

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



2023-2024

Purpose

The Abu Dhabi Education Council defines students' protection as: **all measures, steps, and procedures taken to avoid exposure of students (in or out of school, during school activities and transportation) to any danger or harm whether it is manipulation, violence, physical injury, sexual assault, any vocal insult, moral threatening, or harm of any type.**

UPS School must ensure that:

- * the welfare of the child is paramount.
- * all children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin and/or religious belief have the right to protection from abuse- physical, emotional, or sexual.
- * all suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded swiftly and appropriately.

Wadeema's Law

- * Wadeema, an Emirati girl whose death shocked the nation and prompted the creation of the UAE's new child protection law, was found buried in the Sharjah desert in 2012.
- * The eight year old was tortured to death by her father who regularly burnt Wadeema and her sister with cigarettes, poured boiling water over them and beat them with sticks.
- * In one such attack the father had beat his daughter for an hour with a bar, then locked her up in the bathroom before finding her dead at dawn the next day.
- * The father was arrested after the uncle discovered that Wadeema had died when he came to visit his nephews, Wadeema and her sister.

Facts about Abuse in UAE

The results of a field study conducted by the Dubai Foundation for Women and Children (DFWAC) on “Abuse against children in the UAE society” in November 2014 revealed that:

- * **123** out of every **1,000 children** in school are exposed to abuse or violence.
- * **65** out of every **1,000** children have to suffer such predicament at home

The study also showed that:

- * **male** children are the most vulnerable to abuse at home (7.2%), compared to females (5.7%).
- * Similarly, more **male** children suffer abuse at school (15.1%) than female children (9.3%).
- * Children of the middle stage of education (**secondary**) are the most vulnerable to abuse than children in other stages, whether at home or at school

Policy aims

- * FIA has a duty to safeguard all children from harm. All children have a right to protection and FIA will ensure the safety and protection of all children through adherence to the Child Protection Law adopted by Ministry Of Education at Abu Dhabi .
- * Under the new regulations, the school administration will act as a guardian and accept the implications of that status while the child is in the school's trust, whether it is on school grounds or school buses.

Types of Abuse

* Neglect

For example: Frequently without food for the school day, poor appearance and hygiene, left alone frequently below the age of 14 without any adult supervision.



* **Physical abuse**

For example: Frequent bruises, change in personality, refuses to call home.



* **Sexual abuse**

For example: Overly provocative behavior, clear use of sexual language, asking questions of a sexual nature.



* Emotional

For example: Shy and withdrawn, disinterest in activities or school generally, noticeable change in mood.



Establishing a Child Protection Team

- * UPS has a “Child Protection Team” comprising of senior staff members who are nominated from each section of the school (high school, elementary and KG).
- * The Child Protection team will investigate any incidents of physical, emotional or sexual abuse whether by staff, parents or students
- * Any case of abuse must be immediately reported to the Social Worker who will then be required to send a written report to within 24 hours, following the Child Protection Team investigation reports.

Child Protection Team

**Dr. Salam
Principal**

**Mr. Sameh
Social Worker**

**Mr. Muhammed M
Supervisor**

**Mr. Mohammed k 7to
12 supervisor**

**Ms. Zainab
Social worker**

**Ms. Kinaanah
V.B**


**Ms. A lia
Supervisor Gr1-4**

**Ms. Nsreen
Grade 5to 12
supervisor**

**Mr. Taki
supervisor Gr
3to 7**

The role of the Child Protection Team

- * Have individual responsibility for reporting child protection concerns and report these concerns to the Social Worker.
- * Keep written records of concerns about children
- * Commitment to the procedures set out by the school administration when an allegation is made against a member of staff.
- * Monitor child protection awareness

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- * Establish and maintain a safe and secure environment.
 - * Ensure that children know the people that they should refer to in any case.
 - * Establish policies on bullying, behavior and safety
 - * Meet at least once a month

UPS has established policies on bullying, behavior, health and safety. These policies all serve to support and enhance the Child Protection Policy.

The role of UPS Staff

- * To treat abuse seriously
- * To listen and look for any act that indicates abuse.
- * To take appropriate action immediately – Report to the Child Protection Team
- * To record all incidents – time, place, information etc..

The Social Worker, in consultation with the Child Protection Team and school administration will decide whether the concerns should be referred to an outside agency.

Dealing with allegations against School Staff, Volunteers or the school administration

The School has procedures to deal with allegations against staff (and volunteers who work with children) that aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect staff and volunteers from false or unfounded allegations. Any allegation should be reported to the school administration if the allegation is made against a member of staff.

As per the Ministry of Education Law as it states under Students' Protection (Article 5):

The principal “shall suspend immediately any staff member if any adverse action against any student is denied by him/her.

In other words, the school will immediately suspend any staff member who is suspected of an offence involving student abuse and /or neglect on a temporary basis ,until the suspicion is adjudicated.

Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained. Information should be handled and distributed on a **need to know** basis only. This includes the following people:

- * the Principal
- * the Child Protection Team
- * the parents of the student who is alleged to have been abused
- * the person making the allegation
- * the owner of the school
- * Ministry of Education


- * An injury that is not typical of the bumps and scrapes associated with everyday activities, or an injury that is not consistent with any explanation given.
- * Frequent injuries even when apparently reasonable explanations are given.
- * Sudden changes in behavior, performance or attitude.
- * Anxiety or low self-esteem

Guidelines for Staff

All staff should be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and know to whom they should report concerns or suspicions.

Recognizing Child Abuse and when to be concerned

It is important that all members of staff including visiting staff, should be aware and alert to possible outward signs of abuse or neglect. Signs of abuse may include one or more of the following:

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- * Knowledge of sexual matters beyond what would normally be expected, or sexual behavior that is unusually explicit or inappropriate to the child's age.
 - * Disclosure of an experience in which the child may have been significantly harmed.

Dealing with the case

- * Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
- * Accept what is being said and allow the child to talk freely.
- * Reassure the child, but do not make promises that might be impossible to keep.
- * Do not promise confidentiality, as it might be necessary to refer the case to the Social Police and Ministry Of Education.

- * Reassure the child that what has happened is not their fault and stress that it was right to talk.
- * Listen rather than ask direct questions; asking open questions rather than leading questions.
- * Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.
- * Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a “need to know basis” only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held confidentially to themselves.

Do's and Don'ts

- * Do not let suspicion, or allegations of abuse go unreported or unrecorded.
- * Do provide access for students to talk to you about any concerns they may have
- * Plan activities that involve more than one other person being present, or are at least within sight or hearing of others.
- * If it is necessary to speak to a child alone, always inform another member of staff where you are. It is advisable not to close the door of the room

- * Recognize that caution is required in sensitive moments of counseling on matters such as bullying, bereavement or abuse.
- * On residential trips, students and staff must have separate sleeping accommodation.
- * Avoid situations that compromise your relationship with students and are unacceptable within a relationship of trust.
- * During coaching of sport or instrumental teaching, where a degree of physical contact may be inevitable, staff must be particularly aware that this should only be used to develop skills/techniques or to treat or prevent injury.

* Staff are advised to avoid transporting a single child in a vehicle without principal's approval even in case of an emergency.

* Remember that someone else may misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.

* Do not have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with pupils. Avoid suggestive remarks or gestures, even in fun.

* Do not jump to conclusions about others without checking the facts.

* Do not rely on your good name to protect you.



UAE law is now more prominent:

“ You are under prosecuting unless you report a crime “

Which means as a staff we need to ensure that we are proactive with our Child Protection Policies.

"Childhood should be carefree, playing in the sun; not living a nightmare in the darkness of the soul."

— [Dave Pelzer, A Child Called "It"](#)





Thanks for listening ..

School principal and Social Worker :

Dr. Salam Omar

Mr. Sameh Zeinhom