

The Child Protection Framework at the American School of Dubai

1 - CHILD PROTECTION: THE PURPOSE

The American School of Dubai is committed to the protection of students against any physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and/or neglect. The protection of children is an important part of the American School of Dubai's role as an educational institution and is the responsibility of all adults working for and/or providing services for the American School of Dubai.

Child abuse and neglect are violations of a child's human rights and are obstacles not only to a child's education but also to their physical, emotional, and spiritual development. Furthermore, the protection of children is consistent with ASD's core values and mission statement. Educating community members on ASD's commitment to child protection can help prevent abuse and neglect as well as limit its scope through improved awareness and reporting.

ASD's Child Protection Policy is based on international best practices and is consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child to which the United Arab Emirates is a signatory as of January 1997, and on UAE Federal Law #3 of 2016 (Wadeema's Law). ASD's child protection policy and handbook serve to prevent child abuse, neglect, exploitation and harassment, protect those who may be involved or at risk, and support those involved in situations in violation of that child's rights. ASD affirms its commitment to child protection and establishes zero tolerance in the community for violations of child protection. To promote clarity, ASD's child protection policy is published on the school website ensuring it is available to all stakeholders.

In accordance with the child protection policy, ASD strives to ensure understanding of child protection issues by all members of the community. ASD hiring practices include steps to ensure safety of all children. Employees have mandatory child protection training at the start of their tenure and regularly thereafter, as requested by the school. All ASD employees sign a code of conduct affirming their commitment to child protection and understanding of this policy. ASD students receive age-appropriate child safety education as part of the school's curriculum. ASD parents have access to this policy and handbook and to educational sessions at ASD. Child protection resources are available to all employees on the ASD website.

2 - ASD'S CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The ASD Board of Trustees has approved the following Child Protection Policy:

The American School of Dubai is committed to the protection of students against any physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and/or neglect as defined in the ASD Child Protection Handbook. To ensure the safety of students, the school shall require all employees to undergo a criminal background check, sign a code of conduct, and participate in child protection training. All employees must report any case of suspected abuse or neglect to their immediate supervisor or, if unavailable, to any member of the ASD administration immediately during the work week, or within 24 hours on a weekend. Supervisors in receipt of a report of potential abuse and/or neglect will immediately inform the Superintendent who will open a formal inquiry and may convene the Child Protection Team.

For the purposes of this policy, the definition of "employee" includes all ASD employees who directly or indirectly work with students, all externally hired and internally hired coaches, volunteers, substitutes and all outsourced employees. To ensure that all key stakeholders are well informed of the school's Child Protection policies and procedures, ASD will publish and distribute annually this policy, reporting procedures, the Child Protection Handbook, the ASD Employee Code of Conduct and Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement.

3 - CHILD ABUSE: THE DEFINITIONS

Abuse: "All forms of physical, and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power." (Report of the Consultation on Child Abuse Prevention, 29–31 March 1999, WHO, Geneva. Geneva, World Health Organization, 1999 (document WHO/HSC/PVI/99.1).)

Abuse may involve two or more adults, including parents and/or ASD employees, adults and children, and/or two or more children.

Physical Abuse: any intentional, unwanted contact with one's body resulting in actual or potential harm

Emotional Abuse: non-physical behaviors such as threats, insults, constant monitoring, humiliation, intimidation, isolation, or stalking that result in actual or potential harm to an individual's health, physical, mental, and/or social development. Such behaviors may include restricting a child's movements, denigration, ridicule, threats and intimidation, discrimination, rejection and other non-physical forms of hostile treatment (adapted from Report of the Consultation on Child Abuse Prevention, 29–31 March 1999, WHO, Geneva. Geneva, World Health Organization, 1999 (document WHO/HSC/PVI/99.1).)

Sexual Abuse: any action that pressures or coerces an individual to do something sexually that they do not want to do or cannot consent to doing. This may involve physical contact (penetrative or non-penetrative) or non-contact activities (viewing sexually explicit material or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways).

Sexual Exploitation: taking non-consensual, unjust, or abusive advantage of another in a sexual or intimate context

Sexual Harassment: physical, verbal, written, or electronic conduct of a sexual nature that interferes with a person's academic or extracurricular activities, professional obligations, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment

Neglect: refers to the failure to provide for the development of the child in one or more of the following areas: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter and safe living conditions (WHO, adapted)

Digital/Electronic abuse: the use of technology for digital communication to bully, harass, stalk, or intimidate another. Digital abuse is a form of verbal or emotional abuse perpetrated through online means of communication. The digital abuse may be student-on-student or involve students and adults.

Child Protection: the safeguarding of children from abuse and neglect; those systems, beliefs, structures in place to guard children's rights and prevent and respond to the actual or suspected harm of children

Child Protection Policy: the statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to protecting children from harm, and establishes pathways for education and training on child abuse and neglect as well as for reporting and investigating instances of abuse and neglect

Child Protection Team (CPT): a group of ASD employees tasked with receiving and responding to reports of child protection violations within the community. The core CPT will include individuals from administration (the divisional principal or designee), counseling, health office, the Director of Student Services, and the Superintendent. The core CPT will request the presence of other members of the community as deemed necessary. The CPT is convened by the Superintendent and will report to the Superintendent as well as the board of trustees if the case involves an accusation against an ASD employee.

Employee: for the purposes of this policy, the definition of "employee" includes all those at ASD who directly or indirectly work with students, all externally hired and internally hired coaches, volunteers, substitutes, and all outsourced employees.

4 - REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

All employees at the American School of Dubai have both a legal and an ethical obligation to report incidents where they have reasonable suspicion to believe that child protection violations have occurred. If any employee at the American School of Dubai has reasonable cause to suspect abuse, neglect, harassment or exploitation based on his/her knowledge of the victim, perpetrator and/or personal experience with children, that person must report their concern. All reports, whether the allegation is made regarding a student, parent or caregiver, or ASD employee are to be made to the employee's immediate supervisor or, if unavailable, to any member of the ASD administration. Upon becoming aware of a child protection violation, employees must report their concern immediately during the work week

or within 24 hours on a weekend. Supervisors in receipt of a report of potential abuse and/or neglect will immediately inform the Division Principal and Superintendent, who open a formal inquiry and may convene the CPT.

5 - SAFE HIRING PRACTICES

The American School of Dubai places child protection front and center of its priorities. To safeguard students, ASD recognizes the importance of recruiting and retaining employees who have been vetted through a child protection lens, who are committed to upholding safe practices, and who participate in training to maintain knowledge and skills regarding child protection. To ensure the safety of students, the school shall require all employees to undergo a criminal background check, sign a code of conduct, and participate in child protection training. All employees hired by ASD undergo a thorough reference-checking process. The Director of Human Resources will confirm the candidate's readiness for an offer once the reference check process has been successfully completed.

6 - TRAINING

All employees will undergo mandatory training on a regular basis. Training will be provided online and face-to-face and will include a focus on reporting, protection, as well as managing allegations.

7 - CONFIDENTIALITY

ASD respects the privacy of those involved in all aspects of child protection cases. The identities of those involved in both the reporting and the incident of suspected child protection violations will be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible. However, those involved must understand that in order for an inquiry into the incident to proceed, certain information must be shared. Information will be shared strictly on a need-to-know basis and only with those directly involved in incident response. These individuals may include but are not limited to the CPT, ASD administrators, the Board of Trustees, and/or UAE child protection officials, the sponsor of the alleged perpetrator and/or his/her embassy. ASD will comply fully with governmental entities tasked with investigating incidents of child protection violations. The identities of both the victims of child protection violations and their reporters will be protected, however, the school cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. Disclosing the identity of the victim to certain individuals or entities may be necessary for the purposes of both internal inquiry and mandatory reporting.

All ASD employees are required to sign a code of conduct that states they will maintain confidentiality and not discuss any student or family matter unless doing so in a professional situation and only with those individuals necessary to maintain the support and wellbeing of the student. No ASD employee found to have violated the ASD Child Protection Policy can be assured of confidentiality and the school will report incident information to the extent necessary to maintain the safety of this and other communities.

8 - EXTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS, VENDORS AND THIRD PARTY PROVIDERS

The American School of Dubai administration will ensure that all external organizations, vendors and third party providers using our campus and facilities commit to operating within our child protection policies and procedures at all times.

9- WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

The American School of Dubai maintains a Whistleblowing Policy to ensure that all employees understand their duty to raise concerns about the actions of their colleagues without fear of repercussions.

10 - POLICY REVIEW

The ASD Child Protection policy and program will be reviewed annually.

11 - LOCAL RESOURCES

Anyone with an immediate need for emergency treatment of any student or employee should call Dubai Ambulance or Police at 999.

The American School of Dubai maintains a list of doctors and therapists which may be of use to any victims of abuse, neglect, harassment, or exploitation. These resources are available from the Health Office, Divisional Counseling offices, and the Office of the Director of Student Services.

Additional resources in Dubai include:

Dubai Foundation for Women and Children

Contact info: [+971 4 287 0088](tel:+97142870088)

Hotline: 800 111;

Email: help@dfwac

[Website](#)

Ministry of Interior Child Protection Centre

Contact info: +97123333999

Hotline: 116111

[Website](#)

Dubai Police Child Protection Hotline

Contact info: 800-243

+971-4-2661228

www.dubaipolice.gov.ae

Child Protection with Community Development Authority

Child Protection Toll Free 800988

CDA Toll Free 8002121

Email: child@cda.gov.ae

Latifa Children's Hospital

Contact info: +97142193000

[Website](#)