

## Student Protection Policy

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### Introduction:

*The UAE emphasizes the rights of children and their need for strong protection. It was one of the first countries in the Middle East to sign the United Nations Convention on Child Protection, and has addressed the rights of children in different existing laws ensuring that they are carried out effectively.*

### Rational:

This policy sets out common values, principles, and beliefs and describes the steps that will be taken in meeting our commitment to protect children.

The policy was adapted from the ADEK and Ministry of Education Children Protection Policy. Safeguarding is defined as protecting students from maltreatment, preventing impairment of health and/or development. This student Protection Policy forms part of a suite of documents and policies, which relate to the safeguarding responsibilities of the school.

### Purposes:

The core purposes of this Child Protection Policy are: To inform staff, parents, volunteers and governors about the school's responsibilities for safeguarding children to enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities should be carried out

### (ADEK) Definitions:

- Student protection is defined as all those measures, steps and actions that must be taken to avoid subjecting students while at School or outside it, during any School activities and during their transportation to any danger or harm, exploitation, violence, physical harm, sexual abuse, any verbal insult, moral threat or harm of any kind. (ADEK's Policy and Guidance Manual 2014-2015).
- A Child under this policy is a person who has not attained 18 years old.
- A school day is the time spent by a student under school supervision. It includes the time spent by the student inside the school and includes the time spent by the student in school buses from and to the school and in extra-curricular school activities.
- Abuse refers to physical abuse, corporal punishment, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and also includes bullying, exploitation, and neglect
- Physical abuse is the deliberate physical injury to a student, or the intentional neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This involves actions including, but not limited to, hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement, or giving the student drugs not prescribed by a physician to control behavior or to cause harm.

- 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 student such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the student's emotional growth and development.
- It involves actions such as, but not limited to, conveying to students that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It involves causing students to feel bullied, frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of students.
- Sexual Abuse and Exploitation involves but not limited to forcing or enticing a student to take part in sexual activities. The activities involve, actions including, but not limited to, physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They include non- contact activities such as involving students looking at or in the production of, pornographic material or, watching sexual activities, sexual hinting or encouraging students to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- Bullying is unwanted aggressive behavior(s) from a student or more to another student and involves an observed or perceived power imbalance and is repeated (or is highly likely to be) multiple times. Bullying, as a form of violence, includes physical (hitting, tripping), verbal (name calling, teasing), relational/social (spreading rumors, leaving out of group), and cyber-bullying aggression (occurs through e-mail, a chat room, instant messaging, a website, text messaging, or pictures or videos sent through cell phones or posted on websites).

### **Aims**

The policy is designed to:

- Establish and maintain an environment where school staff feel safe, are encouraged to talk and are listened to when they have concerns about the safety and well-beings of students.
- Ensure students know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Ensure that students who have been abused will be supported in line with a student protection plan.

## When to Be Concerned

All staff should be aware that the main categories of abuse are:

- + Physical abuse
- + Emotional abuse
- + Sexual abuse
- + Neglect

All staff should be concerned about a student if he/she presents with indicators of possible significant harm.

## Dealing with a Disclosure

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff should:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is being said
- Allow the student to talk freely
- Reassure the student, but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep
- Not promise confidentiality – it might be necessary to refer to a Head of School or counsellor
- Reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell
- Listen, only asking questions when necessary to clarify
- Not criticise the alleged perpetrator
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told
- Make a written record
- Pass the information to the Designated Person without delay

## Confidentiality

Safeguarding students raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff/volunteers in schools.

- All staff in schools, both teaching and non-teaching staff, have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with the school principal.
- If a student confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the child in a manner appropriate to the child's age/stage of development that they cannot promise complete confidentiality –

instead they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the student or other students safe.