse)</i>
Neglect	This is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs which is likely to result in serious impairment to their health and development. May involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing or a failure to protect from physical and emotional harm or danger, or allow access to medical care or treatment, provide education and regular school attendance and maintain personal hygiene. It may also include the neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. <i>(refer to appendix 4 for possible signs of neglect)</i>

Data Confidentiality

Case reports and student data are strictly confidential. The identities of the student subject to alleged abuse or neglect, the alleged perpetrator and person reporting the case must be kept confidential and will only be shared to authorized individuals/authorities.

Roles and Responsibilities

Staff in this school is well placed to observe possible signs of abuse in children. It is neither the role nor responsibility of those working with children in the school to assess, diagnose or investigate whether a child is at risk of or suffering harm or abuse. It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of the need to report any concerns about a child to the Designated Member of Staff as a matter of priority.

The School Principal will:

- Ensure that procedures to prevent situations that could lead to the abuse or neglect of students are in place and understood by all staff and leaders
- Ensure that there is priority emphasis within the school on the protection of the students and for taking immediate actions where there is suspicion of cases of student abuse or neglect.
- Ensure that the students can safely report their concerns about abuse and/or neglect without fear of retribution or punishment
- Ensure that the staff and others can safely report their concern about the potential exposure of any student to abuse and/or neglect
- Ensure that all staff and administrators targeted for child protection training fully attend and participate in all training sessions.

The SENCO/Inclusion Champion will:

- Ensure that the school has a child protection policy and procedures in place, and the policy is made available to Parents on request.
- Conduct Child protection and safeguarding trainings/workshop annually.
- Make sure all staff know about the procedures relating to child protection.
- Ensure that the school operates safe recruitment practices, including appropriate use of References and checks on new staff
- Ensure that there are procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff
- Responsibility for dealing with child protection (the “Designated Senior Person for Child Protection”)
- Ensure that the Principal and all other staff who work with children, undertake appropriate training as part of their induction of the school’s arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities.
- Ensure policies and procedures are reviewed annually



Senior Leadership Team will ensure the following:

- Ensure that all staff are clear about their responsibilities within the child protection procedures.
- Make sure that all staff know that the designated teacher should be informed about any suspicions or allegations of abuse.
- Keep all records up to date.
- Advise staff in cases of uncertainty and give informed advice and guidance to new staff.
- Consider, in conjunction with other stakeholders, at what point to involve parents.
- Contact and liaise with other relevant agencies.
- Be supportive to those members of staff to whom students have made disclosures.
- Be active in supporting the Child Protection Plan.

The Role of Teachers

- Report all suspected case of abuse and/or neglect inside and outside the school upon immediate discovery
- All teachers must be alert to signs of abuse and will act upon any concerns or suspicions. Observations/comments should be recorded on the relevant form and passed on immediately to the SENCO/Inclusion Champion.
- Supervise students at all times while in school care.
- All teachers must attend and participate in the child protection and safeguarding training.
- All teachers must respect confidentiality and share information on a need-to-know basis.
- All teachers must understand this policy to address suspected or alleged student abuse or neglect cases.

The Role of Ancillary staff

- All staff will be alert to signs of abuse and report to their designated coordinator.
- Supervise students at all times while in school care.
- All staff must attend the child protection induction and participate in safeguarding training.
- All staff must respect confidentiality and share information on a need-to-know basis.
- All staff must understand this policy to address suspected or alleged student abuse or neglect cases.

The Role of Parents/Legal Guardians

- Cooperate with the school administration and staff, answer all queries related to the student's behaviour, academic performance and respond to the school's feedback and guidance
- Attend all scheduled meetings
- Communicate any concern or observed changes in their child's behaviour to the school authorities.



Key points to follow if abuse is suspected or observed:

Staff in charge of children or young people should know what to do if they suspect that someone is being abused, or if someone tells them that this is happening. The following key points give a guide on what to do and what not to do:

- **Always stop and listen** to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse.
- **Write brief notes** of what they are telling you while they are speaking (these may help later if you have to remember exactly what was said) – and keep your original notes.
- **Never make a promise** that you will keep what is said confidential or a secret – if you are told about abuse you have a responsibility to tell the right people to get something done about it. If asked, explain that if you are going to be told something very important that needs to be sorted out, you will need to tell the people who can sort it out, but that you will only tell the people who absolutely have to know.
- **Do not ask leading questions** that might give your own ideas of what might have happened (e.g. “did he do X to you?”) – just ask “what do you want to tell me?” or “is there anything else you want to say?”.
- **Immediately tell** the person in charge (unless they are themselves accused or suspected of abusing) – don’t tell other adults or young people what you have been told.
- **Discuss with the person** in charge whether any steps need to be taken to protect the student who has told you about the abuse (this may need to be discussed with the person who told you).
- **Never attempt to carry out** an investigation of suspected or alleged abuse by interviewing people etc. –you could cause more damage and spoil possible criminal proceedings. It is your duty to refer concerns on, not investigate.
- **As soon as possible** (and certainly the same day) the person in charge should refer the matter to the designated member of staff (helped by your notes). Follow their request about what to do next. They will set up any necessary investigations and advise you.
- **Never think abuse is impossible** in your organisation or group, or that an accusation against someone you know and trust is bound to be wrong.
- At times children and young adults (senior students) often disclose about abuse to their peers. It should be ensured that students are aware of the Child Protection Policy.



References

- National Child Protection Policy in Educational Institutions in United Arab Emirates, 2022
- Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 on Child's Rights (Wadeema's Law), 2016

Appendices

Appendix 1

Possible signs of physical abuse

Bruising especially:

- Bruises on trunk
- Bruises on upper arm, shoulders, neck consistent with gripping
- Fingertip bruising/finger marks.
- Burns and scalds especially:
- Cigarette burn
- Burns caused by lengthy exposure to heat.

Injuries or impressions:

- Human bite marks
- Fractures, particularly spiral fractures
- Swelling and lack of normal use of limbs
- Any serious injury with no explanation or conflicting explanations/inconsistent accounts.
- Untreated injuries.

Behavioural observations

- Unusually fearful with adults
- Unnaturally compliant to parents
- Refusal to discuss injuries/fear of medical help
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Aggression toward others
- Wears cover-up clothing
- Neurotic behaviour (such as rocking, hair-twisting, thumb sucking)
- Self-mutilation
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug/solvent abuse
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing, scavenging

Appendix 2

Possible signs of emotional abuse

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags
- Acceptance of punishment which appears excessive
- Over-reaction to mistakes



- Continual self-deprecation
- Sudden speech disorders
- Fear of new situations
- Fear of making mistakes
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations.
- Low self-esteem
- Self-harm
- Neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking

Appendix 3

Possible signs of sexual abuse

- Unusual behaviour which could be general or sexual
- Physical indicators in the genital and anal areas
- Discomfort when walking or sitting

Appendix 4

Possible indicators of Neglect

Behavioural Observations

- Constant hunger
- Constant tiredness
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Destructive tendencies
- Low self-esteem
- Neurotic behaviour
- No social relationships
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging
- Multiple accidents and accidental injuries.

Physical Observations

- Poor personal hygiene
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation, pot belly, short stature
- Poor skin tone and hair tone
- Untreated medical problems

Consistency of Policy

This policy should be read alongside the following other school policies:

- Inclusive Education Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Health and Safety Policy



Important Contact Details

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