

Dubai Schools

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

<i>Designated Safeguarding Lead</i>	<i>TBC</i>
<i>Nominated Person from Taaleem Central Office</i>	<i>Mala Talwar</i>
<i>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead - ES</i>	<i>TBC</i>
<i>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead - MS</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead - HS</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Principal/ Head of School</i>	<i>TBC</i>
<i>Nominated Governor</i>	<i>TBC</i>
<i>Review of Policy</i>	<i>As required</i>

**Policy Title: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

**Introduction:**

Safeguarding and Child protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate school procedures and the monitoring of good practices are the responsibilities of the person(s) in charge of Safeguarding and Child Protection.

His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, has issued Cabinet Resolution No. 52 of 2018 on executive regulations concerning Federal Law No 3 of 2016 on Child Rights (Wadeema's Law).

The law - which covers UAE nationals as well as children of expats - lays out the legal rights of minors in the UAE, and is designed to protect children from birth to puberty from a variety of forms of abuse, including physical, verbal and psychological abuse. The law includes creating special units that intervene when children are at risk and stresses that all children have rights regardless of religion and nationality.

At present, there continues to be a lack of centralized infrastructure which means that the school's scope for onward referral is limited resulting in schools taking a greater role in safeguarding that might be the case in some countries. In most extreme cases, it could be that direct referral to the Police would be initiated.

**CHILD PROTECTION LEADS**

1 To be completed by each individual school- refer to table front page.

**NOMINATED PERSON FROM TAALEEM CENTRAL OFFICE**

Mala Talwar, Business Development & Education Officer, mtalwar@taaleem.ae

When members of the school have URGENT and IMMEDIATE concerns for the safety and welfare of a child or young person during school hours, they should make an immediate referral to a member of the Child Protection Team or any accessible member of the Senior Leadership Team.

**Rationale**

Within all Dubai Schools we believe that all children have a right to be safe, protected from abuse and able to reach their full potential. The primary concern of all staff must be the interests and safety of children. All staff members have a pastoral duty towards children. Due to our day-to-day contact with individual children, we are well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behavior or failure to develop.

The needs of children are paramount and underpin all our work. All staff members have a central role in keeping students safe. Staff have a duty in the initial identification of possible abuse and in monitoring the development and progress of children who have been identified as being at risk of significant harm.

We view Child Protection as more than simply acting when suspicions arise, or information is revealed. We also have a vital role to play in ensuring children are safe at all times and in preparing children to resist abuse and to become responsible, caring and confident adults.

## **AIMS**

The intention of this policy is to ensure that appropriate action is taken where it is alleged that a child is suspected of being abused or is actually being abused. Identifying and dealing with child abuse can only be tackled effectively when all concerned have a heightened awareness of the subject. Once child abuse is suspected the aim should be to minimize the damage to the child and promote recovery.

This policy also serves to protect children when under the care of the school and to ensure they are safe at all times.

## **Policy Statement**

### **Child abuse**

Child abuse and neglect' are generic terms that encompass all ill treatment of children including serious physical and sexual assaults as well as cases where the standard of care does not adequately support the child's health or development.

Children may be abused or neglected through the infliction of harm, or through the failure to act to protect harm.

There are four broad categories of abuse which are generally recognized

- Neglect: persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or emotional needs
- Physical abuse: causing injury, harm or suffering to a child through means such as: hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating.
- Sexual abuse: involvement of a child in sexual activity, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This includes access to pornography
- Emotional abuse: persistent emotional ill treatment of a child. For example: conveying to a child that he/she is worthless, unloved, inadequate, imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations, causing feelings of fright or danger.

These categories overlap and an abused child does frequently suffer more than one type of abuse.

### **Students' health, welfare and well-being**

Students' Health, Welfare and Well-being:

As student health, safety, welfare and well-being are top priority, the school has a responsibility to provide child protection by:

- maintaining a safe environment in which children can learn and develop
- practicing safe staff and student recruitment
- recognizing and reporting incidents of harm and possible offences against children
- supporting children who have been abused
- Appointing a designated member of staff to take primary responsibility for child protection.

### **CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS**

Dubai Schools adhere to the KHDA guidelines in regard to student conduct expectations and discipline. Physical punishment of any kind is never be used on students. Staff working with young children should avoid holding children, picking children up unless they are distressed and avoid being alone in a closed room with a child. Physical intervention / restraint must only be used by staff members as a last resort. All measures of restraint must use the minimum force necessary, in order to prevent harm or injury to the child. (See the positive restraint policy)

Staff must be mindful of the nature in which they use verbal or non-verbal communication. Discipline measures should always be handled in a manner that protects the child's dignity and self-esteem. (See the Behavior policy)

Any inappropriate measures of conduct or discipline that results in harm to a child, by a member of staff, that constitutes any form of abuse, will result in disciplinary action.

### **3.4 Confidentiality of Students' Personal Data:**

All staff members are required to sign a confidentiality agreement, which includes the release of student information. When requested by individual parents, staff members are directed to protect students by not allowing photography or any other form of video data to be collected and distributed.

### **3.5 Security of School ICT Systems:**

Taaleem has an ICT Acceptable Use policy that all teachers and staff members are required to review and sign as part of their employment. A student and parent version of the policy is also distributed to parents and students for review and signature. All reported infractions to this policy are taken seriously, properly investigated and appropriate sanctions are instituted when warranted.

### **3.6 Supervision for Students During School Hours and Extra-Curricular Activities:**

All teachers, learning support assistant, school leaders and support staff are responsible for the safe care of students.

Teachers are responsible for maintaining a safe and secure classroom environment. They are expected to be carefully monitor students during all scheduled contact time. In addition to teaching time, teachers and learning support assistants are assigned designated supervision responsibilities. Failure to fulfill scheduled supervisory duties inside and outside of the classroom will result in disciplinary action as it equates to the endangerment to student safety and well-being.

All adults involved in ECA should maintain close supervision of children at all times. The adult must accompany all children to the designated area for pick-up. The supervising adult may not leave until the last student is picked up by his/her parent or authorized adult.

ECAs may also be organized by outside providers. These providers must hold all the necessary safety documentation and are responsible for student safety whilst under their care.

### **3.7 Vetting Procedures of All School Personnel in Association with Relevant Authorities:**

As part of pre-employment, all staff members undergo an extensive criminal background check, reference check and sign a personal declaration within their employment contract. Staff are required to provide a Police Check or a Good Conduct Certificate.

### **3.8 Safety of School Buildings, Transportation and Field Trips**

Each Dubai School takes multiple measures to ensure student safety at all times. Buildings are well maintained and equipped with security surveillance cameras and with security personnel who manage entry and exit to the campus.

Bus transportation for field trips and other events is provided by a company that is licensed by the Department of Transport. Safety checks are routinely carried out on buses and students are properly supervised by staff members. Bus supervisors provide close supervision to ensure the safety and well-being of children.

## **4 Roles and Responsibilities:**

It is a moral, ethical and legal responsibility of any teaching professional or other staff member to report suspected cases of child abuse, neglect or safety concerns to the designated child protection officer.

### **The Role of Teachers and Support Staff**

Child protection is everybody's responsibility. When not at home or another 'caring base', children spend more time in school than anywhere else. Teachers have a very close relationship and contact with children who generally trust them unreservedly. School may be providing a safe haven and perhaps the only place where a child feels comfortable and able to talk to adults.

Teachers, learning support assistant and other supporting staff members may be the first to pick up early warning signs that a child is being exposed to abuse of a neglectful, physical, emotional, or sexual nature. Abused children may turn to teachers or support staff to discuss their worries and request their help. Young children, particularly, may view their teacher as a neutral figure whom they can confide in.

Teachers and support staff are frequently chosen by children when they need an adult to talk to about their abuse (the point of disclosure). An important aspect of the teacher or support staff's role is in the early detection of abuse, knowing what to suspect and how to respond.

#### **All Teachers and Support Staff Members Must:**

- establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- inform the child protection officer and a senior leader if any form of child abuse is suspected
- integrate child protection issues into relevant teaching and learning to help children protect themselves
- communicate **all** concerns of potential abuse to a senior leader and keep written records of concerns, even where there is lack of evidence (records should state facts not opinions)
- respect the confidentiality of all concerned regarding the welfare of children
- respect children as individuals and engage them in conversations
- cooperate as required with inquiries from the school and relevant agencies regarding child protection matters
- avoid being in a closed room with a child to protect the child and adult, keep doors open.

#### **How to react when a child wants to talk about abuse**

##### Staff should:

- Accept what the child says
- Reassure the child s/he was right to tell you and that you believe the story
- Keep calm and listen
- Be honest
- Let the child know you will need to tell someone – do not promise confidentiality
- Let the child know that even when s/he has broken a rule, s/he is not to blame for the abuse
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened
- Never push for information
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let him/her know what happens Immediately refer to a senior leader

- Make accurate, factual, signed, dated and timed written notes as soon as possible of what was said observed and done.

Staff must not:

- Question children
- Suggest alternatives to what a child has said
- Get the child to write about, or depict their experience in some other way
- Question parents (or inform them of the referral in cases of sexual abuse or other complex cases)
- Question potential witnesses
- Conduct medical examinations
- Delay referral

**The designated Child Protection member of staff is responsible for:**

- The provision of training, advice and support to staff,
- Maintaining accurate and secure child protection records,
- Monitoring attendance and development of children whose are at risk,
- Ensuring that all relevant information about a child is disseminated to appropriate staff within the school,
- Ensuring complete records are sent to receiving schools, whether a child changes as a natural progression or for any other reason,
- In consultation with the principal, refer alleged cases of child abuse to the police or other authorized body.

**5 Reporting of Incidents within the School, to Parents, to Taaleem and to other related entities:**

Each school has reporting mechanisms in place that provides for clear and efficient communication within the school, to parents, to Taaleem and to related entities. (See Child Protection forms).

**Applicable to:**

All staff

**6 Implementation Date:**



## Appendix A (Child Protection Policy)

### Making a Start

Think of a child of whom you have concerns. Can you answer the following questions?

- 1) Is the child average weight/height?
- 2) Is the child clean and well kempt?
- 3) Does the child glow with health - do you know of any health problems?
- 4) Is attendance regular, are absences straightforward?
- 5) Does the child concentrate well?
- 6) Is the child achieving satisfactorily?
- 7) Is the child withdrawn, aggressive, moody?
- 8) Does the child understand "taking turns"?
- 9) Can the child use personal experiences for creative work?
- 10) How does the child respond to adults?
- 11) Who are the child's friends?
- 12) Are those relationships equal?
- 13) Does the child have irritating habits?
- 14) What do you know about the child's home life?
- 15) What is your most worrying concern?

How many questions can you answer for any student in your care?

## Appendix B (Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy)

### Procedures For All Staff Within School

Concerns		Monitor
Suspicion/Allegation of Abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Disclosure by young person</li> <li>○ Report by another person</li> <li>○ Anonymous communication</li> <li>○ Your observation/s</li> </ul>		Record

Consult		
School Coordinator		Record

Action		
Report concern to: School Child Protection Officer (Elementary Principal or Middle/High Principal) Do <b>not</b> investigate		Record

Confirmation		
Any verbal referral must be followed by a completed form passed to Child Protection Officer		Record

Commitment		
You may be asked to attend the school's Child Protection Conference		Record

Review		
Provide additional information as appropriate		Record

