



Child Protection Policy

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect children. This policy sets out those actions The Alpha School will take to ensure the safety and well-being of students under its care.

These guidelines give direction and guidance to school management authorities and all school personnel in dealing with allegations or suspicions of child abuse. It provides basic information to school personnel to enable them to be alert to and to be aware of what to do in situations where child abuse may be a concern or suspicions. However, where abuse is suspected, it is essential that collaboration with external authorities is sought for the best advice.

We aim to support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence, and to raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children. In our schools every member of staff will exercise a duty of care in all parts of the school at all times.

In consort with relevant authorities, we will provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and undertake to ensure that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability and moral fitness.

HH Sheikh Muhammad's vision regarding Physical and Verbal Abuse of Students

Every child has the right to a secure life, permanent care and emotional and psychological stability. We will be uncompromising with whoever infringes upon the rights of children, for the protection of our children is a protection of our future." HH Sheikh Muhammad.



Confidentiality

All information regarding concerns of possible child abuse should only be shared on a need to know basis with the interest of the child placed first. We recognize that all matters relating to Child Protection are confidential and designated staff will disclose information about a pupil to other member of staff only if it is necessary to do so.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.

Responsibilities of all school personnel

All school personnel are especially well placed to observe changes in behavior, delayed development or outward signs of abuse in children. In situation where school personnel suspect abuse, they should ensure that such concerns are reported in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy. Under no circumstances should they take unilateral action and all actions and interventions must be documented in detail.

The main role of the designated teacher/person is to refer suspected abuse or allegations to the authorized personnel. To be effective they will have:

- Received training on how to identify abuse and know when it is appropriate to refer a case
- Make themselves known to all members of school staff
- Ensure those members of staff have annual training in child protection relevant to their needs and are able to identify and report any concern they have to the designated teacher/person immediately they arise
- Ensure that all members of the staff have access to and understand the school's Child Protection Policy
- Ensure The Alpha School Child Protection Policy is updated and reviewed annually in collaboration with external authorities
- Keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of referrals or concerns
- Provide parents with a copy of the Child Protection Policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made by the school.
- Ensure they are kept apprised of changes in UAE law and KHDA regulations regarding child protection



Types of Abuse:

“Nursery and school staff spend many hours with children and can spot indications of abuse, Studies have shown the majority of abused children are below the age of five. They are unable to express themselves and are also unaware of what happens to them. But there are signs to spot and the role of school staff is important.

Physical	<p>Physical hurt or injury usually caused by hitting, shaking, kicking, pushing, pinching, burning or biting. In sport, physical abuse may occur when the nature and intensity of training disregards the capacity of the child’s immature and growing body.</p> <p>Shouting at a child is a form of assault.</p>
Emotional	<p>Bullying in any form: name-calling, threats, denial of rights normally accorded to others, cyber-bullying, teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, exclusion, or extortion. Physical and verbal attacks either in private and must not be ignored. Bullying may be a single incident or repeated actions, and may be initiated by an individual or a group.</p> <p>Note: Overt sarcasm by adults is a form of bullying because it affects the emotions of the person it is directed towards.</p> <p>It also involves persistent emotional ill treatment of a child, likely to cause severe and lasting adverse effects of the child’s emotional development. It may involve telling a child they are useless, worthless, unloved, and inadequate.</p>
Neglect	<p>The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.</p>
Sexual	<p>Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. This may also include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in a sexually inappropriate ways.</p>

Possible Indicators of Abuse

A child may be exhibiting signs of abuse if:

- They provide specific information that they are the victims of abuse;
- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns particularly if situated



- on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries;
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- Unexplained changes in a child's behavior e.g. becoming upset, quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper; difficulty in making friends;
- Being prevented from socializing with others;
- Behavioral changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, depressed, tearful, emotional instability, reluctance to go to training or competitions;
- Consistent evidence, over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.

Other Inappropriate Behavior (by staff)

Staff and others must never:

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children;
- Develop physical/sexual relationships with children;
- Develop relationships with children which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive;
- Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse;
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive;
- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative;
- Have a child/children with whom they are working stay overnight at their home unsupervised (even with the permission of parents);
- Sleep in the same room or bed as a child with whom they are working;
- Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves
- Condone, or participate in behavior with children that is illegal, unsafe or abusive
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse;
- Discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others.

Roles and responsibilities

- All staff working with children has a responsibility to protect them.
- All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns and the procedures that they should follow
- All staff has a duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues and if necessary, they should speak to a member of the management. If the concern is about a member of the management, they should speak to the Principal
- A designated Child Protection Officer is appointed
- It is the role of the Child Protection Officer to ensure that all of the Child Protection procedures are followed throughout the school
- The Child Protection Officer must ensure that all staff members and volunteers are aware of the school procedures regarding Child Protection
- The School Leadership Team must follow a safe recruitment process, ensuring that



- references and checks are carried out prior to employment
- Staff members are kept informed about child protection responsibilities and procedures through induction, inset CPD and awareness training where available
 - The Child Protection Officer or the Deputy Child Protection Officer must report any case of abuse in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy
 - Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse, an allegation or suspects that abuse may have occurred must report it immediately to the Child Protection Officer
 - All staff members must fully comply with the school's Professional Code of Conduct Policy

Third Party

An account of person who saw a child being abused must be treated seriously whether this comes from an adult or another child. Abuse rarely happens in public and hardly ever permits corroborating statements. This does not discount the veracity of the account.

Handling Disclosures from Children

A victim is likely to be under severe emotional stress and a staff member may be the only adult whom the child is prepared to trust. Great care should be taken not to break that trust, *within the*

Confines of the law.

When information is offered in confidence, the member of the staff will need to reassure the child and retain their trust, whilst explaining the need for action and the possible consequences should action not be taken. This will necessitate other adults being informed. The child must be told that everything possible will be done to protect and support them.

Each school's designated Child Protection Officer must carry out any investigation into abuse. This will ensure the matter is dealt with by trained personnel who are fully appraised of best practice in carrying out investigations, and able to seek external advice where necessary.

In cases of sexual abuse or serious assault, the school must seek advice from KHDA and the police as to the limits of the school's role in conducting an investigation, as this may jeopardize subsequent court action.

A basis for concern must be established as comprehensively as possible. However, any school personnel to whom a child makes a disclosure of abuse must:

- Listen to the child;
- Offer reassurance but not make promises;
- Allow the child to recall significant events;
- Explain that further help may have to be sought;
- Record the discussion accurately (*see next section*) and pass this to the designated Child Protection Officer (no tapes or conversations may be made as this contravenes the



- law).
- Ensure any records they keep are secure and confidential.

Records and Monitoring

When child abuse is suspected, it is essential to note carefully:

- What has been observed - signs of physical injury should be described in detail and if appropriate, sketched. Under no circumstances should clothing be removed.
- When they observed it.
- Any comment by the child concerned, or by any person about how an injury occurred should be noted, preferably quoting words exactly used, as soon as possible after the comment has been made. The written record should be checked for accuracy, signed and dated by both the recorder and the person making the allegation. All records created should be regarded as highly confidential and retained in a secure location.

Private Tuition

Private tuition is banned in the emirate of Dubai and across the UAE and authorities have made repeated statements regarding this fact. The staffs at The Alpha School are not permitted to carry out private tuition as the management believes all students are entitled to full and equal access to good teaching and that this is best carried out during the school day. Parents will be sent a letter at the beginning of each year reminding them that they must not solicit the staff of the Alpha School to conduct such tuition either in their homes or in the homes of staff.

School staff has been warned of the dangers of conducting private tuition including:

- Malicious allegations
- Pressure to act corruptly
- Tiredness
- Removal of 'Professional Distance'

Parents and staff who disregard school directives regarding private tuition therefore understand that they accept full responsibility for any actions that may arise. The Alpha School accepts no responsibility in such instances.

Private Communications between Staff and Students

All communications between staff, students and their parents must be conducted through the auspices of the school and be documented.

Member of staff is permitted to initiate or maintain private communications with students in coordination with the school management. As members of staff will be communicating via their school id,s, the teachers will

- send the emails to the students or their parents from their ids
- issue their mobile or landline telephone numbers to students (or their parents)



- contact a student outside school hours for personal reasons (unless related to the student)
- solicit or engage in with current students on social networking sites, such as Facebook or Twitter
- staff are advised to be extremely careful in posting personal details on such sites and should take steps to limit public access to their details

Personal Space

All staff must be aware of their proximity to students so as to avoid potential allegations of inappropriate contact. They must always consider the age and gender of the child, the situation they are in and the location of their interaction.

Where meetings take place between staff and students, doors should remain open and/or a third party be present.

Intervention

There will be circumstances where staff must intervene to stop a child injuring themselves or others, or damaging school property. *Reasonable* restraint at the lowest possible level may be used. However, it is preferable to seek advice or ask for a senior member of staff to attend.

If a staff member is suspected of inappropriate behavior towards a child:

- The matter must be reported to senior staff, however minor;
- Senior staff will inform Child Protection Officer of the allegation and ensure a full investigation is carried out;
- The staff member who is alleged to have engaged in inappropriate behavior towards a child will be asked to write a statement, which they must sign and date. A copy will be given to them.
- Depending on the severity of the allegation, and on the advice of Child Protection Officer/Principal, the member of staff may be suspended from duty. This means they will not be permitted on school premises until notified they may return. During the period of suspension, the staff member may not, under any circumstances, contact the victim or their parents, or any witnesses.
- In the event the allegation is proven, and on the advice of Principal, the member of staff may be terminated. In this instance the termination will be effective immediately.
- In very serious cases involving the police, the school will cooperate with such authorities.

Procedures

- All action must be taken in line with the following guidance;
 - The policy as outlined above
 - School Guidelines & Documentation
 - Local Safeguarding Guidelines and Local Child Protection Procedures (Community Development Authority (CDA) Child Protection Centre)
 - UK National Curriculum and EYFS Framework 2015



- The school will always undertake to share an intention to refer a child with the parents unless to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm
- Impede a criminal investigation. On these occasions, further guidance and advice must be sought out.
- Professional confidentiality must be kept at all times. Information will be shared on a 'need to know' basis and any information shared must be held confidentially to themselves
- Confidentiality must never be guaranteed to a pupil, as where there is a concern, it must be reported to the Child Protection Officer and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities
- Well-kept records are essential for good child protection practice and must be stored in a safe, confidential location
- Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, must make an accurate recording as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event in context, and giving the date, time and location. All records must be passed onto the Child Protection Officer and signed and dated with details of action taken
- This policy must be followed alongside all other school policies
- This policy will be reviewed annually, unless circumstances arise which need the policy to be reviewed earlier

Key Contacts within School

School Nurse : Ms April Favila

Mrs Rachel Cashin - Child Protection Officer