2025 - 2026

SAFEGUARDING

P O L I C Y

Abu Dhabi Branch

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with statutory regulations.

- Policy is reviewed by: *Principal and Child Protection Team*.
- Policy review date: *26/05/2025*
- Policy next review date: *01/09/25*

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The Child Protection Policy is designed to safeguard all students from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and harm while ensuring their well-being, dignity, and rights are fully respected and protected in all aspects of school life. It sets out clear standards and procedures for identifying, reporting, and responding to safeguarding concerns, in alignment with UAE laws and ADEK guidelines.

This policy reflects SAIS-Abu Dhabi's unwavering commitment to creating a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment where all children can thrive academically, emotionally, and socially.

Objectives

- Ensure the Safety and Welfare of All Students
- Protect children from all forms of abuse (physical, emotional, sexual), neglect, and exploitation —both online and offline.
- Promote a Culture of Vigilance and Early Intervention
- Equip all staff with the knowledge and confidence to identify early warning signs of abuse or maltreatment and act promptly.
- Define Clear Roles and Responsibilities
- Establish the responsibilities of staff, Child Protection Coordinators (CPC) and the Child Protection Committee in preventing, identifying, and addressing child protection issues.
- Standardize Reporting and Response Procedures
- Outline step-by-step guidance for staff to document, report, and escalate concerns using the Guard Safeguarding Platform in accordance with internal protocols and ADEK regulations.
- Comply with Legal and Regulatory Requirements
- Ensure all actions are compliant with UAE Federal Law, ADEK policies, and SAIS Education safeguarding standards.
- Promote Training and Capacity Building
- Encourage a Speak-Up Culture
- Empower students, staff, and parents to report concerns confidently, knowing they will be listened to, supported, and protected.
- Maintain Confidentiality with Accountability
- Protect the privacy and dignity of students involved in safeguarding cases while ensuring transparency and accountability through accurate record-keeping and reporting.

Board of Directors

The SAIS Board of Directors holds ultimate responsibility for corporate governance and the oversight of the effective implementation of the SAIS Safeguarding Strategic Plan and Safeguarding Policy. The board ensures that safeguarding remains a priority across all levels of the organization.

SAIS/AUH Safeguarding Committee

The SAIS/AUH Safeguarding committee members/ SCM are responsible for the effective management of child safeguarding across the school. Their key areas of focus include:

- Case management
- Staff training and professional development
- Coordination with external stakeholders
- Oversight of safeguarding processes and procedures
- Integration of safeguarding into the curriculum
- Promoting student voice and participation
- Engagement with parents and the wider school community
- External agencies

The committee works collaboratively to uphold the highest standards of student protection, welfare, and well-being.
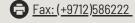
Committee Chairs:
School Principal
Head of School/ HOS
Head of Well-being
Head Of Inclusion

Subcommittee Members:
Section Supervisors
School Social Workers

SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

MRS. BAN AL DURI
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Principal

 The principal is accountable for ensuring that all elements of the SAIS Safeguarding Policy and ADEK Student Protection Policy are effectively implemented within the school. This includes:

·Ensuring staff, volunteers, and students understand and comply with the policy

·Creating a school culture that prioritizes the safety and well-being of all students

·Supporting the Child Protection Coordinator (CPC) in fulfilling their role

Child Protection Coordinator (CPC)

 The Child Protection Coordinator is a designated member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) who leads on safeguarding and child protection, including:

- Coordinating and overseeing child protection procedures
- Ensuring online safety and understanding the school's filtering and monitoring systems
- Acting as a key point of contact for safeguarding concerns

Child Protection Procedures: Handling Disclosures, Concerns, or Allegations

Children may choose to disclose abuse or raise concerns to a trusted staff member at any time, whether anticipated or unexpected. In these situations, staff must act with care, professionalism, and urgency. When a Child Makes a Disclosure:

Staff should:

- Listen actively and supportively, showing they are willing to hear the child without judgment.
- Avoid expressing personal opinions or making assumptions.
- Do not promise confidentiality; explain that you must report the concern to help keep them safe.
- Document the concern accurately and promptly.
- Immediately report to the Child Protection Coordinator /CPC or members of SCM
- Remain calm and reassuring, acknowledging that the information may be difficult and the child may need emotional support.

Allegations Involving Staff or Professionals:

Notify the principal immediately of any disclosure or concern that questions the competence or suitability of another professional, regardless of their employer.

Treat such cases with the utmost confidentiality. The principal must inform HR in accordance with the Employee Disciplinary Policy.

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

At SAIS, safeguarding children is a shared responsibility. All staff members and contractors are legally and ethically obligated to report any witnessed, suspected, or disclosed incidents of child abuse or maltreatment without delay.
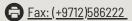
Reporting Procedure:

Any concerns must be immediately reported to the:

- Child Protection Coordinator (CPC)
- School Principal
- Safeguarding committee members

Staff Responsibility:

All teachers and staff, especially those working directly with children, must remain vigilant in identifying, physical abuse (e.g., bruises, injuries), emotional, physical neglect or any form of harm or unsafe conditions.

Teachers are encouraged to be proactive protectors, not only in educating but also in safeguarding students' well-being.

Key Expectations:

- Never ignore signs of abuse, distress, or neglect.
- Act immediately to report concerns to the appropriate safeguarding team/ CPC.
- Support the child by ensuring their safety and removing them from any potentially harmful environment.
- Protecting students is at the heart of our mission. Every report can make a critical difference in a child's life.

Investigation, Risk Evaluation, and Evidence Collection:

The Child Protection Committee (CPC) and the Child Protection Coordinator at SAIS hold a crucial responsibility in safeguarding all children enrolled at the school, even if it requires taking steps to protect a child from their own family or caregivers.

When a Case is Raised:

Upon receiving a report of abuse or maltreatment, the Child Protection Committee will convene immediately to:

- Review all information available.
- Evaluate the risk level and severity of the situation.
- Determine immediate safety needs for the child.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff members are expected to:

- Uphold and implement the school's Behaviour Policy consistently
- Foster positive relationships with students grounded in mutual respect, empathy, and fairness
- Respond appropriately to both positive behaviour and misconduct, using approved strategies

Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviour

Staff members with pastoral or supervisory roles must:
- Collaborate with the SLT to identify students requiring additional behavioural support
- Participate in and/or request targeted training to effectively support these students
- Contribute to the development of individual behaviour plans (IBPs) where necessary

Recognizing Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation

To ensure that SAIS children are protected from harm, all staff must understand what constitutes abuse, neglect, and exploitation. This knowledge is embedded across all levels of SAIS safeguarding training.

Understanding Abuse and Neglect

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. A child may be abused or neglected:

- By being harmed directly (e.g., physical assault), or through a failure to prevent harm (e.g., leaving a child unsupervised in dangerous circumstances).

Abuse may be inflicted by:

- Adults (men or women)
- Peers (other children)
- Individuals online or in real life.

Types of Abuse and Key Indicators

1. Physical Abuse
Involves physical harm or injury to a child, such as: Hitting, shaking, burning, poisoning, or suffocating, Fabricated or induced illness

2. Emotional Abuse (Psychological)
Persistent emotional maltreatment that impairs a child's emotional development, including:
- Constant criticism or rejection
- Preventing expression or social interaction
- Exposure to domestic violence
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Overprotection or unrealistic expectations

3. Sexual Abuse
- Involves a child being forced or enticed into sexual activities, including:
- Physical contact (e.g., touching or penetration)
- Non-contact activities (e.g., watching sexual acts, exposure to sexual materials)
- Online sexual abuse or grooming

Note: Sexual abuse can be committed by males, females, or peers (child-on-child abuse).

4. Neglect
Persistent failure to meet a child's basic needs, such as:
- Lack of food, clothing, or shelter
- Inadequate supervision or medical care
- Emotional unresponsiveness

5. Domestic Abuse

Includes a wide range of behaviours (psychological, emotional, physical, sexual, or financial).
Children exposed to domestic abuse:
- May witness or experience abuse directly or indirectly
- Often suffer long-term emotional, developmental, and academic impact
- Online Abuse and Peer-on-Peer Abuse

Abuse can also happen online:

- Through abusive or harassing messages
- Non-consensual sharing of explicit content
- Exposure to inappropriate or violent material
- Children may be victimized by their peers in both physical and virtual spaces. Staff must be alert to child-on-child abuse and follow school protocols accordingly.

Staff Responsibilities

- Be aware of early warning signs of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Immediately report concerns to the Child Protection Coordinator (CPC) or Principal.
- Record incidents without delay.
- Do not promise confidentiality to a child; inform them you are required to report concerns.
- Seek support if emotionally affected by any disclosure.

If staff are ever unsure, they must consult the CPC. Timely action can prevent further harm and ensure that every child remains safe and supported.

Figure 1. Safety Concern Referrals in Abu Dhabi Schools

Emergency concern in which a student is in imminent danger	Concern is detected or disclosed by staff	Staff to inform the Child Protection Coordinator or any other person representing them	Child Protection Coordinator or any other person representing them to inform the Principal and the police for immediate intervention	Child Protection Coordinator or any other person representing them to fill the Safety Concern Form on the digital safety concern portal[1]
Student protection concern occurred outside of the school's supervision	Concern is detected or disclosed by staff	Staff to notify Child Protection Coordinator or or any other person representing them	Child Protection Coordinator or any other person representing they/them to fill the Safety Concern Form on the digital safety concern portal[1]	
Student protection concern occurred within the school's supervision	Concern is detected or disclosed by staff	Staff to notify Child Protection Coordinator or or any other person representing them	Child Protection Coordinator or any other person representing them to fill the Safety Concern Form on the digital safety concern portal[1]	The portal will send a copy of the report to ADEK CPU to officially follow-up on the case[2]

1. After submitting the Safety Concern Form on the digital safety concern portal, a copy of the report is automatically shared with FCA, ADEK CPU, and MoI CPC.

2. For cases occurring within schools' supervision, the ADEK CPU will review the information first before referring to the FCA for case management. Note: The ADEK CPU will take the necessary procedures to follow-up on the cases after receiving the report.

Relevant contact details are as follows:

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

APPENDIX 1 – CHILD PROTECTION REFERRAL DOCUMENT

Designated reorter:	**Date:**

Person/ People Involved:

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Nature of concern: Be specific/ Be detailed / Write down person's words or attach any notes (dated and signed)

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Action taken:

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Resolution:

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Who is aware of incident:

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Signed: