

## United Private School (UPS) Student Protection Policy

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### 1. Introduction

United Private School (UPS) is unwavering in its commitment to safeguarding the physical, emotional, and psychological well-being of every student. This policy establishes a structured approach to protect students from all forms of harm, including abuse, neglect, exploitation, and bullying. UPS fosters an inclusive and respectful environment that prioritizes student safety as an integral part of its educational ethos.

Aligned with the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) Student Protection Policy, UAE laws, and international safeguarding protocols, this policy provides detailed guidance on prevention, intervention, and monitoring strategies. Through effective implementation, UPS ensures a culture of accountability, trust, and respect for all members of its community.

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### 2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is:

- **Safeguarding Students from Maltreatment**

UPS is committed to protecting all students under its supervision from acts and omissions that constitute maltreatment. This includes creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where students' rights and well-being are prioritized.

- **Identifying and Supporting At-Risk Students**

UPS adheres to the provisions of UAE Federal laws, including:

- Federal Decree Law No. (3) of 2016 (Wadeema) concerning child rights.
- Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 promulgating crimes and penalties and its amendments.
- Federal Decree Law No. (51) of 2022 regulating nurseries.
- Federal Decree Law No. (18) of 2020 on private education and its amendments.
- Other relevant UAE laws ensuring the identification and support of students at risk of harm.

- **Mandated Reporting Responsibilities**

UPS emphasizes that all staff and volunteers are legally obligated as **mandated reporters** to report alleged or suspected cases of maltreatment involving students, whether these occur inside or outside the school. Reporting must be conducted in accordance with UAE Federal laws and ADEK guidelines.

- **Defining Roles and Responsibilities**

This policy defines the roles and responsibilities of UPS principals, staff, and parents

in responding effectively to alleged or suspected cases of maltreatment. Clear accountability ensures prompt and coordinated action to protect students.

- **Ensuring Comprehensive Student Care and Protection**

UPS recognizes its responsibility to safeguard the care, safety, and protection of all students within the school. This includes working collaboratively with relevant authorities and stakeholders to prevent harm and respond swiftly and effectively to any concerns.

### 3. Definitions

- **Child:** Any individual under 18 years of age as defined by UAE Federal Law.
  - **Abuse:** Physical, emotional, or sexual harm inflicted on a student by another individual.
  - **Neglect:** Failure to provide basic needs or protect a student from harm.
  - **Exploitation:** Using a child for labor, sexual activities, or any other form of gain.
  - **Bullying:** Repeated aggressive behavior, including verbal, physical, or cyberbullying, intended to intimidate or harm another student.
  - **Child Protection Coordinator (CPC):** A trained and designated staff member responsible for managing and overseeing child protection issues within the school.
  - **Confidentiality:** The practice of safeguarding sensitive information related to student protection, shared only on a need-to-know basis with authorized personnel.
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## Policy Principles

### 1. Principles

#### 1.1 Student Safety and Best Interests

The safety and best interests of every student are the primary consideration in all actions taken to ensure their well-being. UPS ensures that every decision, strategy, and practice prioritizes student welfare above all else.

#### 1.2 Responsibility of Leadership and Staff

The responsibility to recognize, respond to, and manage student protection risks lies with the Principal, leadership team, and all staff. UPS staff are expected to fulfill their duties to safeguard students to the best of their abilities.

#### 1.3 Accountability for Protection Measures

All UPS mandated reporters, staff, and volunteers are responsible and accountable for implementing and maintaining robust student protection measures. These measures ensure a safe and supportive environment for all students.

#### 1.4 Protection for Mandated Reporters

UPS ensures that all mandated reporters, staff, and volunteers are protected from retaliation or penalties when they carry out their duty to report and safeguard students from maltreatment.

### 1.5 Students' Rights

UPS upholds the following rights for all students:

1. **Voice and Participation:** Students have the right to be heard, express their opinions, and participate in decision-making processes where appropriate.
2. **Dignity and Respect:** Students are treated with dignity, respect, and care at all times.
3. **Fairness and Justice:** Students are entitled to equitable treatment in all school-related interactions.
4. **Advocacy and Support:** Students requiring additional support have the right to advocacy and tailored assistance.
5. **Safety and Awareness:** Students are kept safe from harm and are educated about risks and protective measures.

### 1.6 Zero Tolerance for Maltreatment

UPS implements and upholds a zero-tolerance policy for all forms of maltreatment in all school environments and activities.

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## 2. Legal Obligations and Rights

### 2.1 Alignment with Federal Laws

This policy aligns with UAE federal regulations and student protection policies to safeguard students from maltreatment. All provisions comply with the legal frameworks outlined in the "References" section of this policy.

### 2.2 Compliance with Policy Requirements

UPS adheres to the standards of this Student Protection Policy, ensuring that:

1. The policy meets the minimum requirements set forth by ADEK.
2. The policy is published and made accessible on the UPS website for public reference.

### 2.3 Management of Maltreatment Concerns

UPS strictly follows the **Guide on Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions (DAA Child Protection Committee, 2024)** for the management of abuse-related cases occurring within or reported to the school.

### 2.4 Communication and Agreement

UPS ensures the policy is communicated to and understood by all stakeholders, including:

- Board members
- Staff and volunteers
- Parents and guardians
- Students (through a student-friendly version of the policy)

Students' consent and understanding are sought when addressing student protection concerns.

### 2.5 Principal's Role as Guardian

The Principal serves as the primary guardian of student rights during school hours and

activities. As the legal custodian within the school's supervision, the Principal assumes full responsibility for student care and safety.

## **2.6 Equal Rights for All Students**

All UPS students have equal rights to safety, protection, and care. The school is fully responsible for ensuring the well-being and security of students while they are under its supervision.

## **3. Reporting of Concerns of Maltreatment**

### **3.1 Mandated Reporting**

All UPS staff members, including any individual who has regular or temporary contact with students or provides services to the school, are mandated by Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights (Wadeema) to report all cases of alleged or suspected student maltreatment. This includes incidents involving any alleged or suspected perpetrator, whether the maltreatment occurs inside or outside the school. Reports must be submitted directly to the ADEK Child Protection Unit (CPU) within 24 hours of suspicion. UPS staff are required to follow the procedures outlined in Figure 1 of ADEK's "Safety Concern Referrals in Abu Dhabi Schools" and the "Guide on Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions (DAA Child Protection Committee, 2024)."

### **3.2 Notification of CPC**

All concerns of student maltreatment disclosed in the school, regardless of whether the maltreatment occurred inside or outside the premises, must be promptly reported to the Child Protection Coordinator (CPC) or a designated representative.

### **3.3 Handling Bullying Cases**

UPS adheres to the **National Policy for the Prevention of Bullying in Educational Institutions** for addressing bullying incidents. However, severe bullying cases—those that pose significant physical or emotional risks to a student—are classified as maltreatment and will be addressed under this Student Protection Policy.

### **3.4 Appointment of CPC and CPT**

UPS appoints a Child Protection Coordinator (CPC) and a Child Protection Team (CPT) to manage safeguarding concerns, and these appointments are reported annually to ADEK.

#### **1. Child Protection Coordinator (CPC):**

- The CPC undergoes ADEK-mandated training and is preferably a senior staff member or an individual with significant experience working with students at educational risk.

#### **2. Child Protection Team (CPT):**

- The CPT comprises 3–5 members, including the school counselor, social worker, and relevant members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The CPC may also be part of the CPT.

- In cases where a CPT cannot be fully formed, the CPC assumes responsibility for case management, with a delegate nominated to act in their absence.

### **3.5 Reporting Allegations or Concerns**

If any UPS staff member, including volunteers, becomes aware of or suspects maltreatment—whether the incident occurred on or off the school premises—they must report the matter immediately to the CPC or a CPT member. This includes all concerns defined under the "Types of Maltreatment" section of this policy.

### **3.6 Direct Reporting to ADEK or FCA**

In situations where the CPC or CPT members are unavailable, or if informing the CPC or CPT is deemed not in the student's best interest, the staff member must report the concern directly to the ADEK Child Protection Unit (CPU) or the Family Care Authority (FCA). This is done by completing the Safety Concern Form via the digital safety concern portal.

### **3.7 Emergency Cases**

In cases where a student is in imminent danger, the CPC must immediately inform the Police (999) and the Principal, while simultaneously submitting the Safety Concern Form online through the digital portal.

### **3.8 Emergency Case Definitions**

Emergency cases, as outlined in the "Guide on Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions (DAA Child Protection Committee, 2024)," include situations where immediate intervention is required to protect the student from significant harm or danger.

## **4. Procedures for Identifying and Reporting Student Maltreatment Concerns**

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At United Private School (UPS), safeguarding students is a top priority. The following outlines the procedures for addressing concerns of student maltreatment, including severe bullying, as part of the school's compliance with ADEK's Student Protection Policy and UAE Federal laws.

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### **4.1. Reporting Maltreatment Concerns**

#### **4.1.1 Initial Reporting**

- When a concern of student maltreatment (including severe bullying) is identified, it must be reported immediately to the Child Protection Coordinator (CPC) or a designated representative.
- All UPS staff are trained to identify and respond to maltreatment concerns, guided by the operational definitions provided in this policy.

#### 4.1.2 Emergency Cases

- In situations where a student is in imminent danger, staff must report the concern immediately to the Police (999) and inform the Principal. The CPC must also be notified as soon as possible to ensure a coordinated response.

#### 4.1.3 Maltreatment Outside School Supervision

- If the maltreatment occurred outside the school's supervision:
  - The CPC or a designated representative (in the absence of the CPC) must complete the **Safety Concern Form** via the digital safety concern portal.
  - Upon submission, the form is automatically shared with the ADEK Child Protection Unit (CPU), the Family Care Authority (FCA), and the Ministry of Interior – Child Protection Center (MoI-CPC).
  - The FCA will review the case and manage follow-up procedures in coordination with other relevant entities.

#### 4.1.4 Maltreatment Within School Supervision

- If the maltreatment occurred under the school's supervision:
    - The staff member identifying the concern must inform the CPC or their representative.
    - The CPC will complete the **Safety Concern Form** on the digital safety concern portal.
    - The submitted form is shared automatically with the ADEK CPU, FCA, and MoI-CPC.
    - The ADEK CPU will review the case first, conduct a risk assessment if necessary, and refer it to the FCA for case management.
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### 4.2. ADEK CPU Responsibilities

#### 4.2.1 Initial Review and Risk Assessment

- The ADEK CPU may conduct or assign qualified staff to perform an initial safety and risk assessment. This step ensures the concern is validated before referring the case to the FCA.

#### 4.2.2 Referral to FCA

- If referred to the FCA, the case will be managed by the FCA's Child Protection Services (CPS).
- The ADEK CPU will continue to provide administrative support, such as sharing relevant case information, to assist the FCA in conducting assessments and managing the case.

## 4.2.3 Cases Returned to the School

- If the ADEK CPU determines the case does not require escalation to the FCA, the concern is returned to the school with justification.
- The school (CPC) is then responsible for collecting additional information and submitting a revised Safety Concern Form.

## 4.2.4 Case Logging and Follow-Up

- Regardless of the outcome, the ADEK CPU ensures all concerns are logged and appropriately addressed.

## 4.3. Coordination and Communication

- UPS ensures timely communication with all relevant authorities (ADEK CPU, FCA, and MoI-CPC) and stakeholders.
- The CPC is responsible for maintaining detailed records of all reported cases and follow-up actions to ensure compliance and accountability.

**Figure 1. Safety Concern Referrals in Abu Dhabi Schools**



1. After submitting the [Safety Concern Form](#) on the digital safety concern portal, a copy of the report is automatically shared with FCA, ADEK CPU, and MoI CPC.
2. For cases occurring within schools' supervision, the ADEK CPU will review the information first before referring to the FCA for case management.  
Note: The ADEK CPU will take the necessary procedures to follow-up on the cases after receiving the report.

Relevant contact details are as follows:

- Abu Dhabi Police: 999
- Family Care Authority (FCA): 800444 [icm@adfca.gov.ae](mailto:icm@adfca.gov.ae)
- ~~MoE~~ Child Protection Unit (CPU): 80085 [cpu@moe.gov.ae](mailto:cpu@moe.gov.ae)
- Safety Concern Portal: <https://daasafetyconcern.abudhabi/>

## **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **4. Data Confidentiality**

#### **4.1 Case Confidentiality**

All case reports and student data are treated as strictly confidential. The identities of students subjected to alleged or suspected maltreatment, alleged/suspected perpetrators, and reporting individuals are protected and kept confidential by all parties involved.

#### **4.2 Limited Data Sharing**

Data is shared only with authorized individuals, including the ADEK Child Protection Unit (CPU), Family Care Authority (FCA), investigative teams, and the Abu Dhabi Judicial Department, in accordance with UAE law.

#### **4.3 Prohibition on Disclosure**

Authorized individuals are strictly prohibited from discussing active or closed cases with the media, third parties, unauthorized school staff, or ADEK personnel unless required by investigative or judicial authorities within their legal responsibilities.

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## **5. Training**

### **5.1 Training for CPC and CPT**

The CPC and CPT are required to complete all ADEK-mandated training on safeguarding and the student protection policy. They must sign an affidavit to uphold ethical standards and conduct in managing cases.

### **5.2 Mandatory Staff Training**

All UPS staff members must attend ADEK-mandated training on safeguarding and student protection policies and sign acknowledgment forms confirming their understanding of responsibilities.

### **5.3 Volunteer Training**

All volunteers undergo induction and training on UPS safeguarding policies. Visitors must attest to having read and understood the policy before engaging with the school.

### **5.4 Specialized Training for Counseling Staff**

Staff involved in counseling, advocacy, or direct student contact receive continuous professional training in student protection, supervised by the Principal.

### **5.5 CPS Certification**

CPS staff operating within the ADEK CPU must obtain certification from the Ministry of Community Development (MoCD).

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## **6. Vetting, Hiring, and Monitoring**

### **6.1 Pre-Employment Screening**

All UPS staff, volunteers, and visitors are vetted and screened, including mandatory criminal record checks, before working in any environment where students are present.

### **6.2 Principal Accountability**

The Principal is accountable for the suitability and compliance of all individuals interacting with students. This includes preventing individuals who pose risks to student safety from engaging with students.

### **6.3 Monitoring and Reporting**

The Principal ensures continuous monitoring of staff and promptly reports any allegations of misconduct or suspected actions that may endanger students.

### **6.4 Misconduct Penalties**

Staff found guilty of serious misconduct face termination, as per ADEK policies, Wadeema Law, and Federal Decree Law No. (33) of 2021 on Labor Relations.

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## **7. Acceptable Adult Behaviors**

### **7.1 Respect for Student Rights**

Staff and volunteers must respect and protect student rights, avoiding actions that could harm or endanger them.

### **7.2 Avoidance of Inappropriate Behavior**

Any inappropriate behavior toward or in the presence of students is strictly prohibited.

### **7.3 Reporting of Inappropriate Conduct**

Staff and volunteers are obligated to report incidents of inappropriate conduct immediately.

### **7.4 Serious Allegations**

Serious allegations, such as sexual misconduct, must be reported directly to the Police, FCA, and ADEK CPU. The implicated individual is removed from the school premises immediately.

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## **8. Student Protection Learning Resources**

### **8.1 Development of Resources**

UPS develops and distributes age-appropriate resources to educate students about personal safety, well-being, and reporting violations.

### **8.2 Integration in Curriculum**

Resources, including books, posters, and digital media, are integrated into classroom lessons and counseling sessions to raise awareness.

**8.3 Trained Instructors**

Student protection content is taught by trained staff skilled in understanding safeguarding and developmental needs.

**8.4 Reference Points for Assistance**

All learning materials include clear references for seeking assistance when needed.

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**9. Policy Dissemination and Review****9.1 Policy Access and Communication**

The UPS Student Protection Policy is available publicly on the school's website. It is disseminated annually to parents, staff, volunteers, board members, and students (in a student-friendly format).

**9.2 Policy Review**

All safeguarding policies and procedures are reviewed every five years or as required to align with updates in ADEK regulations and UAE laws.

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**10. Roles and Responsibilities****10.1 Principal Responsibilities**

1. Comply with and enforce the provisions of this policy.
2. Publish and promote the Student Protection Policy within the school and ensure its accessibility.
3. Ensure comprehensive oversight of students during school activities.
4. Address and prioritize protection concerns with immediate action.
5. Facilitate safe and confidential reporting mechanisms for students and staff.
6. Suspend staff involved in suspected maltreatment pending investigation.
7. Provide orientation sessions for parents annually to communicate policy expectations.

**10.2 Staff and Volunteers**

1. Immediately report cases of suspected maltreatment.
2. Attend safeguarding training sessions and apply their learnings.
3. Provide diligent care for students at all times during school supervision.

**10.3 Parent Responsibilities**

1. Actively engage with the school by attending meetings and addressing concerns raised by staff.
  2. Communicate any observed behavioral changes in their child to the school leadership.
  3. Support safe online practices for students during home-based learning.
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## **11. Compliance**

### **11.1 Effective Date**

The policy is effective from the start of Academic Year 2024/25, with full compliance required by Academic Year 2025/26.

### **11.2 Monitoring and Enforcement**

ADEK rigorously monitors compliance. Non-compliance may result in penalties as per ADEK regulations and UAE Federal laws, including Wadeema Law and related decrees.