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OUR VISION

Educate Enlighten Empower

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

2024-25



Version Date	April 2018
Last reviewed	April 2024
Next Review	April 2026
Policy	Child Protection Policy
Purpose	To provide child protection and safeguarding
Target Group	Students
Implemented by	Department of Counselling
Issued for	Staff, Parents and Students

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INTRODUCTION

Child protection is the process of protecting individual children identified as either suffering or likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect. It involves measures and structures designed to prevent and respond to abuse and neglect

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of their health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective and nurturing care and undertaking that role to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

At Sharjah Indian School, we prioritize the safety and well-being of children. Our Child Protection Policy outlines our commitment to ensuring that all children are safe from harm, abuse, and exploitation. This policy provides guidelines for preventing and responding to potential risks, helping our staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities. We believe every child has the right to be protected and treated with respect. We are dedicated to creating a safe environment where children can thrive, and we will regularly review this policy to ensure it meets current best practices. Together, we can support and protect all children in our care.



The welfare of our students continues to be of paramount importance, and we are constantly reviewing our policies, practices and procedures to make sure that our students are safe and secure. At SIS we have rigorous procedures for the safeguarding of students including child protection. All our teaching and supporting staffs are trained in child protection and safeguarding and we have school doctor and counsellors. Our students receive presentations on ‘staying safe’ and who to go to if they have concerns. Our aim is to make sure staff deals sensitively and effectively with

students' needs and concerns.

In addition, we strive to make sure that healthy living is systematically built into and promoted in all aspects of school life. Along with the clinic, our PE and Games Department guide students on leading a healthy lifestyle as well as offering regular programmes of physical education and sport.

Key terms:

Child protection is the process of protecting individual children identified as either suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect. It involves measures and structures designed to prevent

Safeguarding is a term which is broader than 'child protection' and relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Safeguarding is defined in Working together to safeguard children 2018 as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health and development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Some user friendly and informative websites for parents and students. We use activities and information sessions from these websites for our students

<http://www.childnet.com/>

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>

<http://www.kidsmart.org>

OBJECTIVES:

- To provide a safe & welcoming learning environment, promote welfare of all students and make the school a place where all students are respected and valued.
- To provide clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with safeguarding issues.
- To demonstrate the school's commitment to the continued development of good practices and sound procedures so that safeguarding concerns and referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child.
- To integrate cyber safeguarding issues into the curriculum.

MAIN PRINCIPLES:

- Children thrive in a safe and welcoming environment thus making it conducive to learning.
- Child safety and protection are given paramount importance at Sharjah Indian School.
- It is the responsibility of all staff of the school to safeguard and promote student wellbeing & welfare.
- All pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate and adequate support from the senior management of the school who will follow the guidelines detailed in this policy while doing so.
- The policy will be reviewed annually, unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an earlier date of review.

Key Staff:

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD	DR. PRAMOD MAHAJAN (PRINCIPAL)
DEPUTY SAFEGUARDING OFFICER	MS. SHIFINA NAZARUDDIN (VICE PRINCIPAL) MS. THAJUNNISA BASHEER (HEADMISTRESS)
SAFEGUARDING OFFICER	MS.MAIMOONATH MOHAMMED ASHARAF,SIC
CHILD PROTECTION TEAM	MS.JINU SURESH (STUDENT COUNSELLOR) MS. RUHUMA SUSAN (COUNSELLOR) MS. ABLE MARIYA (STUDENT COUNSELLOR)
HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICER	MR. YOOSUF AHAMED KUNJU (HR) MS. SIMI SHAJI (NURSE)

The school has ensured that the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy safeguarding lead:

- Are members of the Senior Leadership Team
- Are appropriately trained.
- The Deputy DSL is trained to the same level as the DSL and in the absence of DSL carries out the functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of students. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the deputy will assume all the functions listed.
- Other SLT members have also received DSL training
- Act as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- Are alert to the specific needs of vulnerable students, including those with special educational needs and other vulnerabilities.
- Keep detailed records of all concerns when noted and reported by staff or when disclosed by a child, ensuring that such records are stored securely and reported onward.
- Refer cases of suspected neglect and/or abuse to children's social care or police in accordance with this guidance and local procedure.
- Develop effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies.
- Ensure that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood this policy.
- Ensure that the child protection policy is updated annually; keep a record of staff attendance at child protection trainings.

THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

- Ensure that the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff.
- Allocate sufficient resources to enable the DSL to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings.
- Ensure that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively.
- Ensure that child's safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum.
- See to it that Child Protection Policy and Procedures that are in line with the regulations of the government of UAE, reviewed annually and made available to parents.
- Safer recruitment procedures that include the requirement for appropriate checks are being followed.
- Plan Targeted Trainings to ensure all staff receive child protection training, as well as subsequent refresher trainings. The DSL should receive refresher training at two-yearly intervals
- Arrange for all staff including temporary staff and volunteers to be made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection.
- Ensure that the staff are aware of the Staff Code of Conduct and practice the same

CLASS TEACHERS

- Class teachers will, in most cases, be the first person to raise a concern. They will collate detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and liaise with the designated safeguarding staff.

- They will keep all concerns and reports confidential and ensure that the information is handed over to one of the safeguarding officers as soon as possible.

SCHOOL NURSE

- It is the role of the school nurse 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.

WHOLE SCHOOL STAFF

- All school staff have a responsibility to identify, and report suspected abuse and to ensure the safety and well-being of the pupils in their school. In doing so, they should seek advice and support as necessary from the Principal/Designated Teacher.
- Staff are expected to provide a safe and caring environment in which children can develop the confidence to voice ideas, feelings and opinions.
- Children must be treated with respect within a framework of agreed and understood behavior.

All school staff are **expected** to:

- Be aware of signs and symptoms of abuse
- Report concerns to the DSL as appropriate
- Keep clear, dated, factual and confidential records of safeguarding concerns.
- Follow all guidelines, practice and policy relating to safeguarding as laid down by the school, SIS School Support Centre or UAE Law.
- The school also has a duty under UAE Law to report any abuse or suspected abuse to the Police.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

Our school understands that children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can be more vulnerable to exploitation/abuse and are required to have enhanced access to support systems. They may be isolated / feel isolated from their peers and find it difficult to express their concerns.

No concern should be overlooked or passed off as a symptom of SEN or disability, including:

- Communication
- Toileting
- Understanding right and wrong
- Physical appearance
- Unusual or overly physical attachment to staff members or peers.

Staff must be vigilant to the needs and concerns of these children who are among the most vulnerable. Additional barriers can exist when recognizing abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

- Children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing signs
- Communication barriers (including EAL needs) and difficulties in overcoming these barriers
- Are at a higher risk of peer group isolation
- Extra support is provided by Heads of Sections, Vice Principal, Well-being Counsellor, Teachers and Inclusion Dept. for children with SEND.

WAYS TO ADDRESS THE SAFEGUARDING NEEDS OF STUDENTS OF DETERMINATION

Issue	Approach
Inability to express feelings	Use feelings chart as a barometer. Begin class or morning with discussion of how the student feels.
Difficulty making decisions.	Use social stories to teach the strategies to solve problems and provide sample problems so the students can try it.
Lack of cooperation with others (anyone at a danger of peer rejection).	Structure learning projects to maximize use of cooperative activities and solutions. Reduce competitive activities.
Heightened interpersonal conflict.	Teach conflict resolution and peer mediation skills.
Changes in behavior	Child Protection team (Supervisors, Teachers, Inclusion Team, Well-being Counsellor – whoever interacts with the student) increases one on one interaction with the student to provide opportunities for communication.

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES AND STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT:

- To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards students, we need to agree standards of good practice which form a code of conduct for all staff. Good practice includes:

- Treating all students with respect.
- Setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately.
- Involving students in decisions that affect them.
- Encouraging positive, respectful and safe behavior among students.
- Being alert to changes in students' behavior and to signs of abuse and neglect and exploitation.
- Recognizing that challenging behavior may be an indicator of abuse.
- Reading and understanding the school's child protection policy, Staff Behavior Policy (code of conduct) and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, behavior, physical contact, sexual exploitation, extremism, e-safety and information-sharing.
- Asking the student's permission before initiating physical contact, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid.
- Maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between students and avoiding the use of sexualized or derogatory language.
- Being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some students lead to an increased risk of abuse.
- Referring all concerns about a student's safety and welfare to the DSL or, if necessary, directly to the Children's Social Care.
- Following the school's rules regarding communication and relationships with students, including via social media.

ABUSE OF POSITION OF TRUST

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behavior towards students is unacceptable and that their conduct towards students must be beyond reproach. Any relationship with a student, even if over the age of consent, is regarded as ‘an abuse of a position of trust’.

CHILDREN WHO MAY BE PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE:

Some children are more vulnerable to abuse and neglect than others. Several factors may contribute to that increased vulnerability, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues, a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur, as well as an individual child’s personality, behavior, disability, mental and physical health needs and family circumstances.

To ensure that all our students receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- Disabled or have special educational needs.
- Young carers.
- Affected by parental substance misuse, domestic abuse and violence or parental mental health needs.
- Asylum seekers.
- Vulnerable to being bullied or engaging in bullying behaviors.
- Living in temporary accommodation.
- Living transient lifestyles.
- Living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations.

- Vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality.
- At risk of being drawn into extremism.

This list provides examples of vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive. Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats for children with communication needs.

EARLY HELP:

The school recognizes that providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. All school staff are trained to notice any concerns about children which may help to identify that they would benefit from early help.

The school is committed to working in partnership with children, parents and other agencies to:

- Identify situations in which children and/or their families would benefit from early help.
- Undertake an assessment of the need for early help; and provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family, developing an action plan that will focus on activity to improve the child's outcomes.

The school will be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for any child who:

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs.
- Has special educational needs.
- Is a young carer;
- Is showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behavior.
- Is in a family whose circumstances present challenges for the child, such as adult substance abuse, adult mental ill health, domestic abuse.

- Is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect; and/or
- Is particularly vulnerable in any of the ways identified in paragraph 6 above.

Careful consideration should be taken regarding who to involve in the 'Early Help' process. The process should involve the child and family as well as all the professionals who are working with them. However, if by doing so this puts the child at further risk, relevant best interests decisions should be made, in consultation with UAE inter-agencies.

The school will keep the needs and circumstances of children receiving early help under constant review. If the child's situation does not improve and/or the child's parents and/or the child do not consent to early help being initiated, the school will make a judgement about whether, without help, the needs of the child will escalate. If so, a referral to Children's Social Care may be necessary.

CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION (ATTENDANCE)

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalization, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

SIS recognizes that regular attendance and punctuality at school is important to the well-being and safety of all our students and enables them to access the opportunities made available to them at school. Attendance is monitored closely, and action is taken where concerns are raised. The attendance policy that is reviewed regularly by the school leaders monitor the impact of the policy in securing good attendance and punctuality. Where a student has 10 consecutive school days of unexplained absence and all reasonable steps* have been taken by the school to establish the whereabouts without success, the school will make an immediate referral to the SIS Head of Safeguarding.

Reasonable steps may include:

- Telephone calls to all known contacts.
- Letters home (including recorded delivery).
- Contact with other schools where siblings may be registered.
- Possible home visits where safe to do so.
- Enquiries to friends, neighbors etc. through school contacts.
- Enquiries with any other service known to be involved with the student/family.
- All contacts and outcomes to be recorded on the student's file.

The school is required by UAE educational law to have an admission register and, with the exception of schools where all students are boarders, an attendance register. All students must be placed on both registers.

HELPING CHILDREN TO KEEP THEMSELVES SAFE

The UAE School Inspection Framework stipulates governing bodies and proprietors to ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a 'broad and balanced curriculum.'

Children are taught to understand and manage risk through our advisory and Moral Education lessons, and through all aspects of school life. Our approach is designed to help children to think about risks they may encounter and, with the support of staff, work out how those risks might be reduced or managed. Discussions about risk are empowering and enabling for all children and promote sensible behavior rather than fear or anxiety. Children are taught how to conduct themselves and how to behave in a responsible manner. Children are also reminded regularly about online safety, the risks of sharing content and images online and tackling bullying, including cyber bullying procedures. The school continually promotes an ethos of respect for

children and students are encouraged to speak to a member of staff of their choosing about any worries they may have.

Discussions about risk will include talking to children about the risks and issues associated with young people sending, receiving and/or disseminating indecent images of themselves and other young people, which is widely referred to as 'sexting'.

It is recognized that a young person may choose to share indecent images with another young person in the context of a romantic relationship and that she or he may do so without any intention to cause harm or distress to anybody. Although technically an offence, 'sexting' of that nature is referred to as 'experimental sexting' and it is usually not necessary or appropriate to criminalize young people in those circumstances, yet UAE law prohibits this.

However, there are clear risks associated with such behavior. Staff are trained to be vigilant and to notice and record any concerns about young people sending and receiving indecent images, which includes listening to what young people say to each other and to staff, as they do with any other safeguarding concern.

When concerns are identified, staff will always speak to children and will inform parents about their concerns unless there is good reason to believe that doing so would place the child at increased risk of significant harm.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS, FAMILIES AND STAFF INVOLVED IN A CHILD PROTECTION ISSUE

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved.

We will support students, their families, and staff by:

- Taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously.
- Nominating a link person (usually the DSL) who will keep all parties informed and be the

central point of contact.

- Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a student, separate link people will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest.
- Responding sympathetically to any request from students or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety.
- Maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies.
- Storing records securely.
- Offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support.
- Following the procedures laid down in our child protection, whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures.
- Cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

SUPPORT FOR AT-RISK STUDENTS IN CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. Access to Counseling Services:

The school will ensure that all students have access to counseling services provided by qualified professionals. These services will be available to students exhibiting challenging behaviors, emotional difficulties, or any issues that may affect their well-being and academic performance.

2. Identification of At-Risk Students:

Staff will be trained to recognize signs of at-risk behaviors in students, such as withdrawal, aggression, academic decline, or changes in social interactions. Early identification is crucial in providing timely support.

3. Collaboration with Parents and Guardians:

Regular communication will be maintained to ensure that families are informed and engaged in their child's progress.

4. Multidisciplinary Approach:

A multidisciplinary team, including counselors, teachers, and other teams, will collaborate to provide comprehensive support for at-risk students. This team approach ensures that all aspects of a student's needs are addressed.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation:

The progress of at-risk students will be monitored regularly to assess the effectiveness of support strategies.

6. Training for Staff:

Staff members will receive training on recognizing and supporting at-risk students, with a focus on effective intervention strategies, communication skills, and understanding the importance of a supportive school environment.

7. Crisis Intervention:

The school will have protocols in place for crisis intervention to address acute behavioral or emotional issues that may arise. Staff will be trained to respond appropriately and safely in such situations.

8. Commitment to Inclusivity:

The school is committed to fostering an inclusive environment where all students feel safe, supported, and valued. Efforts will be made to reduce stigma around seeking help and to promote a culture of understanding and acceptance.

By incorporating these support measures for at-risk students into the Child Protection Policy, SIS aims to create a nurturing environment that addresses individual needs and promotes the

overall well-being of all students.

HANDLING COMPLAINTS RELATED TO UNSUITABLE PRACTICES

Our complaints procedure will be initiated if a child or parent voices a concern regarding inappropriate treatment of a child that does not yet warrant child protection measures. Instances of unsuitable practices may include unjustly singling out a child, using sarcasm or mockery as a means of control, bullying or diminishing a child's self-worth, or engaging in discriminatory behavior. Concerns raised by staff members will be managed through the school's complaints, disciplinary, and grievance procedures.

STAFF INVOLVED IN AN ALLEGATION

When an allegation is made against a staff member, established procedures must be adhered to. Although it is uncommon for a child to make a completely false or malicious claim, misunderstandings and misinterpretations of situations can arise. In some cases, a child may accuse an innocent individual out of fear of identifying the actual offender. Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that some adults may pose genuine risks to children's safety, and every allegation must be addressed seriously. Staff members facing an allegation have the right to a fair, prompt, and consistent investigation and must be kept informed throughout the process. They can reach out to the Principal or the school's HR for support and clarification.

Suspension is neither automatic nor compulsory; however, it may be implemented if deemed necessary to protect the welfare of the children involved. Allegations against staff should be reported directly to the Principal. If the Principal is the subject of the allegation, it should be escalated to the Governing Body of SIS.

CHILD-SAFE RECRUITMENT PROTOCOLS

Our school is committed to ensuring that we hire only 'safe' staff members. The safer recruitment process entails that all applicants will:

- Complete a comprehensive application form.

- Provide two references, including at least one reference that can assess the applicant's suitability to work with children.
- Present proof of identity and qualifications.
- Participate in an interview process.

All new staff members will go through an induction process that includes an overview of the school's child protection policy and an assessment of their individual safeguarding and child protection training needs. Each staff member will sign to acknowledge receipt of the child protection policy.

CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING FOR STAFF MEMBERS

All staff members must undergo training to help them identify the signs of abuse and neglect and to understand the correct procedures to follow if they have any concerns. Newly hired staff will receive this training during their induction period.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY PROTOCOLS

The school transport system operates across three emirates: Dubai, Sharjah, and Ajman. We adhere to the procedures and policies established by the relevant ministries.

- CCTV Surveillance: The buses are fitted with a comprehensive video surveillance system, which records footage using a durable digital video recorder for security purposes.
- Emergency Alert Systems: Panic buttons are installed on each bus, allowing for immediate attention and assistance during emergencies.

Following list of responsibilities, which are in line with ministry rules, are in place and practiced:

RESPONSIBILITIES OF BUS DRIVERS:

- Perform a thorough daily inspection of the buses before departure, checking the lights,

tires, body, and seating. Document any defects and report them to the operator.

- Make sure that no students remain on the bus at the end of the route.
- Ensure that students are not permitted to stand while the bus is in motion, and notify the operator of any violations.
- Confirm that the bus is equipped with first aid supplies and fire extinguishers.
- Before starting the journey, ensure that all entrances, exits, and aisles, including emergency exits, are completely unobstructed.
- Get the bus ready for passenger boarding, ensuring it is clean and that the interior temperature is set between 21-24 degrees Celsius.
- Do not exceed the maximum speed limit, maintaining a maximum speed of 80 km/h at all times, regardless of posted limits.
- Activate the stop arm and warning lights whenever students are crossing the road to enhance their safety.
- Allow students to exit the bus only at their designated stops, unless there is written authorization from the school.
- Maintain a professional demeanor by wearing the designated uniform while on duty.
- Provide the school bus driver permit to authorized inspectors upon request.
- Refrain from eating, drinking, or using mobile devices while the bus is in motion.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF BUS ATTENDANTS:

- Ensure that all students are seated and wearing seat belts where available while the bus is in motion. Students should not occupy the center seat in the rear row.
- Confirm that no students are left on the bus at the final stop.
- Ensure that students under the age of 11 are dropped off with a guardian. If a guardian is not present, inform the school that the student will be returned after all other students have been dropped off.
- Monitor student behavior to ensure their safety during the journey and report any incidents to the school transport coordinator.
- Keep doorways, aisles, and emergency exits clear of any obstructions throughout the trip.
- Assist students when crossing streets to ensure their safety.
- Aid in the evacuation of the bus in case of an emergency.
- Use appropriate car seats for children under four years old, following the manufacturer's instructions.
- Avoid eating, drinking, or using mobile phones while students are on the bus.
- Engage in educating students about traffic safety and proper bus usage, and supervise any entertainment activities on the bus.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS AND GUARDIANS:

- Designate a person to receive the student from the bus at the scheduled time and place if the student is under 10 years of age.

- Provide the school with necessary and up-to-date contact information.
- Pick up students from school if they are returned there due to unavailability of person to receive them at the designated bus stop.
- Notify the school about any issues regarding bus cleanliness or any inappropriate behavior by drivers, escorts, or students.
- Educate children on safety practices during their school bus journey, particularly while waiting for the bus, boarding, and exiting. Instruct them to:
- Arrive at the assigned bus stop before the designated time.
- Conduct themselves in a manner that ensures their safety and the safety of others during the ride.
- Remain on the bus until they arrive at the school or another designated location.
- Stay seated and use seat belts when available during the journey.
- Avoid misbehavior, excessive noise, or causing disruptions.
- Report any concerns regarding bus cleanliness or any misconduct by drivers, escorts, or fellow students to the school administration.

SIS implements the following school transport safety measures:

1. Attendance Monitoring: Aayas are responsible for checking and recording students' attendance using an electronic tablet.
2. CCTV Surveillance: All school transport vehicles are equipped with CCTV cameras to

enhance safety and monitoring.

3. ID Card Verification: Students must present their ID cards for verification before boarding the bus.
4. Anti-Bullying Notice: A notice is prominently displayed inside the bus, stating that bullying is not tolerated.
5. Seatbelt Requirement: All students are required to wear seatbelts while the vehicle is in motion.
6. Drop-Off and Pick-Up Protocols: Clear protocols are established for safe drop-off and pick-up of students.
7. Pre-Departure Attendance Check: Attendance is taken before leaving the school campus to ensure all students are accounted for.
8. First Aid Supplies: Each vehicle is equipped with essential first aid items to handle any medical emergencies.
9. Early Exit or Private Transport Form: A slip/form is available in the transport department for students who do not require school transport on certain days.

These measures are designed to ensure the safety and well-being of all students during school transportation.

DIGITAL SAFETY

Children often use mobile phones and computers for fun, communication, and learning. However, some individuals may exploit these technologies to harm them, including sending harmful messages or engaging in inappropriate conversations. Our school's e-safety policy outlines how we strive to keep students safe. Cyberbullying through texts and emails is treated as seriously as any other form of bullying and is managed according to our anti-bullying procedures. Access to chat rooms and social networking sites is not permitted in school.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND IMAGES:

- Most individuals who take or view photographs or videos of children do so with good intentions. However, to safeguard against potential misuse, we will implement the following measures:
- Obtain consent from children before taking or publishing their photos (such as on our website or in publications).
- Acquire parental consent.
- Ensure children are dressed appropriately for photographs.
- Encourage children to speak up if they have concerns about any images taken of them.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE:

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a student or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a student that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a student or attempting to humiliate them, bullying or belittling a student or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by the Student Counsellor, HM, Vice Principal and school Principal. An explanation of the complaint's procedure is included in the safeguarding information for parents and students.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

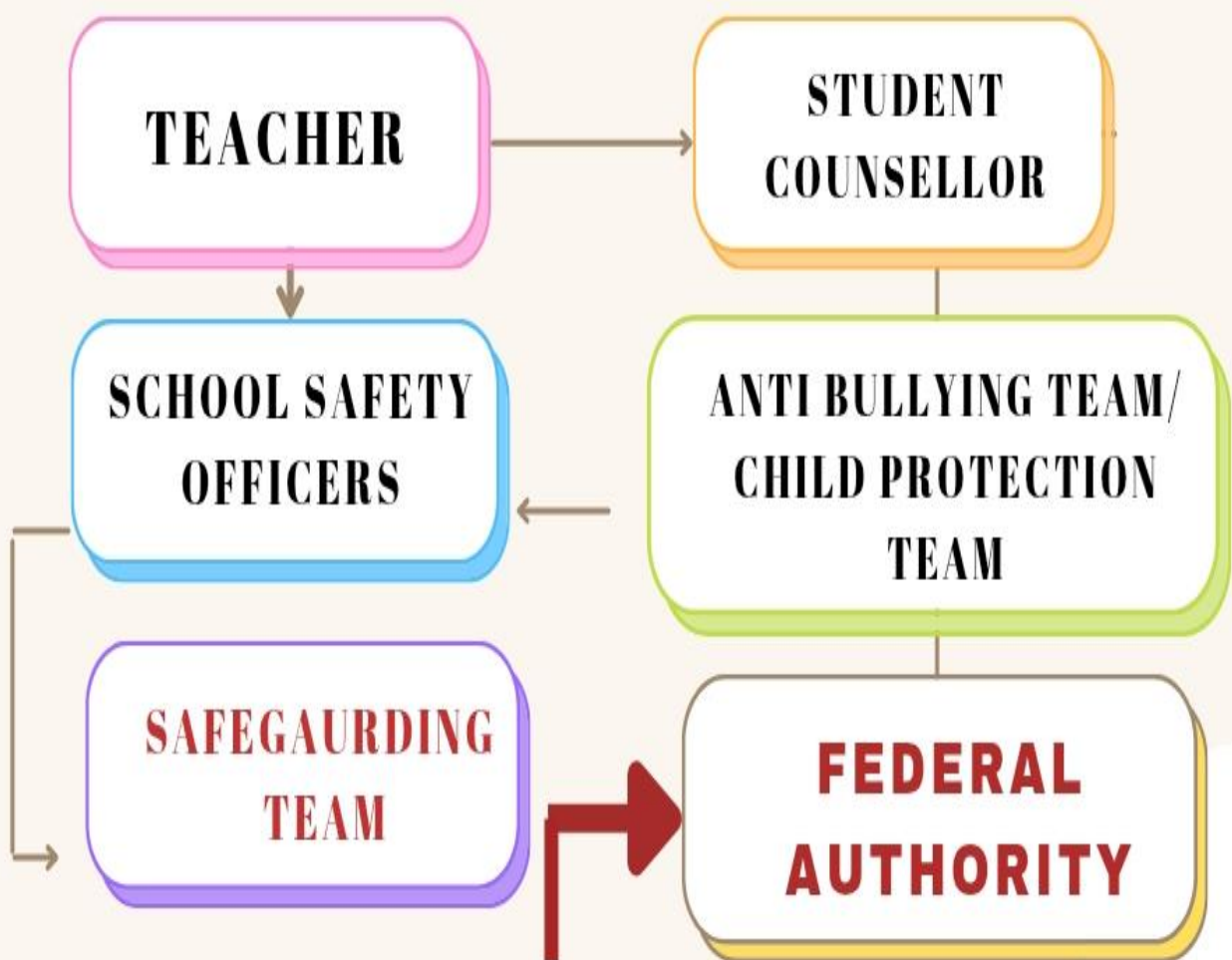
Complaints which escalate into a child protection concern will automatically be managed under the school's child protection procedures.

RAISING A COMPLAINT OR CONCERN

CONCERN/COMPLAINTS	WHO TO CONTACT	WHEN TO CONTACT
REPORTING ABUSE/NEGLECT	Designated Safeguarding Lead	As Soon As Suspected Abuse Is Identified
BULLYING CONCERNS	Student Counsellor, Anti-Bullying Team	During School Hours Or As Needed
SAFETY CONCERNS	School Safety Officers	During School Hours Or As Needed
ANY INCIDENT OF TEACHER USING INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE OR BEHAVIOUR ON THE STUDENT (EX: TEASING, SARCASM, BULLYING, PHYSICAL HARM)	Designated Safeguarding Lead	As Soon As Suspected Issues Arise
BEHAVIOURAL CONCERNS	Student Counsellor	During School Hours Or As Needed
SAFETY OR OTHER CONCERNS CAUSED BY NON-TEACHING STAFF	Designated Safeguarding Lead	As Soon As Suspected Issues Arise
SAFETY OR OTHER CONCERNS CAUSED BY LEADERSHIP	Federal Authorities, Child Protection, UAE	As Soon As Suspected Issues Arise

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

HIERARCHY OF REPORTING



HARM TO STUDENT CAUSED BY SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES:

1. RECOGNISING ABUSE

To ensure that our students are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behavior constitute abuse and neglect. Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or matches within reach of an unattended toddler. Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.

There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect

Physical abuse:-

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

Emotional abuse:-

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional

abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse:-

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect:-

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Definitions taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2015).

2. INDICATORS OF ABUSE

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For those reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioral indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused or neglected may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss school or arrive late

- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behavior – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky – to challenge authority;
- become disinterested in their schoolwork
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol; and/or
- display sexual knowledge or behavior beyond that normally expected for their age and/or stage of development.
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new ‘friends’ or adults recently acquainted with the child’s family.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed.

It is very important that staff report all their concerns, however minor or insignificant they may think they are – they do not need ‘absolute proof’ that the child is at risk.

3. IMPACT OF ABUSE: -

The impact of child abuse, neglect and exploitation should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterized by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

4. TAKING ACTION: -

Any child in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of “It could happen here”.

Key points for staff to remember when taking action are:

1. Teacher identifies concern and documents reason for referral
2. Teacher reports to counselor
3. Counselor can then investigate the case and communicate with Divisional Principal as appropriate
4. If necessary, the concern will then be communicated to the DSL*

*Immediately if there is evidence of physical or sexual abuse and certainly by the end of the day

- Do not start your own investigation
- Share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- Seek support for yourself if you are distressed or need to debrief

5. IF A STUDENT DISCLOSES TO A MEMBER OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEER: -

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual. Their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell. They may have lost all trust in adults. Or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a student talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, the staff member will need to let the student know that they must pass the information on – staff are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which they tell the student this is a matter for professional judgement. If they jump in immediately the student may think that they do not want to listen but if left until the very end of the conversation, the student may feel that they have been misled into revealing more

than they would have otherwise.

During their conversations with students' staff will:

- Allow them to speak freely
- Remain calm and not overreact – the student may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting their listener
- Give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'
- Not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how hard this must be for the student
- Under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the student's mother think about all this (however, it is reasonable to ask questions to clarify understanding and to support a meaningful referral if that is required, e.g. when did this happen, where did this happen?)
- At an appropriate time tell the student that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on
- Not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused
- Avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about this when it started' or 'I can't believe what I'm hearing' may be the staff member's way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- Tell the student what will happen next
- Let them know that someone (either you or another named person, e.g., the DSL) will come to see them before the end of the day
- Report verbally to the DSL

- Write up their conversation as soon as possible
- Seek support if they feel distressed or need to debrief

6. NOTIFYING PARENTS: -

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a student with their parents. This must be handled sensitively, and the DSL will contact the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

BULLYING

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying can have a disastrous effect on a child's well-being and in very rare cases has been a feature in the suicide of some young people.

All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. All students and parents receive a copy of the procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in advisory/transformation and discovery time.

If the bullying is particularly serious, or the anti-bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the headteacher and the DSL will consider implementing 'early help' or child protection procedures.

Please also refer to issues in relation to children who are sexually harmful or abusive towards other children below.

CHILDREN WITH SEXUALLY HARMFUL OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's anti-bullying procedures as above where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a student's behavior warrants a response under child protection rather

than anti-bullying procedures. In particular, research suggests that up to 30 per cent of child sexual abuse is committed by someone under the age of 18.

Abusive behavior by one child towards another will not be tolerated, minimized or dismissed as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

When dealing with abuse of students by other students, staff will be mindful of the potential for prejudice-based bullying; racist, disability, homophobic and transphobic abuse; gender-based violence and teenage relationship abuse. Whilst mindful of the vulnerability of women and girls to violence, it is also recognized that boys as well as girls can be abused by members of the opposite as well as the same gender group.

Members of staff who become concerned about a student's sexualized behavior, including any known online sexualized behavior, should record their concerns and report them to the DSL as soon as possible, as with any other safeguarding concern.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behavior is complex and the school will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community.

MONITORING AND DOCUMENTATION IN CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. Continuous Monitoring: -

Staff members will be tasked with the ongoing observation of student behavior in all school settings, including classrooms, playgrounds, and during school transport. This proactive approach helps identify potential issues early and ensures a safe environment for all students.

2. Incident Documentation: -

All incidents involving student behavior, particularly those that may involve bullying, harassment, or other inappropriate actions, must be documented comprehensively.

Documentation should include the date, time, location, individuals involved, a description of the incident, and any actions taken in response.

3. Standardized Reporting Process: -

A standardized reporting process will be established to ensure consistency in how behavioral issues are recorded and managed. This process will include specific forms or digital systems for reporting incidents, making it easy for staff to submit information promptly.

4. Confidentiality: -

All documentation related to student behavior will be treated with confidentiality. Access to this information will be restricted to relevant staff members involved in the management and support of the affected students.

5. Review of Incidents: -

Regular reviews of documented incidents will be conducted by designated staff to identify patterns or recurring issues. This analysis will inform interventions and help in adjusting strategies to improve student behavior and overall safety.

6. Communication with Parents: -

Parents or guardians will be informed of significant behavioral incidents involving their children. Open communication will foster collaboration and support in addressing behavioral concerns.

8. Policy Evaluation: -

SIS will be evaluated regularly to ensure they remain effective and aligned with best practices in child protection. Feedback from staff, students, and parents will be considered in this evaluation.

By implementing these monitoring and documentation practices as part of the Child Protection Policy, the school will enhance its ability to maintain a safe and supportive environment for all students.




All school staff are valued members of the school community. Everyone is expected to set and maintain the highest standards for their own performance, to work as part of a team and to an excellent role model for our children.

REFERENCES

- ❖ <https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/children-safety#:text=Those who put children in, to the age of 2018.>
- ❖ <https://u.ae/en/about-the-uae/strategies-initiatives-and-awards/policies/social-affairs/national-child-protection-policy-in-educational-institutions-in-the-uae>
- ❖ <https://www.pchr.gov.ae/en/priority-details/children-s-rights>
- ❖ <https://www.adek.gov.ae/en/Education-System/Private-Schools/Child-Protection>
- ❖ <https://www.ese.gov.ae/En/Pages/ChildProtectionUnit.aspx>



Appendix – A (Student Incident Report)

		SHARJAH INDIAN SCHOOL <small>Educate Enlighten Empower</small>	
<u>DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELLING</u> <u>STUDENT INCIDENT REPORT</u>			
			Date: _____
Student Details		Reported By	
Name		Name	
Grade/Section		Title/Position	
Gr.no		ID.no	

INCIDENT	
Date & Time	
Location	
First Aid	

Description of the Incident:

Student's Explanation:

Witnesses:

Action to be Taken:

Verbal warning <input type="checkbox"/>	Written warning <input type="checkbox"/>	Dismissal <input type="checkbox"/>	Suspension <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
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Explanation:

By signing this document, you acknowledge that you have read and understood the information contained herein.

Class Teacher

Supervisor

Appendix – B (Written Warning)

Emirate :
School Operations Department:
Council :
Sector :
School :

Form No. (9)

Written warning following verbal warning

I, the student: Grade do hereby undertake to comply with the rules and regulations of behavior inside the school, maintain its facilities, and to follow-up the instructions and rules of the school. In case of any breach to the same, I shall be subject to all the measures taken by the school management against me according to the rules stipulated under the Code of Behavior of Students in General Education Institutions, keeping in mind that I had been already warned verbally more than once regarding my adverse behaviors summarized as follows:

1.
2.
3.

Name of student:
signature:

Approved by the school Vice Principal:
Issued on: - / - /

(The guardian shall be provided with a copy of this written undertaking; a copy will be kept in the student's file and a copy will be sent to the academic advisor / social worker).

The guardian has been notified,
Name :
Kinship :
Tel. Number :
Contact Date:

Time:

Appendix – C (Offenses Form)

Emirate :
School Operations Department:
Council :
Sector :
School :

Form No. (10)

Undertaking of the Guardian in Case Student's Offenses are Repeated

I, , guardian of the student: Grade:do hereby undertake that my son / daughter shall comply with the rules and regulation of behavior in the school, maintain its facilities, and follow the school instructions and regulations. In the case of any offense to the same, I shall assume all the measures applied by the school management against him / her according to the rules stipulated under the Code of Behavior of Students in General Education Institutions, and that I have taken note of the offenses committed by him / her, summarized as follows:

1.
2.

In witness whereof, this undertaking is given by me.

Name of guardian :

Signature :

Tel.:

Approved by Vice Principal of the school :

Issued on : - / - /

Appendix – D (Transportation Form)



SHARJAH INDIAN SCHOOL

Tel: 06.5670560 Fax: 06.5672914 (Girls Wing)

Tel: 06.5671866 Fax: 06.5675166 (Boys Wing)

P.O. Box – 2324, Sharjah

E-mail: mail@sissharjah.com Website: www.sissharjah.com



OUR VISION

Educate Enlighten Empower

STUDENTS LATE ARRIVAL FORM KG1 TO GRADE XII ONLY

Date: _____ Time: _____ Private / Bus Number: _____

Name of the student: _____

G.R. No. _____ Grade: _____ Section: _____

Reason: _____

Name of the Parent: _____ Contact Number: _____

Student Return Details

Please put (✓) mark in the appropriate column

School transport ☐ Bus Number: _____

Private transport ☐

Signature of the Class Teacher: _____

Signature of the Supervisor: _____

Appendix – E (Declaration Form)



SHARJAH INDIAN SCHOOL

Website: www.sisharjah.com

OUR VISION

Educate Enlighten Empower

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING

DECLARATION FORM

I, hereby declare that I have read, understood, and agree to abide by the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. I understand the importance of protecting children and safeguarding their welfare. I commit to adhere to the following principles:

- I will prioritize the safety and well-being of all children.
- I will report any concerns regarding child protection or safeguarding to the concerned authorities.
- I will maintain confidentiality regarding any sensitive information unless disclosure is required for the safety of the child.
- I have read and understood the policies and procedures related to child protection and safeguarding.