



## **Child Safeguarding Policy**

This policy should be read alongside the following policies:

- Behaviour policy
- Staff Code of Conduct and Staff Handbook
- Data Protection Policy
- School IT and Online Safety policy

## **Aims**

We consider safeguarding as minimizing the risk to the students, staff and school and promoting a happy and safe environment for all children to grow and flourish and staff to develop professionally. We are committed to safeguarding our students, staff and school name. We have this policy as children have a right to be safe, adults have a responsibility to safeguard and protect children and abuse is damaging and can affect the rest of a child's life.

## **Context**

This policy has been developed in line with US guidance and best practice, however, it must be stressed that the policy needs to be adapted to each local context and may require the addition of local legal requirements. For Qatar the policy recognizes the limitations in addressing child protection issues whilst still being subject to Qatari law, custom and support systems.

## **Guiding Principles**

The main categories of abuse are:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

All members of staff have a duty of care to students and are pastoralists supporting the emotional, social and moral wellbeing of the students and not just being responsible for the academic. We want our students to have a positive and caring environment, where they understand that all members of staff are there to support them and care for them so that they can develop in a happy and safe environment.

Safeguarding against abuse is intrinsic to our values and beliefs as educators, and it is embedded in our ethos. Safeguarding encompasses all aspects of ensuring a safe environment and the general well-being of the student in school and includes things like behavior management, anti-bullying and digital safety to child protection (see separate policies).

- Every child, without exception, has the right to protection from abuse, maltreatment and neglect.
- Safeguarding and Child Protection is everyone's responsibility.
- The mental and physical welfare of the child is paramount.
- Protecting the child and acting in their best interests is the priority.
- Involve and engage with the child, wherever possible.
- Seek advice and support from appropriate colleagues and share information appropriately.



- Engage appropriately but objectively and co-operate fully with any child protection procedures/processes.
- Taking action will be justified, even if it transpires that the child is not at risk, as long as concerns are honestly held as reasonable and are escalated through the appropriate channels.

A list of Risk factors and Indicators of Abuse are contained in Appendix A. Everybody in contact with children should be aware of these.

### **Safeguarding Awareness**

At Northview we have a 'Nominated Governor' to take leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements.

Staff:

- are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' as far as safeguarding is concerned;
- should always act in the best interest of the child.
- are familiar with this safeguarding policy and have an opportunity to contribute to its review.
- are alert to signs and indicators of possible abuse and wider safeguarding issues.
- are able to record and report concerns as set out in this policy.
- are able to deal with a disclosure of abuse from a child.
- are involved in the implementation of individual education programmes, integrated support plans, child in need plans and interagency child protection plans as required.

All of those in direct contact with children must ensure that they:

- are able to identify Safeguarding and Child Protection concerns;
- know the correct process to escalate those concerns;
- are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned (rather than it could not happen here);
- are expected, when concerned about the mental or physical welfare of a child/young person/ staff members, to always act in the interest of the child.

### **Training**

All staff - including temporary staff, volunteers and governors - are provided with the Child Protection Policy, Pupil Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Children Missing in Education policy.

Training will be given to governors and staff at the beginning of every academic year.

In addition, online training will also be available through Educare UK (see Appendix B) and complete an on-line e-learning module to support this understanding as well as e-modules on safeguarding and e-safety.

The whole school staff group should receive safeguarding training at least every three years with annual up-dates and notifications of any necessary changes, reminders being made available as required via staff meetings/e-mails/bulletins.

### **Procedures**

Staff must make themselves familiar with all policies and procedures as laid out in the staff



handbook. If a member of staff has a concern about a weakness within a policy, they should discuss this concern with their Head of School.

### **Maintenance**

Any concerns about the fabric of the school should be reported to the following:

Minor maintenance issue to maintenance: maintenance@...

Maintenance issues with an immediate safeguarding concern, report to maintenance and the office manager.

### **Visitors**

All visitors need to provide ID to security at the main gate and receive a visitor's pass and will then be directed to the Reception by Security. Reception will contact the relevant member of staff so that visitors are supervised appropriately. Any visiting speakers must be vetted by SMT for suitability and appropriately supervised during their visit.

Also, see separate guidelines 'Collection of Students' and 'Health and Safety Policy.'

### **Off-site visits**

Appropriate risk assessments must be in place prior to any off-site visit taking place including staff/pupil ratios. Any overnight visit will explicitly set out:

- sleeping arrangements;
- the role and responsibility of each adult, whether employed or volunteers
- on/off duty arrangements
- clear expectations about boundaries and interactions with children;
- expectations that there will be no smoking/drinking by adults

### **Student issues**

We recognize that peer-on-peer abuse is part of the safeguarding remit. Children are capable of abusing their peers and girls are more likely to be victims and boys perpetrators, however girls can still be perpetrators. Abuse is abuse and will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up."

To minimize peer-on-peer abuse, the **School** should:

- Make children follow a Pupil Code of Conduct This policy is in place indicating a variety of ways in which positive behaviors are encouraged along with Sanctions for inappropriate behaviors.
- Have an Anti-Bullying Policy and IT Policy clearly setting out expectations for children.
- Make children aware they can report abuse to a member of staff, for example through Child Support posters suggesting who to speak to.
- Train staff are trained so they understand that peer on peer abuse can happen here.
- Have a clear procedure for staff to report all concerns and incidents to the DSL.
- Addresses any level of inappropriate behavior as part of Behaviors for Learning practices, as this may help prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behavior in the future.



The options available to staff will usually be:

- to manage internally through policies and providing pastoral support to the victim and perpetrator, for example through the Deputy Head Pastoral, School Counsellor, etc.
- to offer early help to prevent escalation of harmful behaviors.
- to refer to children's social care when a child has been harmed/is at risk of harm or in immediate danger. (If appropriate the school will make arrangements to protect a victim and other children in the school whilst an investigation occurs).
- Report to the police (in parallel with reporting to social care), if a criminal offence has occurred.

We believe that our open channels of communication and shared responsibility enhance the care we provide. Staff must understand the systems and processes which support the welfare and safeguarding of children in the school and seek clarification if anything is not clear to them.

Above the normal channels of communication, outlined in the Staff Handbook, if a member of staff has an immediate safeguarding or child protection issue that is of concern to them then they should report it immediately (See Appendix C).

If a member of staff is told something by a child in confidence and they are not comfortable with that knowledge as they deem it to be a serious safeguarding concern or a child protection issue then they should inform the relevant person, with the confidence that they will be supported. Child protection supersedes confidentiality (see Appendix D).

**The designated Child Protection Officers (CPO) within the school are:**

- Kindergarten – Head of KG
- Elementary - Head of Elementary
- Middle - Head of Middle School
- High – Head of High School

Staff should support each other fully in safe practice.

**Dealing with a disclosure – see Appendix G Action Flow Chart:**

Information concerning students at risk of harm will be shared with all members of staff on a “need to know” basis. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will make a judgement in each individual case about who needs and has a right to access particular information.

With the absence of outside agency support the SLT will work together as a team and deal with the situation as best they can. If necessary, they will seek the support of the relevant Embassy, the Ministry of Education or the police.

The school will:

- Keep clear written records of all child safeguarding and child protection concerns using the standard recording form, with a body map (see template in Appendix 6), including actions taken and outcomes as appropriate.
- Ensure all child safeguarding and child protection records are kept securely in a locked location. The record must be signed and dated and kept in a file under the child name (not



family files), away from all the other records. The DSL is responsible for ensuring that concerns and discussions are written up properly and acted on appropriately.

- Ensure that all child protection records relating to a child who moves to another school or college are passed on to the new school securely, promptly and separate from the main pupil file, with a copy being kept in this school. Confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Child welfare records below the child protection threshold but with continuing relevance to the child's wellbeing should also be transferred with parental consent.

### **Safeguarding of Staff**

We want all staff to work in a positive and caring environment where they feel supported and valued. Any concern a staff member has about their wellbeing or about safe practice should feel confident in sharing this with their head of school to gain support and guidance.

Staff should be aware of the importance of privacy settings and the content of their social media sites as they are working in a Muslim country and that inappropriate pictures may be against the laws of the country and this may cause difficulty for the staff member (see separate Acceptable Use of ICT Policy).

### **Allegations against staff or adults**

Allegations may be genuine or malicious. Determining which involves deciding whether a threshold has been passed. This threshold may be met when anyone including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Any allegation of abuse will be dealt with promptly in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

In some circumstances the member of staff will, without prejudice, be asked to take a period of paid leave pending the results of the investigation. If the member of staff lives in staff accommodation, alternative arrangements would be made for him or her away from children during the period of investigation.

The School will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

Malicious allegations against staff will be investigated and dealt with by the Principal and, if appropriate, a committee of governors.

Reports to the Principal regarding supply staff and contractors will also be notified to their employers.



Staff are encouraged to self-refer where they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

### **Recruitment and offboarding**

See Appendix E. The school carries out a number of pre-employment checks when recruiting new staff and selecting volunteers. Staff are carefully selected and screened. These include:

- enhanced UK DBS check with barred list information
- identity checks (which also confirm right to work in the U.K)
- verification of mental and physical fitness
- qualifications (cited on application forms) checked (against original certificates)
- a minimum of two employment references, gained before interview where possible (verified by telephone)
- overseas/previous history checks with the Council for International Schools where relevant
- Prohibition Order checks (issued by the Teaching Regulation Authority in the UK)

Governors will have enhanced DBS checks.

All checks should be maintained by Human Resources on a central, accessible record.

When staff leave, the School commits to report promptly to regional disclosure services any person (whether employed, contracted, student or a volunteer) whose services are no longer used for regulated activity and UK DBS referral criteria are met, that is, he or she has caused harm or posed a risk of harm to the child.

### **Minor Concerns**

Any minor safe practice concerns can be discussed with the staff member directly but should be mentioned to the Head of School, so that the member of staff can be supported in understanding how their actions put them in a vulnerable position.

### **Child protection concerns**

Adults working in the school will usually be the first to know when someone inside or connected with it is doing something illegal or improper, but often they feel apprehensive about voicing their concerns. We believe that it is not in anyone's interest for those with knowledge of wrongdoing to remain silent.

If a staff member has a serious concern about a member of staff that creates a child protection situation or if a member of staff has previous knowledge of a newly appointed member of staff who has had concerns about their behaviour raised in the past, then they must speak to the Principal or Head of School immediately and confidentially.

### **Safeguarding the School**

All staff members are expected to refrain from talking about school issues in the community.

At all times, staff should conduct themselves in a manner that will not bring the school into disrepute or damage the good name of the school.



Staff should also read 'Staff Code of Conduct' from the Policies and Procedures Handbook.

### **Child Going Missing**

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. Staff are responsible for following up any absences and flagging any concerns to the DSL.

If a member of staff or volunteer becomes aware that a child is missing, or missing education, they need to report to the DSL immediately. Unauthorized absence procedures will be followed where a child or young person:

- has 10 days or more continuous absence from school without an explanation and/or
- has left school suddenly and the destination is unknown and/or
- has not taken up an allocated school place as expected.

Any such concern will be reported to local authorities and Ministry as an unauthorized and unexplained absence, including any child being withdrawn from school with the intent to be electively home educated where there are safeguarding concerns.



## APPENDIX A

### Risk Factors/Common Indicators for Abuse

It is not possible to identify an exhaustive list of risk factors or common indicators for abuse; however, all workers should be alive to and vigilant towards the following indicators.

- Child being unwanted or failing to fulfil the expectations of parents;
- Child having special needs, crying persistently or having abnormal physical features;
- Family breakdown or violence between family members;
- Poor physical care and inadequate hygiene;
- Inappropriate dress;
- Failure of a parent or carer to seek appropriate healthcare;
- Unrealistic parental expectations;
- Over-protection of the child;
- Child demonstrates fear of adults;
- Child demonstrates aggressive behavior/deliberate self-harm/substance abuse;
- Injury where explanation from parent, carer or child is inconsistent with the injury;
- Bruises:
  - in shape of hand/stick/implement;
  - in a child not independently mobile;
  - numerous and similar in shape and size;
  - on a non-bony part of the body;
  - attempted strangulation;
- Bites – human bite not caused by a young person/animal bite;
- Lacerations where explanation is unsuitable;
- Thermal injuries where:
  - explanation is unsuitable;
  - child not independently mobile;
  - in shape of an implement;
  - suggestive of immersion;
- Cold injury – no obvious medical explanation;
- Fractures – of different ages;
- Intracranial injuries/eye trauma/spinal injury/visceral injury where no major confirmed trauma;
- Repeated life-threatening events;
- Poisoning;
- Fabricated or induced illness.

### Criminal abuse:

Some child behavior may arise as the result of exploitation by adults that may be criminal in nature (e.g. joining gangs), where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity.



This power imbalance can also be due to a range of factors including age, gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. Emotional and behavioral states that can arise from this form of abuse as well as others include:

- Recurrent nightmares;
- Extreme distress;
- Markedly oppositional behavior;
- Withdrawal of communication;
- Withdrawn;
- Habitual body rocking;
- Indiscriminate contact or affection seeking;
- Over-friendliness to strangers;
- Excessive clinginess;
- Excessively good behavior to parent;
- Coercive behavior towards parent;
- Temper tantrum;
- Frequent rages at minor provocation;
- Inconsolable crying;
- Dissociation;
- Self-harm;
- Scavenging, stealing, hoarding, hiding food/items;
- Day/night wetting;
- Sexualized behavior.

**Peer on peer abuse** is most likely to include, but not limited to:

- bullying (including cyber bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm.
- gender based violence
- consensual and non-consensual sharing nudes and semi nudes images and/ or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery).
- Online abuse— can also take the form of abusive, harassing, misogynistic messages and sharing abusive images to those who do not wish to receive such content.



## APPENDIX B

### Training

The training for **all adults** in direct contact with children will include training on:

- Recognizing potential indicators of child abuse;
- Identify signs of specific forms of abuse; physical, emotional, psychological, sexual and neglect;
- Ability to assess risk;
- Dealing with disclosures from children;
- Recognizing the potential impact of a parent/carer's physical/mental health on the well-being of a child;
- Ability to take appropriate advice where there are concerns;
- Understanding professional responsibilities and boundaries;
- The procedures for recording and reporting concerns;
- Ability to make appropriate records regarding concerns which differentiates between facts and opinion;
- Any additional requirements of Local Law.

All new staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, must be provided with induction training that includes an element of certification in the following:

- the school's safeguarding policy;
- the staff code of conduct policy;
- the identity of the designated person

If a child wishes to confide in you the following guidelines should be adhered to:

- Create a safe environment
- Take the child to a private (but not isolated) safe place if possible
- Stay calm
- Reassure the child and stress that she is not to blame
- Tell the child that you know how difficult it must have been to confide in you
- Listen to the child and tell her that you believe them and are taking what is being said seriously
- If the child would prefer to write down their disclosure, allow them to do this instead
- Tell the child what you are going to do next after the disclosure
- Make accurate notes as soon as possible
- Be honest
- Do not make promises that you cannot keep
- Explain that you are likely to have to tell other people in order to stop what is happening
- Be clear about what the child says and what you say
- Do not interview the child and keep questions to a minimum.
- Encourage the child to use their own words and do not try to lead them into giving particular answers
- Questioning should only include TED questions:
  - Tell me
  - Explain
  - Describe
- Or use the mirroring technique:



i.e. “My dad hit me last night”; respond by “Your dad hit you last night?”

**Do not:**

- take sole responsibility. Immediately consult your Designated Safeguarding Lead so that any appropriate action can be taken to protect the pupil if necessary. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider the information and decide on the next steps.
- Investigate the issue yourself or try to diagnose a condition.
- Ask the child to write down what they said or repeat it to another adult.
- Record the conversation on any device.
- Ask another adult to witness their disclosure –the child has chosen to tell you.
- Ever make the child feel like they are creating a problem for reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment
- View or forward illegal images of a child (if the disclosure has an online element)
- Take images of a child’s injury, bruising or similar

**APPENDIX C**

**Assessments of Disclosures from Children**



**Effective assessments will:**

- Be child-centred;
- Make decisions in the child's best interests;
- Be informed by evidence;
- Focus on action and outcomes;
- Adopt a holistic approach – addressing the child's needs both within their family and the wider community;
- Involve the child and their family;
- Build on strengths as well as recognise difficulties;
- Be integrated in approach with other appropriate agencies, organisations or stakeholders;
- Be transparent;
- Be an on-going process rather than a one-off event.

**In carrying out assessments, all workers are expected to:**

- Listen and observe – collate information from all sources available
- Seek an explanation – in an open and non-judgmental manner;
- Record – observations, information and concerns;
- Consider abuse – look for other alerting features of abuse in the history, discuss concerns with a colleague, gather collateral information;
- Suspect abuse – refer and take action in accordance with the Safeguarding Practice;
- Exclude abuse – where a suitable explanation is found;
- Record – all actions taken and the outcome;
- Respond to the discovery.



## APPENDIX D

### SAFER Communication Guidelines

All adults are expected to follow the SAFER communication guidelines, when sharing information:

- **S**ituation – who is making referral, about whom, to whom, what are the concerns, what is the parental awareness;
- **A**ssessment and Actions – outline of assessment of the child, reasons for concerns, actions taken to make the child safe;
- **F**amily Factors – both those making the child vulnerable and those supporting the child;
- **E**xpected Response – what type of investigation is anticipated, whether any steps are required of the referrer;
- **R**eferral and Recording – follow up with written referral setting out anticipated timescales for response

## APPENDIX E

### Safer Recruitment Policy

Issues to do with Safeguarding and Child Protection and promoting the welfare of children will be included in every stage of the recruitment process; including (but not limited to):

- Where the post is advertised
- Job description to make reference to the responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection and promoting the welfare of children
- Person specification includes specific reference to suitability to work with children
- Consistent and thorough process of obtaining, collating, analyzing and evaluating information from and about applicants.

Safer recruitment requires recruiters to:

- Take up and satisfactorily resolve any discrepancies or anomalies in the documentation provided by the applicant;
- Obtain independent professional and character references that answer specific questions to help assess an applicant's suitability to work with children and following up any concerns;
- Conduct face to face interviews that explore the applicant's suitability to work with children and questions that applicant's ability to support the organization's agenda for Safeguarding and Child Protection; and

Verify the successful applicant's:

- Identity;
- Academic or vocational qualifications claimed;
- Previous employment history and experience;
- Health and physical capacity for the job;
- Right to work in the country;
- Checks on any statutory barring lists or criminal records; and
- Checks in line with any regulatory requirements.



All new starters will have an induction period when they will be closely observed. Training on the school's safeguarding policy will be given as part of the induction program.

## **APPENDIX F**

### **Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

It is apparent from the procedures outlined throughout this policy that great reliance is placed upon all staff sharing information and referring their concerns to a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL must ensure they have appropriate status, authority, time, funding, training, resources and support to fulfil their responsibilities. They must consult the Principal if they feel that this is not the case.

The duties and objectives of the DSL include:

- providing advice and support to staff on child welfare and child protection matters;
- gathering and collating information on alleged safeguarding incidents, seeking clarification from alleged perpetrators or victims;
- managing the referral process (see more below);
- keeping parents informed (wherever possible) and sharing with them any reports concerning their child;
- keeping the Principal informed of all significant safeguarding matters;
- undergoing their own training updates;
- raising awareness of safeguarding matters generally;
- consulting on the design of the PSHE policy and relevant curriculum components of welfare and safeguarding.

## **APPENDIX G:**

### **Further Reading**

- UK Department for Education Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2021
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused (2015)
- UK National Minimum Boarding Standards (2015).



## **Appendix H:**

### **The role of the Nominated Governor**

Schools should appoint a Nominated Governor for safeguarding (or equivalent) to take leadership responsibility for the organization's safeguarding arrangements. This person's role is to ensure safeguarding is always a priority by:

- Championing child protection issues within the school and liaising with the DSL and the Principal and offering challenge if necessary
- Ensuring the Child Protection policy is checked for impact and reviewed yearly.
- Auditing safeguarding measures annually alongside the DSL and the Principal.
- Ensuring that all governors understand and comply with their statutory duty to provide the services of the school in a way that safeguards and promotes the welfare of pupils.



**Appendix I: Action Flow Chart for Members of Staff when Dealing with a Disclosure**

