



SHINING STAR INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL ABU DHABI

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

I. INTRODUCTION

At Shining Star International School, we are dedicated to creating a safe and nurturing environment where all students can thrive and reach their fullest potential. Our commitment to safeguarding and student protection is paramount and underpins every aspect of our educational practice. In accordance with Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights (Wadeema), we recognize the rights of every child to be protected from harm and to develop in a safe and supportive environment.

This safeguarding policy outlines our priorities and processes for promoting the welfare and security of our students. It establishes clear guidelines for identifying, reporting, and responding to concerns regarding the safety and well-being of children in our care. We believe that every member of our school community—staff, students, and parents—plays a vital role in fostering a culture of safety and vigilance.

Shining Star International School is committed to implementing best practices in safeguarding and ensuring that all individuals are aware of their responsibilities. We strive to educate our students about personal safety, respect, and resilience, empowering them to voice their concerns and seek support when needed.

Through collaboration with families, local authorities, and safeguarding agencies, we aim to create a comprehensive support system that ensures the well-being of every student. Our commitment to safeguarding reflects our core values and the belief that a secure and caring educational environment is essential for effective learning and development.

Together, we will work diligently to uphold the highest standards of safeguarding, ensuring that every student at Shining Star International School can learn, grow, and flourish without fear or prejudice.

II. DEFINITIONS

Additional Learning Needs

Individual requirements for additional support, modifications, or accommodations within a school setting on a permanent or temporary basis in response to a specific context. This applies to any support required by students of determination and those who have special educational needs and/or

additional barriers to learning, access, or interaction in that specific context (e.g., dyslexic, hearing or visually impaired, twice exceptional, or gifted and/or talented). For example, a student with restricted mobility may require lesson accommodations to participate in Physical Education and building accommodations to access facilities but may not require any accommodations in assessments. Equally, a student with hearing impairment may require adaptive and assistive technology to access content in class and may also require physical accommodations (e.g., sit in the front of the class to be able to lip read) to access learning.

At Risk of Harm

The inability to safeguard one's own well-being.

Authorized Personnel

Personnel who are authorized by ADEK or other relevant government entities to visit a school and access its premises and resources for a specific purpose.

Bathroom

A room that contains facilities for bathing and personal hygiene. It typically includes a bathtub or shower, a toilet, and a washbasin.

Duty of Care

The obligation to safeguard stakeholders, to maintain their health, safety, and wellbeing, and to take steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm while under the school's supervision (on its premises, utilizing its systems, or engaging in school-organized activities off campus).

Governing Board

The governing body of a school, appointed by the school owners, and including qualified representatives and parents. The Governing Board is the senior authority of the school, with responsibility for the overall governance of its activities.

In Loco Parentis

Meaning "in place of a parent", in situations when parents are absent.

Maltreatment Refers to abuse (physical, emotional, and sexual), and includes neglect, exploitation, bullying, and cyberbullying of a student.

School Behaviour Policy



Parent

The person legally liable for a child or entrusted with their care, defined as the custodian of the child as per the Federal Decree Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights (Wadeema).

Safeguarding

The protection of students from the risks of harm, including maltreatment and other types of risks that impact their overall health and development, wellbeing, and safety.

Safeguarding Lead (or Committee)

An individual (or group of individuals) responsible for the implementation of the safeguarding policy and practices and ensures compliance by the school community. This position can be filled by any relevant position in the school such as the Child Protection Coordinator, School Counselor, Social Worker, Head of Wellbeing, etc.

Security Breach

An incident that compromises or results in an unauthorized disclosure of or unlawful access to protected space, persons, systems, and/or information. Security breaches stemming from accidental or deliberate action have the potential to cause damage (financial, legal, or school wide consequences, etc.) to school assets or reputation and includes both confirmed and suspected incidents.

Staff

An individual employed by a school on a remunerated contractual basis regardless of employment mode (internal, external/third-party, etc.).

Student

A resident who is enrolled in an educational institution in Abu Dhabi.

Student Protection

Synonymous with child protection, all measures, steps, and actions that must be taken to prevent, protect, and support students from risk of maltreatment while they are under the supervision of the educational institution.

Supervision

The state of being responsible, having the duty of care, and keeping watch over an individual in the interest of their and others' security while under the care of the school or an individual employed at the school, whether onsite, while utilizing its systems, and/or taking part in all activities organized by the school offsite.

Toilet Block

A structure or designated area within the school or outdoor setting that contains multiple toilets and washbasins.

Visitor

For the purpose of this policy, a visitor is any temporary visitor (e.g., a parent or a relative of a student, prospective student and their parents, inspectors, contractors, etc.) entering the school premises.

An invited visitor is anyone visiting the school on a temporary basis to interact with students (i.e., a speaker, career fair representative, etc.) and includes volunteers, who are engaged by an educational institution on a non-remunerated basis to interact with students (e.g., parent chaperones, etc.).

Whistleblowing

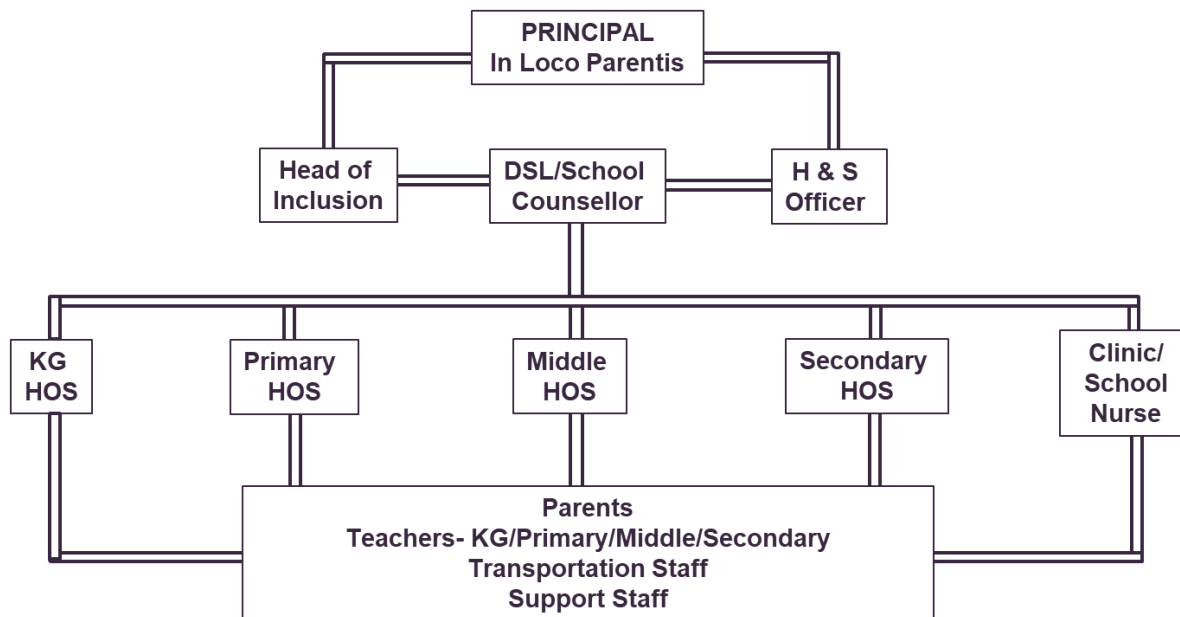
An instance where an individual passes on information about organizational malpractice (e.g., fraud, corruption, miscarriage of justice, risk of serious harm to an individual, risks or damage to the environment and other actions against public interest) taking place at, or near, their place of employment or education.

III. SCHOOL-BASED SAFEGUARDING STRATEGIES

We prioritize the safety and well-being of its students and staff through a range of efficient safeguarding strategies. Our leadership team includes **Safeguarding Level 3 certified leaders**, who ensure the highest standards of child protection. We conduct regular **fire drills** and maintain comprehensive **lockdown plans** to ensure preparedness for emergencies. The school is equipped with advanced **CCTV surveillance** systems and employs **security guards** to monitor and secure the premises. In addition, we carry out thorough **risk assessments** to identify and mitigate potential

hazards. For students with additional learning needs (ALN), we have tailored **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP)** to ensure their safety in emergencies, demonstrating our commitment to inclusivity and security for all members of our school community.

IV. SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE



The school has a Safeguarding Committee or Lead, to oversee the school’s overall safeguarding strategy. The school, through the Safeguarding Committee, is committed to maintaining the highest standards of safeguarding by adhering to a robust and regularly reviewed **Safeguarding Policy**. Annually, the effectiveness of this policy is carefully monitored to ensure it is known, understood, and practiced appropriately by all members of the school community. We ensure that the safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the **Governing Board** are fully implemented and strictly observed. Together with the Principal, we ensure that all staff, volunteers, and invited visitors are informed of their responsibilities about safeguarding procedures. Parents are provided with access to the Safeguarding Policy and all related documents through various channels, including the school website, ensuring transparency and involvement. To maintain a high level of awareness, the school also develops an **induction and training program** that ensures all staff and volunteers are properly trained and equipped with the knowledge of the school's safeguarding arrangements.

V. SAFEGUARDING AWARENESS

The school ensures the provision of a safe and caring environment in which all students can learn, thrive, and develop the confidence to voice ideas, feelings, and opinions in an atmosphere that prioritizes their best interests, in line with the guiding principles stipulated in the Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions (DAA Child Protection Committee, 2024).

- Guarantees adherence to a zero-tolerance approach to student maltreatment and ensure that any visitor or member of the school community who has any maltreatment concerns about a student is aware and able to easily follow the processes set out in the ADEK School Student Protection Policy.
- Monitors students known or thought to be at risk from harm, including students with additional learning needs, who could experience heightened vulnerability.
- Ensures staff knew how to respond to safeguarding incidents and reassure victims and/or witnesses who disclosed that they were being taken seriously and supported.
- Ensures students and staff feel part of a positive and transparent environment where they can freely liaise with members of the Safeguarding Committee or Lead in instances where a concern or worry is raised about the behavior of a student, staff, or visitor.
- We are vigilant of student safety in online spaces as per the ADEK School Digital Policy.
- Ensures that no policy within the school shall adversely harm or jeopardize the health or well-being of a student (e.g., placing limitations on washroom breaks) in line with the ADEK School Wellbeing Policy.
- Provides support and counseling that is accessible, free of judgment, and available to all students, so that students know whom to turn to for advice and support within the school.
- Ensures every parent understands that they are obligated to enroll their child in school as per Federal Law No. (39) of 2022 Concerning Compulsory Education, and any suspicious incidents (such as excessive absences or the sudden unexplained withdrawal of a student from school) shall be reported as a maltreatment concern to relevant authorities, as per the ADEK School Student Protection Policy.

Safeguarding and the Curriculum

Our safeguarding policy is deeply embedded in the school curriculum, with a special focus on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and sessions based on the PERMA pillars (Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment). Our curriculum

School Behaviour Policy



prioritizes the development of students' self-esteem and self-regulation, helping them build emotional resilience and the ability to manage their feelings.

We foster a culture of respect and civility towards others and living things, encouraging empathy and community-mindedness. Through SEL, students are equipped with communication skills and the ability to express consent appropriately, promoting healthy interpersonal relationships.

Our curriculum also emphasizes the importance of understanding and managing risks, particularly in relation to online behavior and social media use, enabling students to navigate digital spaces safely. We provide guidance to help students develop effective self-protection strategies and handle peer pressure positively. Furthermore, our PERMA-based sessions encourage students to take responsibility for their own and others' safety, fostering a holistic understanding of personal and collective well-being.

VI. SAFEGUARDING THE SCHOOL'S SECURITY

Schools shall be equipped with integrated and fully functioning access and security systems, including security video surveillance cameras (CCTV systems).

CCTV Systems: Schools shall install and maintain CCTV systems via an MCC licensed vendor, in compliance with the Manual of Standards for Surveillance Devices (MCC, 2023). a.

- a. **Contract Validity:** Schools shall maintain a valid maintenance contract at all times with an MCC-licensed vendor.
- b. **Coverage:** Schools shall ensure that their CCTV cameras provide coverage of the following areas:

All entrances and exits of the school buildings and grounds.

2) All walkways and public areas (e.g., corridors, stairs, courtyard, sports hall, sports fields, canteen, libraries).

3) Student pickup and drop-off areas for private vehicles and buses.

4) Security areas (e.g., control room) and hazardous areas.

5) Exterior areas surrounding the school grounds.

6) Learning spaces (e.g., classrooms, labs, studios, maker spaces).

- 7) Entrances to bathrooms/toilet blocks and changing rooms.
- 8) All blind spots within the school premises.
- 9) CCTV cameras shall not be installed inside lavatories, changing rooms, or any other areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.
- 10) Schools shall place signs within the school premises indicating to the public that the area is under CCTV surveillance.

c. **Regular Monitoring and Maintenance:** Schools shall monitor the functioning of their CCTV cameras on a daily basis and ensure they are working and providing appropriate coverage. In case any issues are identified that affect their functionality, schools shall inform the vendor immediately and ensure prompt action is taken to rectify the issue in line with the terms of their contract.

d. **Access to Footage and Recordings:** Schools shall restrict access to CCTV footage and recordings as follows:

- 1) **Monitoring of CCTV Footage:** Schools shall have a monitoring and control room for the purpose of monitoring CCTV footage. Schools shall ensure that only the vendor-appointed CCTV specialist(s) monitor the footage.

- 2) The Principal is authorized to access live CCTV footage of the school premises from their office.

- 3) **Access Permission for Staff:** The principal and vendor-appointed CCTV specialist(s) are authorized to retrieve and view CCTV recordings. Principals are authorized to permit other staff members to view CCTV footage on a need-basis at the Principal's discretion. Schools shall maintain a record of all individuals granted permission to view the footage, where applicable.

- 4) **Access Permission for ADEK Personnel:** Schools shall provide access to CCTV footage and recordings to authorized ADEK personnel upon request.

e. **Copying and Distribution:** The copying or distribution of CCTV recordings is strictly prohibited and punishable by law, in line with the Federal Decree Law No. (34) of 2021 on Combating Rumors and Cybercrimes.

f. **Escalation:** Where an incident captured in a CCTV recording requires clarification beyond the school level, the school shall immediately notify ADEK to deal with the incident. g. **Deletion:** Schools shall retain CCTV recordings for a minimum of 180 days.

VII. SECURITY GUARDS:

1. Are present at any given time at all entry points/gates. They are not permitted to leave their posts unless there is someone to replace them temporarily.
2. Holds authorized licenses, as per the ADEK School Staff Eligibility Policy.
3. Remains alerts and ensures safety and security on the school premises, supported by the school's security system.
4. Maintains a visitor's log by recording the visitor's name, ID, signature, telephone number, purpose of visit, time of arrival, and time of departure.
5. Issues visitors access passes only upon collection of a form of photo ID and verifying that it matches the identity of the physical person.
 - a. They are authorized to issue permanent access passes to registered visitors involved in the routine pick-up and drop-off of students i.e., parents, nannies, drivers, etc.

Security guards verify that each access pass matches the identity of the physical person and ensure that anyone whose permanent access pass has been canceled/revoked cannot enter the school with the invalid access card (they would need to sign in as would a general visitor).

6. Maintains a communication link between the security guard at the entry gate and the school reception/administration to authorize the entry of unknown persons.
7. Are provided with the appropriate handover procedures to facilitate the transition in the event of the school changing security providers.

VIII. SCHOOL VISITING PROCEDURES:

The school has procedures for visiting the school. The Principal shall have the right to deny or allow visitors to their school with good cause. The school's procedure for visitors shall include the following as a minimum:

1. All visitors to the school shall sign in at the security gate and obtain a visitor's access pass in exchange for a valid form of ID.
2. Visitors shall display their access passes, which are to be visibly worn at all times whilst on the school premises. Visitors are not authorized to enter classrooms unless invited.

3. Invited visitors shall remain under the supervision of a designated member of staff unless they are authorized personnel (see Section 5.3.5) whilst on the school premises.
4. Upon completion of the school visit, visitors must sign out at the security gate and return their visitor access passes upon leaving the school premises.
5. Granting Access to Authorized Personnel: Schools shall provide authorized personnel (e.g., government inspectors, compliance specialists) with access to their full premises and relevant resources (e.g., school reports, records, access to keys for locked areas, etc.), as per Federal Decree Law No. (18) of 2020 on Private Education and its amendments. Where required, schools shall enable such personnel to monitor and interact with staff, students, and parents.
 - a. Schools shall verify the identity of the personnel and ensure they have a valid purpose for their requests, prior to providing access to the school's premises or resources.
 - b. Schools shall ensure that any access granted is in line with the requirements and purpose of the personnel's visit.
 - c. Where access is provided to any school reports and records, Principals shall keep a record of the personnel to whom the access was provided, the reports and records accessed by them, and the purpose for providing access. Schools shall preserve these records in line with the requirements for administrative records, as per the ADEK School Records Policy.
 - d. Authorized personnel are authorized to be present on school premises without being accompanied by a member of staff.

IX. SCHOOL DEPARTURE PROCEDURES:

The school has established school departure procedures to verify that student departures follow the parent-authorized methods for transitioning student supervision from the school to the home, such as ensuring that:

1. Only parent-authorized persons are picking up students.
2. For persons who are not pre-registered and have permanent access passes, parents are informed by the school in advance in writing and provide the ID of the nominated person.
3. In sudden emergencies or late notice change of plans, parents are called to inform the school of the name of the person picking up their child and the school logs the conversation

including the name of the authorized person, and forwards the names to the security guards and teachers/individual(s) supervising the concerned student.

4. The school checks the identity of the nominated person at the gate (via presentation of a form of ID) and when handing over the student from the school's supervision.
5. IDs are not required if the person is already a member of the school community (e.g., another parent), and the school already has their ID on record.

Acceptable School Drop-Off and Pick-Up Timings:

The school communicates to parents acceptable drop-off and pick-up timings.

1. The school ensures the supervision of students 45 minutes before the start of the school day and 90 minutes after school hours and must notify parents of their responsibility toward their children outside of these two periods.
2. In instances where parents drop off children at the school without the school's knowledge, the school is not legally responsible for the safety of the child.

School Arrival and Departure Notification for Unaccompanied Cycle 3 Students:

Upon written consent by parents, students in Cycle 3 are authorized to arrive at and depart from school unaccompanied.

1. The school has established a system to record and notify parents of their arrival and departure times.
2. Parents are authorized to request notification of arrival and departure times for accompanied students in any grade below Cycle 3, and schools shall provide such notifications.

X. SPECIAL EVENTS:

The school ensures that we have increased security measures in place for safeguarding the school during special events. The school ensures that:

Events are only open to the immediate family (parents and siblings of the student). Parents who wish to invite other guests must pre-register them with the school by providing a copy of a valid ID. Guests who are not pre-registered are required to register on arrival at the school gate and subsequently provide a copy of a valid ID.

2. Signage indicating accessible areas for visitors within the school premises is clearly displayed.
3. Increased security is present when a larger number of visitors are expected.
4. All outside service providers and their employees are pre-approved, and contracts stipulate that they have undergone security checks. Service providers shall submit their trade license and a valid work permit for each employee.

XI. SAFEGUARDING THE PRIVACY OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY:

The school ensures that we have measures to safeguard the privacy and identities of the school community in physical spaces (e.g., the reception area) and in digital spaces, (e.g., email lists, WhatsApp groups) as per the ADEK School Digital Policy. The school practices discretion about the following:

1. Keeps reception areas free of individually identifiable elements such as displaying timetables/class schedules, or photographs and names of members of the school community.
2. Avoids sharing personal details i.e., emails and mobile numbers of students, parents, or teachers without consent, except as authorized by applicable laws and ADEK policies.

XII. MANAGING SECURITY BREACHES:

The school has established systems for managing security breaches to prevent the occurrence of a dangerous/harmful event, including intruders from gaining unauthorized access to the school grounds or confidential information. The following have applied to the school:

1. The school has established a system to lock down the school (manually or automatically) which includes a security breach procedure and a response plan, led by the Safeguarding Committee or Lead, with appropriate reporting mechanisms in place.
2. Ensures all school staff are aware of and have received training on the security breach procedure.
3. The designated Safeguarding Committee or Lead (including deputies in their absence) has fulfilled requirements.
4. The school maintains regular service of alert systems, timed bells or alarms in line with local regular requirements.

5. In line with the ADEK School Digital Policy, the school can respond to security breaches by backing up important data from the school IT system and activating its business continuity plan.
 - a. The school ensures every digital incident is recorded, documented, and signed by the Principal and stored for auditing purposes, in line with the ADEK School Records Policy.
6. The school conducts emergency planning and subsequent drills, in line with the ADEK Policy.
7. Complied with local regulatory requirements and report any security breach incidents to ADEK and/or appropriate authorities.

XIII. TRAINING

Training and Continuous Professional Development (CPD):

The school provides the following training and CPD to staff, at a minimum:

1. Safeguarding training at induction, including for the Governing Board, staff, and volunteers.

The staff training includes the following:

- a. Identifying signs of student maltreatment or other safeguarding issues including what to do if the staff or volunteer or someone else is worried about a student.
- b. Alerting staff to be vigilant to the specific requirements of students at risk of harm, including students with additional learning needs.
- c. Understanding the importance of not disregarding certain behaviors (e.g., banter, practical jokes), which can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviors in an unsafe environment, preventing students from coming forward to report them.
- d. Detailing written records of events in a secure and accurate manner and respecting confidentiality as per the ADEK School Digital Policy.
- e. Taking necessary actions in emergency situations to prevent harm and danger.
- f. Sharing information on a need-to-know basis only and not discussing the issue with colleagues or the parent community.
- g. Making support available for individual staff members who may be suffering from wellbeing-related concerns, as per the ADEK School Staff Wellbeing Policy.

h. Understanding of the school's security system and security breach protocol.

2. While training is not required for invited visitors, schools shall ensure that they have read and signed the school's Safeguarding Policy.

XIV. WHISTLEBLOWING MECHANISM

The school has implemented a whistleblowing mechanism to enable any individual to raise concerns or allegations of organizational malpractice in confidence.

1. For anyone who raises a concern, the school protects their identity and ensures that they should not be made to feel ashamed for reporting the concern. In case their identity becomes known, schools shall take measures to protect the individual from any negative repercussions such as harassment, reprisal, and stigmatization.

2. For anyone who has a concern raised against them, the school is the best of its ability, to protect their identity where possible and protect them from any negative repercussions until any investigation process is completed.

XV. INCLUSION

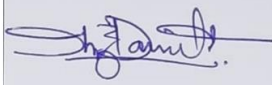
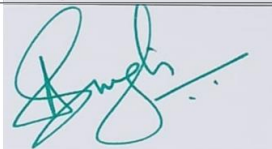
Inclusive Provision:

The school ensures that the Safeguarding Committee or Lead works closely with the Wellbeing Committee or Lead, Head of Inclusion, School Counselor, Health & Safety Officer as well as other relevant stakeholders (e.g., teachers, parents) to promote the safeguarding and security of all students with Risk Assessment, PEEP, and Physical Accessibilities as prescribed in Inclusion Policy, and ensures that the safeguarding practices and associated policies and initiatives take into account the individual needs, communication and behavior styles, and engagement of students with additional learning needs, in line with the ADEK School Inclusion Policy.

CONCLUSION

At Shining Star International School, safeguarding is at the heart of our mission to provide a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment for all students. Through robust policies, certified leadership, continuous staff training, and a curriculum that emphasizes personal development and safety, we are committed to the protection and well-being of every member of our school community. Our proactive approach, which includes measures such as regular risk assessments,

emergency preparedness, and the promotion of respect and civility, ensures that all students are equipped with the knowledge and skills to protect themselves and others. This policy will be regularly reviewed and updated to meet the evolving needs of our community, ensuring that Shining Star International School remains a secure and thriving space for learning and growth.

	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Dr. Aby Daniel A. Head of Inclusion		20/09/2024
Policy Review Approved by:	Mrs. Abhilasha Singh (Principal)		03/10/2024

REFERENCES

1. Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK)
2. The UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 on Child Rights (Wadeema's Law)
3. Abu Dhabi Child Protection Policy
4. British Schools in the Middle East (BSME) Safeguarding Policy
5. The National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM)
6. UNICEF Guidelines on Child Safeguarding
7. Local Laws and Regulations