



Safeguarding Policy

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Safeguarding Team

Designated Safeguarding Lead

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Safeguarding Team Member

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Introduction

The school fully recognizes its contribution to safeguarding under UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 concerning children's rights, also known as 'Wadeema's Law,' which protects children against all forms of negligence, exploitation, and physical and psychological abuse. All staff are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, thereby protecting them from such abuses. This policy exists to protect children of all ages from the four main kinds of abuse.

What is Abuse?

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child, either by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. Harm can include non-physical ill-treatment, as well as the impact of witnessing the ill-treatment of others. These harms are particularly relevant, for example, to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by adults or by other children.

Physical Abuse:

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to the child. Fictitious illness by proxy (also known as Munchausen syndrome by proxy) may also be considered physical abuse.

Emotional Abuse:

This is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child that causes severe and lasting adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve telling children that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate, or that they are valued only for meeting another person's needs. Emotional abuse may include age-inappropriate or developmentally inappropriate expectations imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger or exploiting or corrupting them.

Sexual Abuse:

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. These activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or producing pornographic material, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect:

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely resulting in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may involve failing to provide adequate food, shelter, or clothing, failing to protect the child from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglecting or failing to respond to a child's basic emotional needs.

ADEK's Safeguarding Policy

All public schools must comply with the provisions of this policy. Every private school is required to publish a Child Protection Policy that protects students from abuse and neglect, provided it meets the minimum requirements of this policy and does not contradict any of its provisions. The school principal serves as the guardian of students while they are in the school's care and assumes responsibility for their safety and well-being.

All students are entitled to equal protection, safety, and security in both public and private schools. Schools are fully responsible for the care and protection of students while they are on school grounds, traveling to and from school using school transportation, and participating in school-organized activities both on and off-campus. Schools must also supervise students before the start of the school day and after school hours. No child should be left unattended for reasons of safety and well-being.

All ADEK employees and school staff—whether they have regular or temporary contact with students—are mandated to report all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect, regardless of whether the abuse occurs inside or outside the school. Such cases must be reported to the Ministry of Interior–Child Protection Center within 24 hours of suspicion.

Reports can be made via the telephone hotline (116111) or the electronic reporting link available on the ADEK website (<https://www.adek.gov.ae/en/Education-System/Private-Schools/Child-Protection>). If a child is in immediate danger, the police should be called using the 999 service, followed by reporting to the Ministry of Interior–Child Protection Center within one hour of discovery. School staff must also inform the school principal immediately when they suspect any student has been exposed to abuse and/or neglect.

No school principal or staff member may impede or prevent the reporting of suspected abuse or neglect by a third party, nor may they retaliate against the person making the report.

The Ministry of Interior–Child Protection Center is responsible for investigating reports, communicating with parents/guardians, and, if necessary, referring affected children and families for treatment and rehabilitation. ADEK, in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior–Child Protection Center, will provide guidance to school staff on next steps, maintaining the confidentiality of all parties involved and adhering to relevant laws and procedures.

Data Confidentiality

All reports and case data are strictly confidential. The identities of the child involved, the alleged perpetrator, and the person reporting the case must be kept confidential. Information may only be shared with authorized individuals from the ADEK Division in charge of child protection, the Ministry of Interior–Child Protection Center, and Social Support Center staff. School staff are prohibited from discussing cases with unauthorized individuals, the media, or any third party, except as required by investigative or judicial authorities.

Training

Due to the importance of understanding and complying with this policy, the Ministry of Interior–Child Protection Center, in coordination with ADEK, will provide mandatory child protection training for school leaders and staff. Attendance at these training sessions is compulsory.

Failure to Comply

Failure to comply with this policy will result in legal and administrative consequences as stipulated by ADEK regulations, UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 on Child Rights, UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 1987 (the Penal Code), and other applicable laws.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Principal Will:

- Comply with this policy and ensure that the school publishes a Child Protection Policy that meets all the requirements stated herein.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to prevent situations that could lead to abuse or neglect and that these procedures are understood by all school staff and leaders.
- Ensure the supervision of students at all times while they are in the school's care.
- Prioritize the protection of students and take immediate action when abuse or neglect is suspected.
- Ensure students can safely report concerns about abuse or neglect without fear of retribution.
- Ensure staff can report any concerns about a student's potential exposure to abuse or neglect without fear of retribution.
- Solicit feedback from students and parents regarding safety and protection within the school.
- Immediately report any potential abuse or neglect of students as outlined in this policy.
- Ensure all staff and administrators attend and participate fully in mandated student protection training.
- Conduct orientation sessions for parents/guardians at the start of each school year to promote awareness of this policy and inform them of their roles, responsibilities, and rights.
- Maintain confidentiality of students' records in compliance with the Student Records Policy.
- Immediately suspend any staff member suspected of involvement in abuse or neglect until the matter is adjudicated.

All School Staff Will:

- Report suspected abuse or neglect immediately upon discovery.
- Supervise students at all times while they are in the school's care.
- Understand and follow this policy when addressing suspected or alleged cases of abuse or neglect.
- Attend and actively participate in student protection training.

Parents/Legal Guardians Will:

- Cooperate with school administration and staff, respond to all inquiries regarding student behavior and academic performance, and follow school guidance.
- Attend all scheduled parent meetings.

- Communicate any concerns or observations about their child's behavior to school administration or the appropriate school staff.

APPENDIX 1

Possible signs of emotional abuse may include:

1. Regular tiredness
2. Fear of a new situation
3. Low self esteem
4. High levels of anxiety
5. Unusually passive or aggressive
6. Delayed speech
7. Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
8. Running away
9. Lying
10. Neurotic behavior, e.g., sulking, hair twisting, rocking
11. Fear of making mistakes
12. Self-harm
13. Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress

APPENDIX 2

Possible signs of sexual abuse may include:

1. Unusual behavior, which could be general or sexual
2. Age-inappropriate sexual behaviour
3. Sexually transmitted diseases
4. Physical indicators in the genital and anal areas
5. Pain or itching in the genital area
6. Bruising or bleeding near the genital area
7. Vaginal discharge or infection
8. Discomfort when walking or sitting down
9. Pregnancy

APPENDIX 3

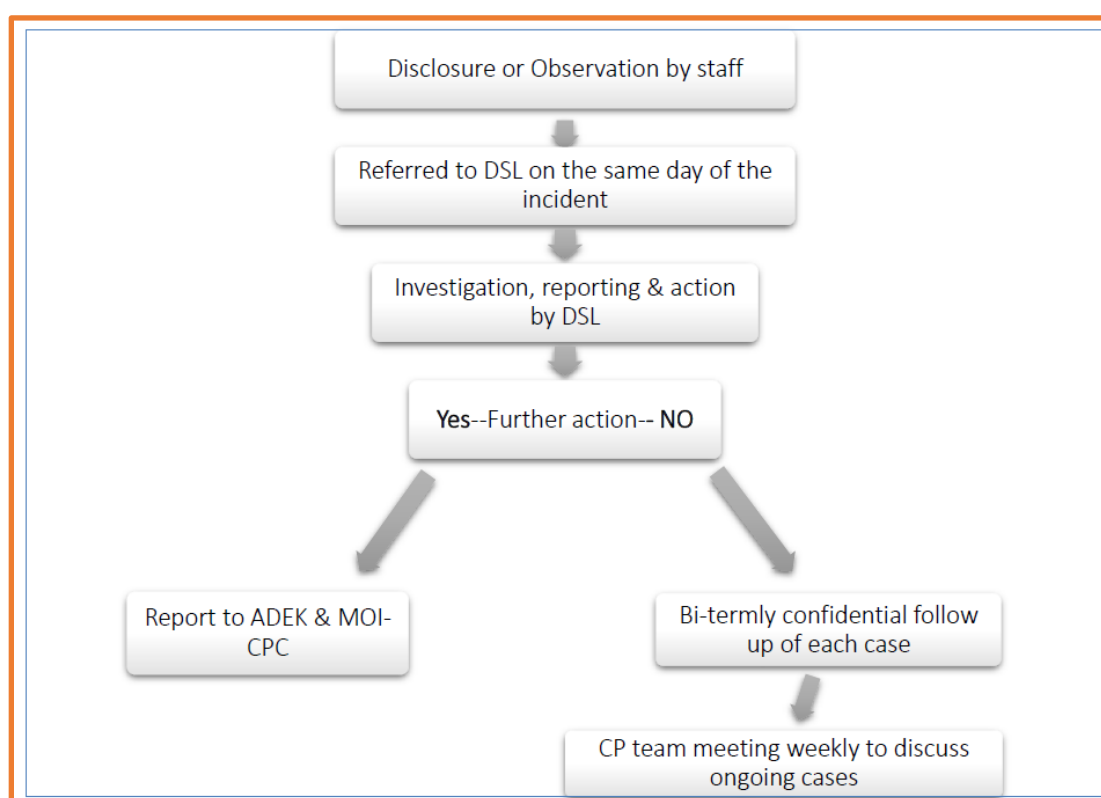
Possible signs of neglect may include:

1. Stealing
2. Poor Social Relationships
3. Failure to Thrive
4. Poor personal hygiene
5. Frequent hunger
6. Untreated Complaints
7. Frequent lateness or absence from School
8. Inappropriate Clothing
9. Substance or alcohol misuse

APPENDIX 4

Reporting a Safeguarding Concern – Flow Chart

As a school, we are obliged to report safeguarding concerns under UAE Child Protection Law. A case should only be reported by The Principal or a Safeguarding team member. The case will be reported to the Child Protection Centre (CPC) 800 988.



References

UAE Federal Law No.3 of 2016 on Child Rights

ADEK-MOI CPC Memorandum of Understanding of 2015

Ministry of Interior – Child Protection Center website (www.moi-cpc.gov.ae)

UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 1987 on Penal Code