

# Dubai International Private School Al Qouz

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2023-2024

### *DIPS Vision:*

*DIPS, in partnership with parents and community, strives to ensure all students are digitally literate, lifelong learners, productive citizens and nurture their well-being in an inclusive learning environment.*



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# DUBAI INTERNATIONAL PRIVATE SCHOOL AI QOUZ BRANCH



## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

2023-2024

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## 1- KEY CONTACTS WITHIN THE SCHOOL

**Child Protection Officer: Vice Superintendent:** Mounir Al Lahham

### **Child Protection Leads:**

**Superintendent:** Dr Akram Zeiour, [superintendent@mydischool.com](mailto:superintendent@mydischool.com)

**KG Head of Section :** Suhad El Kassar , [suhad@mydischool.com](mailto:suhad@mydischool.com)

**Elementary Head of Section :** Rinkle Jadeja, [rinkle.jadeja@mydischool.com](mailto:rinkle.jadeja@mydischool.com)

**Middle and High school Head of Sections:** Sehrish Zaafar, [sehrish@mydischool.com](mailto:sehrish@mydischool.com)

**Governance Body representative:** Wafic Al Kayyal [wafick@mydischool.com](mailto:wafick@mydischool.com)

### **School Counselors:**

1. Nancy Saleme
2. Lama Bashasha

## 2. RATIONALE

At DIPS we believe that all children have a right to be safe, protected from abuse and able to reach their full potential. The primary concern of all staff must be the interests and safety of children. All staff members have a pastoral duty of care towards children. Due to our day to day contact with individual children, we are well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behavior or failure to develop.

The needs of children are paramount and underpin all our work. All staff members have a central role in keeping students safe. Staff has a duty in the initial identification of possible abuse and in monitoring the development and progress of children who have been identified as being at risk of significant harm.

We view Safeguarding and Child Protection as more than simply acting when suspicions arise, or information is revealed. We also have a vital role to play in ensuring children are safe at all times and in preparing children to resist abuse and to become responsible, caring and confident adults.

Child protection refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. As administrators and teachers, we have a responsibility to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

At Dubai International Private School we are fully committed to promoting children's rights, notably their right to be protected from harm, abuse and exploitation and to be involved in any

decisions that directly affect them. Dubai International Private School- is committed to developing the children's understanding of their rights and responsibilities as global citizens, in line with The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child to which the UAE is a signatory.

Furthermore, one of our main tasks is to clearly communicate to all learners the expected code of conduct on digital platforms and communications, just as would be expected for 'in person' behavior. Promoting and monitoring the students online behavior are necessary tasks that go along teaching and learning. DIPS staff will be aware that younger children in particular may not have developed or practiced these skills before and could unintentionally hurt others. Physical bullying may be replaced by cyberbullying. Therefore, the school has published new rules and regulations that address online challenges and published them so that both students and parents are aware of the consequences. The school will ensure the channels of support and counselling services when needed. Counselling services will continue to play a major, where children may be experiencing family problems, domestic violence or heightened feelings of insecurity and anxiety. The school's main task will be to monitor the wellbeing of all students including students with disabilities and continue to guide teachers on identifying and reporting child abuse or neglect via their virtual communications.

Moreover, the policy is developed in relation to International Centre for Missing and Exploited (ICMEC) **STANDARDS** that focus on keeping Children Safe; the Standards cover four areas: policy , people , procedures and accountability.

#### **Standard 1: Policy**

The organization(school) develops a policy that describes how it is committed to preventing, and responding appropriately to, harm to children .

#### **Standard 2: People**

The organisation(school) places clear responsibilities and expectations on its associates and supports them to understand and act in line with these.

#### **Standard 3: Procedures**

The organization(school) creates a child-safe environment through implementing child safeguarding procedures that are applied across the organization.

#### **Standard 4: Accountability**

The organization(school) monitors and reviews its safeguarding measures

DIPS (all the faculty and administrative staff) recognizes its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in their care.

In formulating these policies and procedures, the school has taken due regard to the most recent Child Protection legislation in the UAE; and with the Dubai Community Development Authority (CDA) Child Protection Centre.

All the students have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, or beliefs. The School recognizes its legal duty to work with and in accordance with locally agreed interagency procedures.

### 3. Definitions:

#### a. What is Child Protection?

The phrase “Child Protection” refers to all forms of exploitation, abuse, and the violence that children may encounter. Children who are vulnerable to these abuses including the sexual, trafficking, and child labor practices are considered at risk physically, psychologically, and/or mentally.

#### b. What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding refers to actions taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm, abuse, and maltreatment; prevent harm to children’s health and development; ensure that children grow up enjoying safe and effective care; and follow all means to help children have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of the safe guarding processes as it focuses on protecting children identified as suffering significant harm. This includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child.

#### Scope of Application

This policy targets the following People:

- a. Students enrolled at Dubai International Private School
- b. Staff (Teaching, administrative, and other employees) at Dubai International Private School
- c. Partners, Suppliers, and service providers to Dubai International Private School

### 4. Objectives:

- a. To protect and enhance children’s welfare, wellbeing and best interest
- b. To enhance the supportive and safe school environment and protect the child against any threatens that endanger his/her physical, mental, psychological and health conditions
- c. To assert the school’s commitment to ensure the welfare, safety, and respect for all children
- d. To enhance the positive, enjoyable and safe educational environment to all children
- e. To ensure the proper implementation of the mechanisms and measures of child protection at DIPS
- f. To determine the responsibilities and role of all the stakeholders and related parties
- g. To create safe and confidential information reports and complaints of suspected child abuse cases.
- h. To protect children when under the care of the school and to ensure they are safe at all times.
- i. To raise staff awareness of the responsibility for reporting possible cases regarding child’s abuse
- j. To Ensure effective communication between all staff on child protection issues;

**Individual children, especially some of the most vulnerable children and those at greatest risk of social exclusion, will need coordinated help from us, faculty and staff.**

## 5. FRAMEWORK & DUBAI CONTEXT

Child protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate school procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the Person for Child Protection and Safeguarding.

Within Dubai and the United Arab Emirates the infrastructure of Educational Safeguarding and/or Social Care Services is under development and growth. Following cases which caused concern in the Emirati community, Sheikh Mohammed, the Ruler of Dubai, supported the drafting of a Federal law on child protection “to ensure a secure and stable future for children in the U.A.E.”

## 6. PREVENTION

The objective is to ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to minimise the risk of harm to children’s welfare including:

- Educating all the students about their rights, commitment and duties in the school and the society where values of justice prevail.
  - Ensuring safer recruitment practice.
  - Ensuring through training that all staff are aware of and committed to the Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding and Child Protection
    - .Ensuring that social networking platforms which are used for teacher-student interactions should employ built-in protection measures for children while giving teachers appropriate permissions to carry out their functions. Furthermore, online platforms using video conferencing services, which are increasingly being used for online interactive sessions, should ensure that relevant security and privacy protections are in place.
    - Adopting a supportive, open and accepting attitude towards children so that they feel valued, listened to and respected.
    - Establishing a positive and secure environment, in which children can learn and develop.
    - Preparing extra –curricular activities about the children right to equip the students with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse.
    - Providing pastoral support that is accessible and available to all students and ensuring that students know to whom they can talk about their concerns both within and beyond school.

## 7. PROTECTION

Protection is attained by ensuring all appropriate actions are taken to address concerns about the welfare of a child or children, working with agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local external agencies, including KHDA, Dubai Community Development Authority, the Child Protection Centre and, where necessary, the Dubai Police. This may include:

- Sharing information about concerns with agencies that need to know and involving children and their parents/carers appropriately
- Monitoring children known or thought to be at risk from harm and contributing to assessments of need and support packages for those children.
- Ensuring that children who are subject to any type of abuse and staff are aware of the support that the school can provide, the channel of reporting.



## 8. SEND – Students of Determination

- Students of determination can be more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse and should have enhanced access to support systems.
- They may be more isolated from their peers and may find it difficult to express concern.
- No concern should be overlooked or passed off as a symptom of SEND; including :
  1. Communication;
  2. Toileting;
  3. Understanding right and wrong;
  4. Physical Build;
  5. Unusual or over-physical attachments to staff members or peers;
- Staff must be hyper-vigilant to the needs and concerns of these children who are among the most vulnerable.
- Additional barriers can exist in identifying neglect and harm for some groups of students.

## 9. POLICY STATEMENT

### Child Abuse

‘Child abuse and neglect’ are generic terms that encompass all ill treatment of children including serious physical and sexual assaults as well as cases where the standard of care does not adequately support the child’s health or development.

Children may be abused or neglected through the infliction of harm, or through the failure to act to protect harm.

There are five broad categories of abuse which are generally recognized

- **Neglect:** persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or emotional needs. These may appear in the forms of constant hunger or tiredness; frequent lateness or absence, poor personal hygiene, untreated medical problems; running away, stealing, low self-esteem
- **Physical abuse:** causing injury, harm or suffering to a child through means such as: hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating. Signs of physical abuse can be injuries/bruises; improbable or evasive excuses, untreated injuries; fear of treatment or medical help, fear of physical contact, fear of going home, over aggressive or defensive tendencies, fear of removing clothes, bites, lashes, facial injuries.
- **Sexual abuse:** involvement of a child in sexual activity, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This includes access to pornography. And this is represented in the Tendency to cling, tendency to cry, genital itching, acting ‘like a baby’, distrust of familiar adults, wetting and/or soiling, fear of undressing, throat infections, depression, fearful/panic attacks.
- **Emotional abuse:** persistent emotional ill treatment of a child. For example: conveying to a child that he/she is worthless, unloved, inadequate, imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations, causing feelings of fright or danger. Abused children in this category



display over-reaction to mistakes; tearful, fear of losing, fear of parents being contacted, stealing, thumb-sucking, rocking, anxiety, Munchausen Syndrome by proxy (If a parent of child deliberately fabricates or induces illness in that child). Signs may include; perceived illness, doctor shopping.

- **Self harm or self abuse**

These categories overlap and an abused child does frequently suffer more than one type of abuse.

**Faculty and staff should:**

- Be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;
- Be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to Children;
- Share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the child's needs and circumstances;
- Contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the child's welfare;
- Take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the child against specific plans;
- Work co-operatively with parents unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the child's safety.

## **10. STUDENTS' HEALTH, WELFARE AND WELL-BEING**

As student health, safety, welfare and well-being are top priority, the school has a responsibility to provide child protection by:

- maintaining a safe environment in which children can learn and develop,
- practicing safe staff and student recruitment,
- using effective curriculum to clearly define what is and is not acceptable behaviour, how to speak up regarding concerns and how to become (as an adult) a safe and respectful citizen,
- recognizing and reporting incidents of harm and possible offences against children,
- supporting children who have been abused,
- Appointing a designated and certified member of staff to take primary responsibility for child protection.

## **11. CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS**

DIPS adheres to all KHDA guidelines in relation to student conduct expectations and discipline. Physical punishment of any kind must never be used on students. Staff working with young children should avoid holding children, picking children up unless they are distressed. Physical intervention / restraint must only be used by staff members as a last resort. All measures of restraint must use the minimum force necessary, in order to prevent harm or injury to the child.

Staff must be mindful of the nature in which they use verbal or non-verbal communication. Discipline measures should always be handled in a manner that protects the child's dignity and self-esteem.

Any inappropriate measures of conduct or discipline that results in harm to a child, by a member of staff, that constitutes any form of abuse, will result in disciplinary action.

## **12. SAFE RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES OF ALL SCHOOL PERSONNEL IN ASSOCIATION WITH RELEVANT AUTHORITIES:**

The school has set rigorous recruitment procedures that ensure all employees and volunteers are sound moral characters and are suitable people to work with children and young adults. As part of pre-employment, all staff joining DIPS must submit a police clearance document and sign a personal declaration within their employment contract. At least, two references will be taken up and they will be required to give evidence of their qualifications. Also it is mandated by KHDA that all teachers, new and existing, to pass one mandatory course on Safeguarding and child protection.

## **13. CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENTS' PERSONAL DATA**

All staff members are required to sign a confidentiality agreement, which includes the release of student information. When request by individual parents, staff members are directed to protect students by not allowing photography or any other form of video data to be collected and distributed.

## **14. SUPERVISION FOR STUDENTS DURING SCHOOL HOURS AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

All teachers, learning support assistant, school leaders and support staff are responsible for the safe care of students.

Teachers are responsible for maintaining a safe and secure classroom environment. They are expected to be carefully monitoring students during all scheduled contact time. In addition to teaching time, teachers and learning support assistants are assigned designated supervision responsibilities. Failure to fulfil scheduled supervisory duties inside and outside of the classroom will result in disciplinary action as it equates to the endangerment to student safety and well-being.

All children are closely monitored by supervising adults. The adult must accompany all children to the designated area for pick-up. The supervising adult may not leave until the last student is picked up by his/her parent or authorized adult.

DIPS may also be organised by outside providers. These providers must hold all the necessary safety documentation and are responsible for student safety whilst under their care.

## **15. SAFETY OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS, TRANSPORTATION AND FIELD TRIPS**

DIPS takes multiple measures to ensure student safety at all times. Buildings are well maintained and equipped with security surveillance cameras and with security personnel who manage entry and exit to the campus.

Bus transportation for field trips and other events is provided by a company that is licensed by the Department of Transport. Students are properly supervised by staff members. The same bus company is available for parents who would like to pay for their child to be transported to and from school. Bus helpers provide supervision to ensure the safety and well-being of children.

## **16. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is a moral, ethical and legal responsibility of any teaching professional or other staff member to report suspected cases of child abuse, neglect or safety concerns to the designated Child Protection Officers or the Head of Sections.

### **The Superintendent:**

Their role is:

- To ensure all staff are familiar with school guidelines for identifying and reporting abuse, including allegations of abuse against staff;
- To ensure that the school operates an effective child protection policy;
- To ensure that all staff receive foundation training in child protection;
- To be responsible for co-ordinating action and liaising with other agencies and support services over child protection issues;
- To support and advise staff on child protection issues generally;
- To ensure they have had up-to-date training;
- To monitor the attendance and development of children who have given cause for concern;
- To disseminate relevant information to the appropriate staff e.g. to Class Teachers or Teaching Assistants (TA);
- To complete CP records and send onto new schools (where relevant);
- To maintain accurate and secure child protection records in chronological order.
  - To report issues related to this policy to the Board. Board members will not be given specific details relating to child protection situations.

### **Class Teachers**

Class teachers will, in most cases, be the first person that a concern is raised by. They will collate detailed, secure, accurate written records of concerns and liaise with the designated child protection staff.

### **The School Physician and Nurses**

Their role is to ensure that relevant information obtained in the course of their duties is communicated to the Designated Teacher. Types of injuries, attendance and frequency are recorded.

## **The Responsibilities of the whole School Staff**

- a) All school staff have a responsibility to identify and report suspected abuse and to ensure the safety and well-being of the students in their school. In doing so they should seek advice and support as necessary from the Superintendent.
- b) Staff members are expected to provide a safe and caring environment in which children can develop the confidence to voice ideas, feelings and opinions. Children should be treated with respect within a framework of agreed and understood behaviour.
- c) All school staff members are expected to:
  - Be aware of signs and symptoms of abuse
  - Report concerns to the Head of Sections.
  - Keep clear, dated, factual and confidential records of child protection concerns.
  - establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to,
  - inform the Child Protection Officer or Deputy Safe Guarding Lead if any form of child abuse is suspected,
  - integrate child protection issues into relevant teaching and learning to help children protect themselves,
  - communicate all concerns of potential abuse to a senior leader and keep written records of concerns, even where there is lack of evidence (records should state facts not opinions).
  - respect the confidentiality of all concerned regarding the welfare of children,
  - respect children as individuals and engage them in conversations,
  - co-operate as required with inquiries from the school and relevant agencies regarding child protection matters.

## **17. REPORTING**

**(See appendix 1 for referring procedures)**

## **18. HOW TO REACT WHEN A CHILD WANTS TO TALK ABOUT ABUSE/ DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE**

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

- accept what the child says,
- listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief;
- reassure the child s/he was right to tell you and that you believe the story,
- keep calm and listen,
- be honest,
- allow the child to talk freely;
- reassure the child, but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep;
- not promise confidentiality, as it might be necessary to refer the case to the Child Protection Officer

- let the child know you will need to tell someone – do not promise confidentiality,
- let the child know that even when s/he has broken a rule, s/he is not to blame for the abuse,
- be aware that the child may have been threatened,
- reassure the student that what has happened is not their fault;
- never push for information,
- let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let him/her know what happens,
- immediately refer to the section principals/senior leader,
- make accurate, factual, signed, dated and timed written notes as soon as possible of what was said, observed and done.

**How to deal with concerns:**

- Record what was said/seen Cause of Concern (Physical signs/behaviour disclosure)
- Report to the Head of Section
- Refer to the School Assistant Superintendent ( In case of emergency refer directly to the School Superintendent)

**Staff must not:**

- Question children,
- Suggest alternatives to what a child has said,
- Get the child to write about, or depict their experience in some other way,
- Question parents (or inform them of the referral in cases of sexual abuse or other complex cases),
- Question potential witnesses,
- Conduct medical examinations,
- Delay referral

**19. RECORDING DISCLOSURE**

When a student has made a disclosure, the member of staff should:

- make some brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation;
- not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court;
- record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child;
- draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury, or request a Child Protection Body Map (**See appendix 2**) to record the abuse;
- record statements and observations, rather than interpretations or assumptions.
- Use the attached diagram to draw and record the suspected abuse

**20. SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF**

The Superintendent will make all reasonable attempts to protect and otherwise support students who have disclosed information about possible child abuse incidents.

Dealing with a disclosure from a child is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff concerned should consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the Superintendent.

## **21. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Members of staff have access to confidential information about students in order to undertake their everyday responsibilities. Staff members are expected to:

- Treat information they receive about students in a discreet and confidential manner.
- Seek advice from the Superintendent, if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them.
- Be cautious when passing information to others about a student.
- RECORDING and MONITOR: well kept records are essential to Good Protection practice. Concerns and disclosures should be recorded in writing by the member of staff who receives them and passed to the designated person without delay

The Head of section with the Superintendent will then decide on further action and any appropriate monitoring programme for the student.

Records are stored in a dedicated filing system maintained by Superintendent.

When Students having records in this filing system shift to another school, the Superintendent is responsible for transferring information judged to be relevant to the children's next school.

### **The Head of Section is responsible for:**

- The provision of training, advice and support to staff,
- Maintaining accurate and secure child protection records,
- Monitoring attendance and development of children who are at risk,
- Ensuring that all relevant information about a child is DIPS disseminated to appropriate staff within the school,
- Ensuring complete records are sent to receiving schools, whether a child changes as a natural progression or for any other reason,
- In consultation with the Superintendent, refer alleged cases of child abuse to the police or other authorized body
- Liaison with outside agencies such as counsellors and psychologists
- Review and communication of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy within the school

## **22. STAFF TRAINING**

All staff should receive Child Protection training as part of the CPD programme. Staff are informed of any changes subsequently made to this.

All staff members are made aware, during their induction period (and regularly thereafter).

All staff members are required to sign a document confirming that they have been made aware of, have read, and that they understand, the above information.

All staff members receive Child Protection Training and Prevent Duty awareness training, which is regularly refreshed in order that they are equipped with the skills needed to keep children safe. New staff members are trained as part of their induction process and before students arrive for classes.

All staff members are regularly updated via email and staff meetings as required to ensure their knowledge is kept up to date.

## **23. CHILD PROTECTION AND THE CURRICULUM**

The school curriculum is important in the protection of children. We aim to ensure that curriculum development meets the following objectives (these are often met through the SEL and moral education curriculum):

- Developing student self-esteem;
- Developing communication skills;
- Informing about all aspects of risk;
- Developing strategies for self-protection;
- Developing a sense of the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in adults;
- Developing non-abusive behaviour between students.

## **24. RELEVANT LEGISLATION OR AUTHORITIES**

This Child Protection Policy is underpinned by the fundamental principle of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989 of which the United Arab Emirates (UAE) ratified on the 3rd January, 1997 along with the UAE local Child Protection Laws (Wadeema) and Cabinet Resolution No.52 of the 2018 in relation to implementing regulations of Federal law No. 3 of 2016 regarding the child rights.

## **25. KEY CONTACTS WITHIN THE LOCAL AREA**

- The DUBAI POLICE CHILD PROTECTION HOTLINE confidentiality and advice.  
CONTACT NUMBER: 800-243 Website: [www.dubaipolice.gov.ae](http://www.dubaipolice.gov.ae) AL AMEEN SERVICE

Contact number 800-4-888

- Community Development Authority (CDA)
- Child Protection Unit (CPU) (email:  
[moe.gov.ae/En/ImportantLinks/Forms/Pages/ChildProtectionUnit.aspx](mailto:moe.gov.ae/En/ImportantLinks/Forms/Pages/ChildProtectionUnit.aspx)  
Hotline: 116111

### **Alternative Referrals**

When members of the school have URGENT and IMMEDIATE concerns for the safety and welfare of a child or young person during school hours, they should make an immediate referral to a member of the Child Protection Team (Section Principals) or any accessible member of the Senior Leadership Team.





## 26. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Superintendent will regularly

monitor and review any incidents.



Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



### **Declaration:**

I (full Name) \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Declare that I have received and reviewed a copy of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Understood its content and pledge to abide by the provisions contained therein.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_