

AL ITTIHAD PRIVATE SCHOOL-MAMZAR



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Health & Safety

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Child Protection Committee

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Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Because of their day to day contact with individual children during the school terms, all staff at Al Ittihad Private School - Mamzar is committed to **safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children. Teachers and other school staff are responsible for observing possible signs of abuse/harm and taking action against them.

1. PURPOSE: An effective whole-school child protection policy is one which provides clear direction to staff and others about expected behavior when dealing with child protection issues. An effective policy also makes explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child.

2. INTRODUCTION:

2.1 Al Ittihad Private School-Mamzar takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. "Every child has the right to live, be safe, be educated, and be protected from neglect and all forms of abuse" (UAE Child Protection Law)

2.2 There are 4 main categories of abuse that all teachers and staff should be aware of.

- Physical- any intentional act causing injury or trauma to another person by way of bodily contact.
- Emotional- characterized by a person subjecting, or exposing, another person to behavior that may result in psychological trauma, including anxiety, chronic depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder.
- Sexual- also referred to as molestation, usually undesired sexual behavior by one person upon another. (Child molestation)
- Neglect- a deficit in meeting a child's basic needs, including the failure to provide adequate health care, supervision, clothing, nutrition, housing as well as their physical, emotional, social, educational and safety needs.

2.3 The UAE Federal Law No. 3(Child Protection) places a statutory responsibility on institutions to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils of the school.

2.4 As "mandated reporters" all teachers, faculty, school staff and educational institutions can be held responsible and prosecuted for failing to report known cases of abuse.

2.5 There are three main elements to our child protection policy

- a) Prevention through the creation of a positive school atmosphere and the teaching, and support offered to pupils.
- b) Protection by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.
- c) Support to pupils who may have been abused.

2.5 This policy applies to all pupils, staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to Al Ittihad Private School.

2.6 This school recognizes it is an agent of referral and not of investigation.

3. School Policy

We recognize that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps to prevent abuse.

Our school will therefore:

- a) Establish and maintain an environment where pupils feel safe and secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- b) Ensure that pupils know that there are adults within the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- c) Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PHSE (Personal, Social and Health Education), which equip pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse. School enrichment days and assemblies are currently the key means of delivery.
- d) Include in the curriculum material which will help pupils develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.
- e) Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues.

4. FRAMEWORK

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 Health and Safety: Child Protection and Safeguarding committee.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect and safeguard them. Staff should always follow the procedures concerned with behavior management from the “Staff Handbook” (separate document).

- **Child Protection Coach-** There are key people within the school and the local authority who have specific responsibilities under safeguarding & child protection procedures. The names of those carrying out these responsibilities for the current year are listed in the beginning of this document. It is the role of the designated Child Protection/Safeguarding coach in each section to ensure that all of the child protection procedures are followed within their section, and to make appropriate, timely referrals to the coordinator in accordance with the school’s policy. It is the role of the designated coach for Safeguarding & Child Protection to ensure all staff employed including temporary staff and volunteers within the school are aware of the school’s internal procedures, to advise staff and to offer support to those requiring this.
- **Safeguarding/Child Protection Coordinator-** If for any reason the designated section’s Safeguarding /Child Protection coach is unavailable, the Safeguarding & Child Protection Coordinator has been identified who will act in their absence. The designated Child Protection Coordinator will provide a report for the leadership team detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by all staff and any other relevant concerns.

- **School leadership** – School leadership along with the HR team are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes. As part of the school’s recruitment and vetting process, criminal records and background checks will be sought on all staff that has substantial and unsupervised access to children.

6. PROCEDURES

- I. The school will assure that staff is kept informed about child protection responsibilities and procedures through orientation upon hire briefings and awareness training. There may be other adults in the school who rarely work unsupervised, more usually working alongside members of the school staff. However the Head of Section will ensure they are aware of the school’s policy and the identity of the Child Protection/Safeguarding Mentor and Coordinator.

Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse, an allegation or suspects that abuse may have occurred must report it **immediately** to the Head of Section or Child Protection member.

The Child Protection Committee refers cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the executive team who will take the necessary steps in reporting such cases to the Ministry of Interior Child Protection. Parents can obtain a copy of the school protection policy upon request.

II. ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for young people so they can enjoy their enrollment in a happy and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Al Ittihad Private Schools. This includes bullying of students by adults, adults by students, students by other students and adults by other adults.

If bullying does occur, everyone should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening should know how to report bullying by either informing a faculty member or through other channels such as help lines and national websites.

Procedures

Students should report bullying incidents to a member of faculty. The bullying behavior or threats of bullying will be investigated and the bullying stopped immediately. In all cases, parents/guardians should be informed. Appropriate referral to specialist support will be offered to the victim(s) of bullying. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted. Support should also be offered to the bully/bullies. An attempt will be made to help the bully/bullies change their behavior.

7. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

The Child Protection Coach and all other staff who work with children will undertake appropriate child protection awareness training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding effectively. Training will be kept up to date by yearly refresher trainings. The school will ensure that the designated child protection coordinator also undertakes external trainings to keep knowledge and skills up to date. Temporary staff and volunteers who work with children in the school will be made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities. Support is available for staff from the Child Safety team and from members of the school's leadership team where there are concerns about child protection.

All staff should have access to advice and guidance on the boundaries of appropriate behavior and conduct. These matters should be included in staff recruitment and referred to in the staff handbook.

8. PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a student nor should they agree to keep a secret, as where there is a child protection concern this must be reported to the Child Protection Coach and coordinator and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.

Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect to 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 confidential.

9. RECORDS AND MONITORING

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse must make an accurate record as soon as possible on the "Child Safety Concern" form. Noting what was said or seen, putting the event in context, and giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated, signed and will include the actions taken.

These file notes are kept in a confidential file, which is separate to other files, and stored in the school's Child Safety Coordinator's office. In the same way notes must be kept of any student who is being monitored for child protection reasons.

10. SUPPORTING STUDENTS AT RISK

- 10.1 Our school recognizes that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth or view the world as a positive place.
- 10.2 School may be the only supportive, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, while at school their behavior may still be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.
- 10.3 This school will strive to support students through:
- a. The curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation
 - b. The school philosophy which promotes a positive, supportive and collaborative environment, giving all students and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
 - c. The implementation of the school's code of conduct.
 - d. A consistent approach agreed by all staff which will ensure the students' understanding that some behavior is unacceptable but s/he is valued.
 - e. Regular collaboration with other professionals and agencies that support the students and their families.
 - f. Commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's best interest to do so.
 - g. The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.
 - h. Recognition that statistically children with behavioral difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse so those who work in any capacity with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behavioral problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.
 - i. Recognition that in a home environment where there is domestic violence and abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.
- 10.4 This policy should be considered alongside other related school policies. The other policies to be considered include, the policy for teaching, the policy for the management of students' behavior (Code of conduct), policy for bullying and the Health and Safety policy.

11. SAFE SCHOOL, SAFE STAFF

- 11.1 It is essential that high standards of concern and professional responsibility are practiced with regards to alleged child abuse by school staff as with parents or other abusers.
- 11.2 Only authorized agencies may investigate child abuse allegations (Child Protection Centre and the Police). While it is permitted to ask the child(ren) simple, non-leading questions to ascertain the facts of the allegation, formal interviews and the taking of statements is not.
- 11.3 Allegations against a staff member should be immediately referred to the Child Protection Coordinator and executive team who shall take appropriate actions by informing the relevant agency for further investigations and actions.
- 11.4 If for any reason it is decided that a referral to an external agency is not appropriate, it will be necessary to address matters in accordance with school's disciplinary procedures.

12. USE OF THE SCHOOL PREMISES BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS

12.1 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, using the school premises, the school will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection.

12.2 In the case of an outside body providing services to students, a criminal background report should be provided and/or a member of the school faculty should be present.

13. WHISTLEBLOWING

13.1 We recognize that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

13.2 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary they should speak to the Head of Section or the school's Child Protection Coordinator.

14. POLICY REVIEW

A. The executive team is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy.

B. The executive team must have a firm understanding of their role in implementing and monitoring this policy.

C. The executive team is responsible for ensuring the key contacts on the cover sheet are kept up to date.