



SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

At Ambassador International Academy the welfare of each child is paramount. The School will always strive to keep its children safe from any form of harm or abuse. All members of the school community remain vigilant. We are never complacent about the safety and well-being of our students.

Ambassador International Academy believes that every student has the right to develop themselves emotionally, intellectually, and physically. All children have equal rights to protection from any form of violence, abuse, or neglect.

It is a child's right to feel secure. It is the school's responsibility to provide such an environment. No child can flourish in any area of their development unless they feel safe. All members of staff at Ambassador International Academy, regardless of job description or status are equally responsible for the care of our students. All members of staff are responsible for acting immediately should they become concerned about any aspect of a child's safety or well-being.

As such, it is the responsibility of all members of staff to keep themselves fully informed of the policy procedures to follow should such concerns arise.

We engage in partnerships with all other relevant agencies in the UAE that support the care and welfare of children. By engaging efficiently with all such other agencies, we further our commitment to ensuring effective and useful partnerships designed to protect and safeguard children.

Whilst the school consistently aims to work in open and full communication with our parents, we reserve the right to contact the police or other authorized child-protection agencies without first notifying parents, where it is believed that this course of action is in the child's best interests.

All references to child protection, well-being, and safety, include on-line safety for students.

AIMS OF THE POLICY

The aims of the policy are by necessity brief and direct. For further details you are guided to the

'Procedures' section that follows.

The aims of the School's Safeguarding policy are to demonstrate the school's commitment to safeguarding our students, parents, and the wider community. To safeguard any students who may be of concern through early identification of their level of need:

- those who are already identified as in need of any additional support.
- those who have suffered or are likely to suffer significant harm.
- those alleging abuse.

To raise and maintain the level of awareness of all members of Ambassador International Academy staff members, regardless of job-description or rank, of how to safeguard our students by identifying and reporting possible abuse through the correct procedural channels.

To maintain an easily accessible communication procedure that all members of the school community can follow to report any concerns of harm or abuse of children.

To ensure that all members of staff and members of the wider adult school community, who have immediate or substantial access to our students have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their previous records, identity and qualifications, including any previous training and experience of child protection.

Policy Statement

Child abuse and neglect are concerns throughout the world. Child abuse and neglect are violations of a child's human rights and are obstacles to the child's education as well as to their physical, emotional, and spiritual development. Ambassador International Academy endorses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which our host country, UAE, is a signatory and seeks to be a safe haven for students who may be experiencing abuse or neglect in any aspect of their lives.

Ambassador International Academy staff, having the opportunity to observe and interact with children over time, are in a unique position to identify children who need help and protection. All

members of staff are legally mandatory reporters and have a professional and ethical obligation to be alert to the signs of neglect or abuse and inform a member of the Child Protection Team of suspected abuse or neglect. Procedures are initiated as directed by school policy and regulations in accordance with local authorities and UAE child protection laws.

Ambassador International Academy will ensure this policy is available to all parents, applicants, and Ambassador International Academy members of staff. Ambassador International Academy will provide developmentally appropriate education to Ambassador International Academy students on child protection issues and will provide training for all staff.

Ambassador International Academy will make every effort to implement hiring practices to ensure the safety of children and will review the policy annually for child protection law and regulation compliance and effectiveness. In the case of a staff member reported as an alleged offender, Ambassador International Academy will follow a carefully designed course of action in accordance with UAE law and regulations with the support of the MOE and KHDA, keeping the safety and wellbeing of the child as the highest priority.

All staff members, academic & non-academic are ensured to sign safeguarding undertaking during the commencement of the academic year.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

What is Child Abuse?

According to the World Health Organization (Krug et al., 2002), child abuse constitutes “all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.” A person may abuse a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional (e.g. school) or community setting; children may be abused by individuals known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger. Often children may experience multiple forms of abuse simultaneously, further complicating the problem. Most child abuse is inflicted by someone the child knows, respects or trusts. The World report on violence and health and the 1999

WHO Consultation on Child Abuse Prevention distinguish four types of child maltreatment: Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Emotional and Psychological abuse and Neglect.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse of a child is defined as the intentional use of physical force against a child that results in – or has a high likelihood of resulting in – harm for the child’s health, survival, development, or dignity. This includes hitting, beating, kicking, shaking, biting, strangling, scalding, burning, poisoning, and suffocating. Much physical violence against children in the home is inflicted with the objective of punishing.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is defined as the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared, or else that violates the laws or social taboos of society. Children can be sexually abused by both adults and other children who are – by virtue of their age or stage of development – in a position of responsibility, trust or power over the victim.

Emotional and Psychological Abuse

Emotional and psychological abuse involves both isolated incidents, as well as a pattern of failure over time on the part of a parent or caregiver to provide a developmentally appropriate and supportive environment. Acts in this category may have a high probability of damaging the child’s physical or mental health, or its physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. Abuse of this type includes: the restriction of movement; patterns of belittling, blaming, threatening, frightening, discriminating against or ridiculing; and other non-physical forms of rejection or hostile treatment.

Neglect includes both isolated incidents, as well as a pattern of failure over time on the part of a parent or other family member to provide for the development and well-being of the child – where the parent is in a position to do so – in one or more of the following areas:

- health

- education
- emotional development
- nutrition
- shelter and safe living conditions.

Signs of Sexual Abuse

Child Sexual Abuse is a ruthless combination of Sexual Abuse, of Emotional Abuse and of Physical Abuse. The Child Victim of abuse may show a cluster of physical, behavioral and emotional changes listed below:

Physical Symptoms

- Bite marks
- Unusual bruises
- Lacerations
- Burns
- High incidence of accidents or frequent injuries like swelling of face and extremities
- Discoloration of skin
- Sleep, speech disorders
- Complaints of pain upon movement or contact
- Bed wetting
- Continuous loose motions and passing stools on bed
- Recurrent abdominal pain
- Constant throat and urinary infections

Behavioral Changes

- Avoids physical contact with others
- Avoids certain adults
- Wears clothing to purposely conceal injury, i.e., long sleeves
- Gives inconsistent versions about occurrence of injuries, burns, etc.
- Often late or absent from school
- Comes early to school, seems reluctant to go home afterwards
- Not concentrating in school
- Compulsions, obsessions, problems, phobias, hysterical reactions
- Temper tantrums, aggressive over demanding behavior
- Say negative statements about self
- Attempting to physically hurt oneself
- Constant rubbing of body parts against objects
- Sexual exploration and abuse of others
- Substance-Abuse
- Precocious sexual behaviour
- Emotional changes
- Apprehensive when other children cry
- Depression, anxiety
- Seems frightened by parents
- Has difficulty getting along with others
- Deep sense of isolation
- Little respect for others

- Overly compliant, shy passive withdrawn give in readily
- Plays aggressively, often hurting peers

Procedure

The following section of the policy document is designed to supply more specific detail on how the aims of the policy are put into practice.

- All members of the school staff will have satisfied KHDA requirements in terms of police/EDB checks against any prior convictions or concerns that may exist in the UAE or abroad, regarding each person's suitability to work with children.
- In the event of any concern arising over data protection during a child protection concern, the school will take the line that child protection outranks data protection and will proceed accordingly.
- All members of staff are trained and receive regular refresher courses on on-line safety for children.
- All members of staff and adults who are associated with the school who have direct contact with students are regularly trained and updated in child-protection & safeguarding.
- The school has appointed James Lynch (Principal), as the Designated Senior Lead (DSL). This colleague is responsible for overall administering and ensuring the safeguarding of all students in the school's care.
- The school has appointed Caroline Gloria Dsouza (Student Counselor), as the Child Protection Officer (CPO) to oversee any reported cases, liaison with the DSL and take appropriate action.
- The school's safeguarding policy is made available to all parents.
- Any external letting arrangements of the school's facilities will include assessing the suitability of adults working with children on the school site.
- The school will take all reasonable precautions to ensure that any contractors or visitors to the school are assessed or that their contact with students is risk assessed and that they accompanied whilst on our site.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Designated Senior Leader

The DSL will ensure:

- that a rigorous and correct safeguarding policy is maintained and administered, in that the policy is adhered to by all members of staff and any other adults who may meet the students at the school.
- that all adult members of the school community are aware of how to access the Safeguarding/ Child Protection Policy at any time and that colleagues are consistently aware of the core aspects of the policy, as incidents of concern over a student can arise quickly and unexpectedly.
- that the school communicates and cooperates with all child protection inter-agency activity across Dubai, the UAE and internationally, (where applicable), to ensure the safety of our students.
- that a suitably qualified CPO is permanently in post and that the post-holder is sufficiently trained and supported in practical terms to offer the fullest level of care and protection to our students. Such provision will include a clear job-description, consideration of confidentiality issues, administrative support, training, time, and staffing support. The full details of the CPO's job-description are given below under the heading 'Child Protection Officer'.
- Lead and model a culture of safeguarding awareness across the school community.
- Together with the CPO ensure that where there is a safeguarding concern, the child's wishes, and feelings are considered when determining next steps and future actions.
- Together with the CPO ensure that all safeguarding procedures are effectively communicated across the school community.
- that all members of staff are fully aware of their responsibilities regarding raising concerns about students, colleagues, or unsafe practices (whistleblowing).
- That via the curriculum, all students are made aware of how to keep themselves safe, including being safe online.
- Will ensure that when a student transfers to another school, their child protection file is passed to the new school as soon as possible, and within any statutory timescales (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure transit) and that confirmation of receipt is received.
- Ensure that all allegations or concerns raised about any member of staff are dealt with

according to the school's Safeguarding Policy and the KHDA in such cases.

Child Protection Officer

- Holds the responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety across the school.
- Will liaise with local child safe-guarding agencies and authorities to support best practice of safeguarding at the school.
- In keeping with the laws and police procedures of Dubai and the UAE, ensure that members of staff are aware of and alert to identifying possible indications of radicalization of children at school.
- Will remain fully informed of the developing risks associated with on-line safety for children both at home and at school.
- Maintains a school-wide culture of awareness that child abuse can happen anywhere – including at our school.
- Will liaise with DSL, external case managers and any designated authorities in any safeguarding matter which may include concerns over a member staff at the school.
- The CPO will also be responsible for any cases of staff or volunteer dismissal stemming from a concern of risk or harm to a child.
- Will be the lead authority at the school on any matter relating to peer-on-peer abuse at the school.
- Be available during term time, school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns or issues with.
- Together with the Principal, will arrange and communicate contact cover arrangements for out of hours/term times.
- Will act as the initial source of support and expertise in all safeguarding matters to all members of the school.
- Will encourage and support a school-wide culture of paying due deference and respect to the pupil's point of view, of listening to children and being alert to their feelings and sensitivities in such difficult situations.
- Will be the lead practitioner in all child-protection and safeguarding matter. Accordingly, the CPO will be responsible for ensuring their own training remains current as befits a lead practitioner. Equally the CPO will be responsible for maintaining the high profile of

safeguarding training for all other members of staff and volunteers.

- The CPO will be responsible for maintaining all records pertaining to staff and volunteer safeguarding training and ensuring that all colleagues remain within agreed timeframes of such training.
- Together with the SENCO, the CPO will be attuned to the needs of students with any Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).
- Will maintain a register of all/any students who have been identified of being at risk/of concern. The Register of Concerns will be supported by full records of all concerns, incidents, actions, and outcomes. Such records to be kept securely by the CPO in hard- copy format and secure electronic records. These records will include all concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral, as well as the rationale for decisions made and action taken.
- Will access training and support to ensure they have the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role.
- CPO training should be updated at least every two years and their knowledge and skills refreshed at regular intervals but at least annually.
- Will understand and support the School's delivery with regards to radicalization.
- Will liaise with school staff (especially pastoral support, behavior leads, school health colleagues and the SENCO) on matters of safety and safeguarding.
- Will be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with SEND and young pupils.
- Will understand the risks associated with online activity and be confident that they have the up to date knowledge and capability to keep children safe whilst they are online at school and understand the additional risks that children with SEND face online and the associated and appropriate support they require.
- Will ensure that where a student transfers to a new school and is on a child protection plan or is a child looked after, their information is passed to the new school immediately. In addition, consideration should be given to a multi-agency schools transition meeting if the case is complex or ongoing.
- Will ensure a decision in the case of a transfer whether a copy of the Child Protection file is retained or destroyed in line with best practice.
- Will report to the DSL, any significant issues in terms of child protection practice.

- Will ensure that all staff sign to say they have read, understood and agree to work within the School's Safeguarding Policy, the Online Safety Policy, the Staff Code of Conduct and the Behaviour for Learning Policy (students).
- Will organize child protection and safeguarding induction, regularly updated training, and a minimum of annual updates (including online safety) for all school staff, keep a record of attendance and address any absences.
- Ensure that in collaboration with the school leadership, the Safeguarding/ Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually and that the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly.
- Ensure that the Safeguarding Policy is available publicly and that parents are aware that referrals about suspected harm and abuse will be made and the role of the School in this.
- Will ensure that the name of the designated members of staff for Child Protection, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Child Protection Officer, and deputies are clearly advertised in the school, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.

Role of Teachers:

- To assess the psychological, physical, and medical impact of abuse on the child and its family, historically, currently and in the future.
- To consider the social impact of the disclosure on the child and his/her family.
- To consider the current and rehabilitation needs of that child.
- To understand that it is best to listen to the child and consider the child's needs prior to taking any precipitate action.

ONLINE SAFETY/DISTANCE LEARNING

Ambassador International Academy offers distance learning by using digital platforms such as Teams, Seesaw, Nearpod, etc. Our aim is to replicate as close as possible the normal learning experience for pupils with adaptations where necessary. This approach is flexible and will adapt as needed. We are determined to ensure high safety measures are followed to ensure the protection of all stakeholders in the school during the distance learning.

School communications are managed in a respectful and safe way. For clarity and safety, parents and guardians will be able to view communication between staff and pupils. All content should remain within the school platforms and should not be adapted or shared beyond these platforms or on social media.

Distance Learning Responsibilities for Students

- Students will respect everyone's contributions and online safety
- They will not record or take photos of their peers or teachers during distance learning
- They will not change any videos sent by their teachers and share them with anyone outside the AIA community
- They will use their device moderately and for learning purposes
- They will not deliberately browse, download, upload or forward material that is inappropriate. If they accidentally come across inappropriate material or something that upsets them, they will report it immediately to the teacher or parent.
- Ambassador International Academy has zero tolerance towards any form of bullying and strict action will be taken against the concerned student.

Distance Learning Responsibilities for Teachers

- Teachers must never use personal accounts. This also applies to communication via email.
- Always use the school mail and account
- One to one meeting should be recorded for safeguarding
- Store recorded conferences on school drive/server not personal drive or server
- Talk to children regularly about the benefits and risks of the online world and give them space to ask questions.
- Do not give your personal number out.
- Do not make contact through social media.
- Do not meet students outside of school to re-teach content, chat or support

Dealing with Disclosures

- A member of staff who is approached by a child should listen positively and try to reassure them.
- They cannot promise complete confidentiality and should explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe.
- The degree of confidentiality should always be governed by the need to protect the child.
- Additional consideration needs to be given to children with communication difficulties and for those whose preferred language is not English. It is important to communicate with them in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference.
- All staff should know who the CPO is and whom to approach if the CPO is unavailable.
- If the disclosure is of abuse, staff must not investigate.
- Report, as per the guidance below.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The sevenRs

1. Receive

- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is said and take it seriously
- Make a note of what has been said as soon as practicable

2. Reassure

- Reassure the pupil, but only so far as is honest and reliable
- Do not make promises you may not be able to keep e.g. 'I'll stay with you' or 'everything will be alright now' or 'I'll keep this confidential'
- Do reassure, for example, you could say: 'I believe you', 'I am glad you came to me', 'I am sorry this has happened', 'We are going to do something together to get help'

3. Respond

- Respond to the pupil only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether you need to refer this matter, but do not interrogate for full details
- Do not ask 'leading' questions i.e. 'did he touch you?' or 'did she hurt you?' Such questions

may invalidate your evidence (and the child's) in any later prosecution in court, ("leading the witness").

- Do not ask the child why something has happened.
- Do not criticize the alleged perpetrator; the pupil may care about him/her, and reconciliation may be possible
- Do not ask the pupil to repeat it all for another member of staff. Explain what you must do next and whom you must talk to.
- Reassure the pupil that it will be a senior member of staff

4. **Report**

- Share concerns with the DSL immediately.
- If you are not able to contact your DSL and the child is at risk of immediate harm, contact the Police, as appropriate, directly
- If you are dissatisfied with the level of response you receive following your concerns, you should press for re-consideration

5. **Record**

- If possible, make some very brief notes at the time, and write them up as soon as possible.
- Record the date, time, place, persons present and noticeable non-verbal behavior, and the words used by the child. If the child uses sexual 'pet' words, record the actual words used, rather than translating them into 'proper' words
- If appropriate, complete a body map to indicate the position of any noticeable bruising
- Record facts and observable things, rather than your 'interpretations' or 'assumptions'

6. **Remember**

- Support the child: listen, reassure, and be available
- Complete confidentiality is essential. Share your knowledge only with appropriate professional colleagues
- Get some support for yourself if you need it

7. Review (led by DSL + CPO)

- Has the action taken provided good outcomes for the child?
- Did the procedure work?
- Were any deficiencies or weaknesses identified in the procedure? Have these been remedied?
- Is further training required? What happens next?

It is important that concerns are followed up and it is everyone's responsibility to ensure that they are. The member of staff should be informed by the DSL what has happened following a report being made. If they do not receive this information, they should seek it out.

If they have concerns that the disclosure has not been acted upon appropriately, they should inform the Principal.

Receiving a disclosure can be upsetting for the member of staff. As such, the school will be open to supporting a colleague after experiencing such a disclosure. Such support may include reassurance that they have followed procedure correctly and that their swift actions will enable the allegations to be handled appropriately. In some cases, additional counselling might be needed, and staff should be encouraged to recognize that disclosures can have an impact on their own emotions.

Allegations Against Students Causing Harm to other

Students

All reported incidents will be taken seriously and investigated, involving all parties. Following steps must be followed if the incident has happened once:

- Involved students will be interviewed by the HRT/Specialists. Reflection time and behavior management procedure will be followed.
- SLT will be briefed about the incident and parents will be informed through email or one-to-one meeting by HRT.
- Incident will be recorded.

If the incident is repeated:

- Appropriate disciplinary sanctions will be implemented in accordance with the school's

Behavior and Anti-Bullying Policy.

- Student Counselor/Assistant Head Teacher will be informed and will commence counselling. Reflection time for the student will be administered.
- Follow up meetings will take place concerning all involved to ensure welfare of the students.
- Parents will be briefed by the Pastoral team and will be advised with strategies to encourage positive behavior
- Student will commit to a behavior contract with the Student Counselor

If the incident persists:

- An incident report will be made and emailed to the concerned Head
- A follow-up with the SLT will take place. Student will be referred for counselling or referred to outside agencies
- The Student Counselor/Assistant Head Teacher will have a meeting with the parents to understand the nature of the child and any changes in home environment, such as any behavior disturbances, loss of family member, case of abuse, etc.
- Liaising with parents, HRT and Counselor for appropriate action by the SLT

Allegations against adults who work with children

Procedure

This procedure should be used in all cases in which it is alleged a member of staff or volunteer in a school, or another adult who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children.

In dealing with allegations or concerns against an adult, staff must:

- Report any concerns about the conduct of any member of staff or volunteer to the CPO or DSL immediately
- A meeting will be done separately with parties involved. Student will be interviewed by the DSL/CPO
- If an allegation is made against the Principal, the concerns need to be raised with Mr Kamal

Kalwani, Ambassador International Academy CEO, as soon as possible.

- There may be situations when the DSL/CPO or CEO will want to involve the police immediately if the person is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence
- Student is sent for Counselling

Allegations against Guardians/Relative Responsible for the Child

This procedure should be used in all cases in which it is alleged a parent or relative of the child has behaved in a way that has harmed a child or indicates that he/she poses a risk of being harmed.

- Student reports to Teachers/Counselor/Co-coordinators
- Teachers reports to CPO/DSL/school nurse
- Matter is discussed with the safeguarding team
- Parent is called to the school and advised
- There may be situations when the DSL/CPO or CEO will want to involve the police immediately if the person is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence
- Student is sent for Counselling

WHISTLEBLOWING

We recognize that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

All staff must be clear regarding their duty to raise any concerns they may have about any issue over the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues, poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding arrangements.

All such concerns should be raised immediately directly to the Principal.

Whistleblowing regarding the Principal should be made to Mr Kamal Kalwani, whose contact details are available to staff.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Members of staff have access to certain information of pupils required to undertake their everyday responsibility. Staff is expected to:

- Keep the information discreet and confidential
- Seek advise from the Principal if they have any doubts
- Be cautious when passing information to others about a pupil

RECORDS AND MONITORING

Records need to be updated and stored for the smooth running of safeguarding. Concerns and disclosures should be recorded in writing or copied in mail to concerned members.

Records are stored in a dedicated filing system or digital locker maintained by the school

SAFEGUARDING TEAM

Designated Senior Officer

Child Protection Officer (School Counselor)

Vice Principal

Pastoral Team

School Medical Team

REVIEW OF POLICY

Current: August 2021

Review: August 2022