



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

PURPOSE:

POLICY STATEMENT

Al Diyafah High School is concerned about the welfare, wellbeing, safety and best interests of all its pupils and attempts to create an environment in which pupils feel secure and valued and in which they are listened to and taken seriously.

This policy aims to outline the identification process to promote positive child protection, the management of such cases, people responsible for it and the precautions taken by school in lieu of the KHDA guidelines for child protection. All cases of child protection shall be dealt with in line with the Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 regarding the Child Rights Law (Wadeema) and Cabinet Resolution No. (52) of 2018 regarding implementing regulation of Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 regarding child rights.

SCOPE:

OUR COMMITMENT: -

We endeavour to make our school a safe and happy place. We ensure that our recruitment and induction procedures are aligned to the Child Protection Policy of the School and any case of reported Child Abuse is immediately responded to as per the laid procedures.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk.

Our commitment against Child Abuse is reflected in: -

- The content of the curriculum; such as our School Assemblies; Value Education Program, Moral Education and class discussions.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure educational environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The School's Wellbeing Policy, Positive Behaviour & Anti-bullying policy which are aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school and enhancing their welfare and wellbeing.
- The practice of training all teaching Staff, CPO, board of management, bus attendants & drivers and all members in the school concerned with the welfare of the students.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Child Protection Policy Guidelines are divided into the following sections:

1. Recognising signs of abuse
2. Dealing with Disclosure
3. Role of the Child Protection Committee
4. Staff Code of Conduct

1. Recognizing Signs of Abuse

It can often be difficult to recognize abuse. The signs in these guidelines are only indicators and many can have reasonable explanations. Children may behave strangely or seem unhappy for

many reasons, as they move through the stages of childhood or their families experience changes. It is nevertheless important to know what could indicate that abuse is taking place and to be alert to the need to consult further.

Someone can abuse a child by actively inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse can take place within a family, in an institutional or community setting, by telephone or on the internet. Abuse can be carried out by someone known to a child like the parent, sibling, relative, and teacher or by a stranger.

1.1. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, drowning, suffocating. Symptoms that indicate physical abuse include:

- Bruising in or around the mouth, on the back, buttocks or rectal area
- Finger mark bruising or grasp marks on the limbs or chest of a small child
- Burn and scald marks; small round burns that could be caused by cigarette
- Fractures to arms, legs or ribs in a small child
- Large numbers of scars.

P.S – According to the Dubai Police Department any visible sign of injury is physical abuse and will be recorded as an offence.

Failing to or being unwilling to prevent physical harm to a child can also be considered as Physical Abuse.

1.2. Emotional or Psychological Abuse

Emotional abuse happens when a child's need for love, security, praise and recognition is not met, in turn abusing their psychological state causing severe to permanent harm to thus affecting their psychological growth and development. It usually co-exists with other forms of abuse. Emotionally abusive behaviour occurs if a parent, teacher or authority figure is consistently hostile, rejecting, threatening or undermining. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of someone else. Symptoms that indicate emotional abuse include:

- Excessively clingy or attention – seeking behaviour
- Very low self-esteem or excessive self-criticism
- Excessively withdrawn behaviour or fearfulness;
- Lack of appropriate boundaries with strangers; too eager to please
- Eating disorders

1.3. Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, mental and moral safety against danger, causing damage to their health and development. It could also mean protecting the rights of the child.

Symptoms of physical and emotional neglect can include:

- Inadequate supervision; being left alone for long periods of time
- Lack of stimulation, social contact or education
- Constant hunger; stealing or gorging food
- Failure to seek or to follow medical advice such that a child's life or development is endangered
- Inappropriate clothing for weather conditions

Sexual Abuse

- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities; whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. It could include instances which do not involve any physical contact. Symptoms of sexual abuse include:
 - Genital soreness, injuries or discomfort
 - Sexually transmitted disease; urinary infection
 - Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters; inappropriately sexualized play, words or drawing
 - A child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
 - Repeated sleep disturbances through nightmares and/or bedwetting.
 - Engaging them in watching or producing pornographic material.
 - Encouraging children to act in a sexually inappropriate way.

Older children and young people may additionally exhibit:

- Depression
- Drug / Alcohol abuse
- Eating disorder; obsessive behaviour
- Self-mutilation; suicide attempts
- School/ peer/relationship problems

2. Dealing with a Disclosure

All child protection concerns should be acted upon immediately. If you are concerned that a child might be at risk or is actually suffering abuse:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is being said.
- Allow the child to talk freely.
- Reassure the pupil, but do not make promises which might be impossible to keep.
- Reassure the pupil that what has happened is not their fault and stress that it was right to talk.
- Listen rather than ask direct questions; ask minimal open rather than leading questions.
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.
- If you feel a physical examination & first aid is required, refer the child to the doctor in consultation with the CPO.

Assessment and Record Keeping

- Make notes as soon as possible after the conversation on the concerns form (Appendix-1)
- Do not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court.
- Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the pupil.
- Record on a body map (Appendix-2) the site of any injury – do NOT take photos.
- Record statements and observations, not interpretations or assumptions.

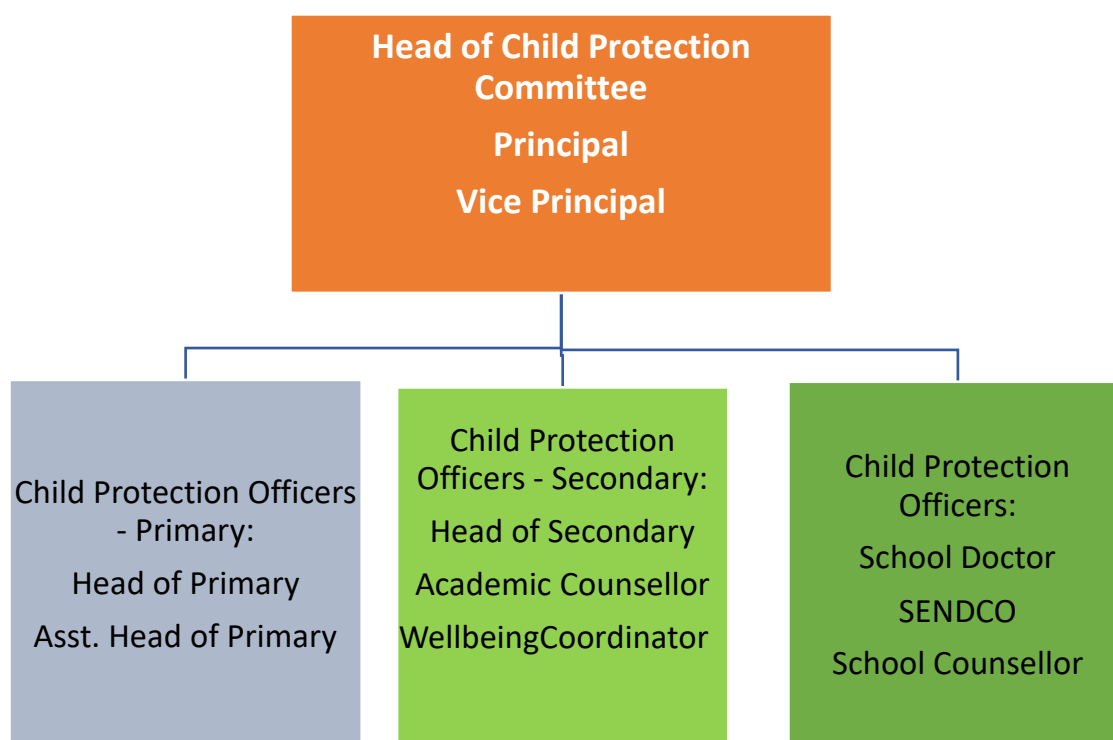
- All information relating to Child Protection is maintained within a confidential file.

3. Role of the Child Protection Committee

The **Child Protection Committee (CPC)** constitutes of 5 **Child Protection Officers (CPO)**, the Principal, who **Heads the Child Protection Committee** and the Vice Principal as the **Assistant Head of the CPC**.

The Designated Person whose main tasks are to:

- Undertake an investigation if a concern is raised, whether this is an allegation against a parent, member of staff or another pupil (or group of pupils)
- Decide whether to take further action about specific concerns.
- Ensure that accurate records are maintained on individual cases and these are kept in a secure place and marked "strictly confidential". (fill form to record action taken – Appendix-
- Provide guidance to parents and staff about obtaining support.
- The Designated Person, in consultation with the Principal, will decide whether the concerns should be referred to an outside agency.



<p><u>Read and understood:</u></p> <p>Vice Principal: Mahesh Sajnani</p> <p>Head of Primary: Padmaja Menon</p> <p>Head of Secondary: Sudha Roberts</p> <p>Head of Sixth Form: Mallika Menon</p>	<p>Reviewed and updated: September 2023</p> <p>Principal Signature: <i>Neetha S. Raju</i></p> <p>Date of next review: September 2024</p>
--	--