

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Ambassador International Academy



اكاديمية امباسادور الدولية
AMBASSADOR
INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY
INSPIRE INQUIRE INNOVATE

IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

Ambassador International Academy (AIA) - Mission Statement

Inspire our children to be passionate global lifelong learners through an enriched holistic international curriculum that encourages them to inquire and innovate while proactively contributing in meaningful ways to the world.

Vision

Ambassador International Academy is dedicated to creating responsible universal citizens who would be bright leaders of the 21st century by laying a superior foundation through quality education.

Our Values

Accountable for children's learning, overall wellbeing and holistic development

Maintain quality standards across the entire organization

Broaden the horizons of our children's experience and knowledge

Attend to the child's individual learner potential

Safe and collaborative learning community

Sensitive to the needs of students of determination

Adopt modern instructional strategies

Documentation to make learning visible Outstanding teaching and commitment to research

Relevant real world education aligned to the child's life experience

Vision

Every student at AIA has the right to grow up and develop to their full potential in a secure, safe family and school environment, free from any kind of exploitation.

Mission

To empower staff, students, families, and communities to provide the best environment for children to thrive and develop. AIA fully recognizes its responsibilities to safeguarding and Child Protection under the following articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNRC):

Article 3: which states that the best interests of the children must be the primary focus in decision making about them.

Article 13: which states that children have the right to get and share information as long as it is not damaging to them or another child.

Article 14: which states that children have the right to think and believe what they want to and to practice their religion.

Article 16: which states that children have the right to a private life and their character and reputation should not be attacked.

Article 36: which states that children should be protected from any activity that takes advantage of them or could harm their welfare and development.

Article 37: which states that no one is allowed to punish children in a cruel and harmful way.

All the UN articles can be found in the following link: www.unicef.org

Our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy applies to all staff working in the school.

At AIA we aim to:

- Ensure we practice safe recruitment by checking the suitability of staff to work with children.
- Raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills needed to keep the safe and implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected case, of abuse support the students who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.

- Ensure there are rigorous health and safety provisions across the school to safeguard the whole community, this establishes a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- To provide a safe and secure curriculum that supports the needs of all students.
- Share information about child protection and good practice with students, parents, staff, volunteers, and visitors.
- Develop and implement an effective anti-bullying policy and related procedures. (Please refer to the AIA Anti-bullying policy.)

At AIA we will:

- Appoint nominated child protection leads and deputies.
- Protect all students who attend AIA and use our services in accordance with the laws of the UAE.
- Establish and maintain an environment where students feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Develop and implement an effective e-safety policy and related procedures. (Please refer to the AIA E-safety policy.)
- Prioritise the safety and wellbeing of our students.
- Ensure staff understand their roles and responsibilities regarding safeguarding and child protection.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect, and other safeguarding concerns.
- All new staff that join the school during the academic year receive safeguarding and child protection training.
- Ensure that appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse.
- Ensure students know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Record, store and use information professionally and securely.
- Use our procedures to manage allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately.
- Ensure that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place. (Please refer to the AIA Whistleblowing Policy)

We take account of the guidance issued by the KHDA to:

- Have two designated Child Protection Leads for child protection with designated deputies. The details of the designated staff members can be found on the safeguarding flowchart which is displayed around the school.
- Ensure we communicate concerns with, when appropriate, the KHDA & the Child Protection Centre, Al Barsha.
- Ensure every member of staff knows the name of the designated Child Protection Leads responsible for child protection and their role.
- Ensure all staff members understand the difference between Safeguarding & Child Protection and their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility and follow the correct chain of communication in terms of a referral.
- Ensure that parents understand the responsibility placed on the school and staff for safeguarding & child protection. At various points in the year offer training to parents so they can understand how the school protects their children and handles cases of significant harm.
- Develop effective links with the Child Protection Centre, MOI and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences or court hearings.
- Record, store and use information professionally and securely.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer. (Please refer to the AIA Whistleblowing Policy)
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed, which includes police clearance checks for all teaching and support staff at AIA.

Definition of Terms

There are a significant number of ways that students may be exposed to risk and danger, all of which necessitate a response. Abuse is defined as any form of maltreatment of a child, including direct harm or failure to protect a child at risk or already experiencing harm.

The more commonly referred to types of abuse are:

- **Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding or otherwise causing harm to a child.

- **Emotional abuse:** the persistent maltreatment of a child such as causing severe and adverse effects in the child's emotional development. This may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person.
- **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. This form of abuse can involve direct contact activities but also non-contact activities over social media or the internet.
- **Neglect:** This is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs and is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

While the four areas mentioned are significant potential areas of abuse, it is important to recognize that abuse can take many different forms, which may involve one or more of these areas.

Organisational and school staff should remain vigilant and attentive to other potential types of safeguarding issues, being aware of indicators that may suggest their presence. While the sections below offer examples of additional safeguarding issues, it is important to note that this list is not exhaustive. There could be numerous other safeguarding risks that the Designated Safeguarding Leads will familiarise themselves with, ensuring comprehensive awareness and preparedness. The goal is to stay proactive and responsive to safeguarding concerns, prioritizing the well-being and safety of all individuals within the school community.

Self-Harm

Self-harm can manifest in various physical and/or emotional forms, and there can be multiple underlying reasons why children and young people engage in such behaviour. Once self-harm begins, it can become a compulsive pattern. Consequently, it is crucial to identify signs of self-harm as early as possible and provide comprehensive support. Regardless of the reason behind self-harm, it should always be taken seriously.

There are some common themes that may help to identify concerns including:

- Physical indicators such as cuts, bruises, burns and bald patches (where hair has been pulled out).
- Emotional indicators such as depression, sudden weight loss, unusual eating habits and isolation or withdrawal.

If staff suspect that a student is self-harming, it is crucial to follow the established protocols in the school policy. This involves referring the matter to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or any other staff member included on the Safeguarding flow chart. The DSL will then assess the situation and determine the necessary steps to be taken.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

The sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 encompasses exploitative relationships where young individuals receive something in exchange for engaging in sexual acts. Such exploitation can occur through face-to-face interactions or through technology, including mobile phones or computers.

Sexting

Sexting refers to the act of sharing sexual, naked, or semi-naked images or videos of oneself or others, as well as sending sexually explicit messages. It involves using digital communication platforms, such as mobile phones or social media, to exchange such content.

E-Safety

The increasing use of electronic media in everyday life, along with the availability of a wide range of devices, has been brought about additional risks for children. While electronic media and devices offer numerous benefits, such as educational resources and connectivity, they also expose children to various potential risks.

- **Online Predators:** Children may encounter individuals with malicious intent who seek to exploit or harm them through online platforms, social media, or gaming platforms.
- **Cyberbullying:** The use of electronic media can facilitate instances of bullying, harassment, or intimidation through online channels, causing emotional distress and harm to children.
- **Inappropriate Content:** Children may inadvertently come across or intentionally seek out age-inappropriate or explicit content that can negatively impact their emotional and psychological well-being.
- **Privacy and Data Security:** Children may unknowingly share personal information or engage in activities that compromise their privacy or expose them to identity theft, scams, or online fraud.

To mitigate these risks, it is essential for parents, educators, and caregivers to educate children about online safety, digital citizenship, and responsible use of electronic media. Implementing parental controls, monitoring online activities, and promoting open communication are also vital strategies to ensure children's safety in the digital world. Additionally, AIA will provide comprehensive digital literacy programs and create safe online environments to empower children to make informed choices and protect themselves from potential risks.

AIA believes that the best way to protect our students is to teach awareness and understanding of risk, particularly through personal, health education, sex and relationship education and wellness programs. The school's curriculum includes appropriate and frequent opportunities to teach children how to recognise when they and others are at risk and equips them with the skills, strategies and language they need to take appropriate action.

Allegations about staff and volunteers

Any allegation made against a staff member or volunteer will be treated seriously, regardless of when it is reported. There are robust procedures in place to handle such allegations promptly, fairly, and in accordance with established guidelines.

Whistleblowing (Please refer to AIA Whistleblowing policy)

Any allegation made against a staff member or volunteer should be treated seriously, regardless of when it is reported. It is crucial to have robust procedures in place to handle such allegations promptly, fairly, and in accordance with established guidelines.

When an allegation is brought forward, it is essential to follow established safeguarding procedures to ensure a thorough and objective investigation.

AIA treats any allegation seriously and follows appropriate policies and procedures. We prioritise the well-being and safety of all individuals involved while upholding principles of fairness, confidentiality, and due process.

Anti-bullying (Please refer to the AIA Anti-bullying policy)

Bullying is a safeguarding matter and if left unresolved can become a more serious child protection issue. Staff at every level will take seriously any concerns raised in relation to the bullying of any student. Action will always be taken to investigate concerns and to prevent repeat incidents or behaviours. Bullying may involve the misuse of social media or other technology or be direct from student to student. Having an anti-bullying policy and a commitment to restorative practices further strengthens your school's approach to addressing bullying. These strategies emphasise not only addressing specific incidents but also focus on understanding the underlying issues, promoting empathy, repairing harm, and fostering positive relationships among students.

Safeguarding Leads 2023/24

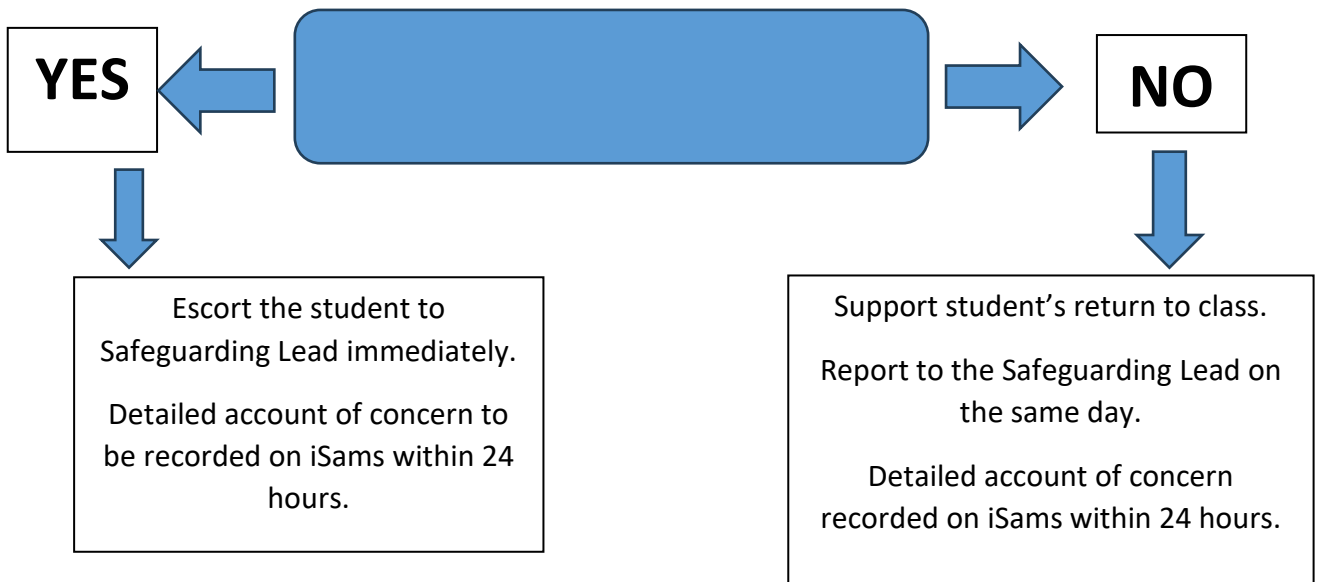
Whole School Designated Safeguarding Lead: James Lynch	
PYP Safeguarding Lead: Sharmistha Bhatia	MYP Safeguarding Lead: Alistair Hamilton

Safeguarding flow for Child Protection

If a child makes a disclosure to you:

Provide a safe, quiet space where they can talk to you.

DO NOT PROMISE CONFIDENTIALITY – LISTEN OBJECTIVELY – DO NOT INVESTIGATE OR ASK LEADING QUESTIONS



If YOU have a concern about a child:

Talk to the Safeguarding Lead (do not discuss with anyone else or the child).

Detailed report to be recorded on iSams within 24 hours.