



مدرسة شيننج ستار أنترناشونال

Shining Star International School, Abu Dhabi

## Our Vision

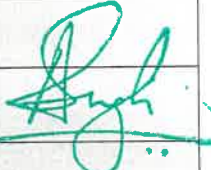
To be a school of innovation & creativity; preparing students for global challenges.

## Our Mission

“Our mission is through the combined efforts of our staff, parents, students, and community to develop future leaders with active and creative minds. Our focus is on the holistic development of the individual, social, moral, intellectual, and physical growth, along with a strong sense of heritage and culture.”

## Core Values

Care, Ownership, Togetherness, Honesty, Empathy, Gratitude  
We ensure that the entire SSIS family follows these values.

Student Protection Policy	
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Authored by	Dr. Aby





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### 1. Introduction

Every student has the right to learn in an educational environment that **upholds their dignity, ensures their safety, and promotes care and respect**. This policy outlines Shining Star International School’s responsibility to **establish and implement robust student protection measures**, with a strong focus on the **prevention of maltreatment** and the **effective identification, reporting, and management of any safeguarding concerns**.

### 2. Purpose

The policy aims to **protect students from all forms of maltreatment**, identify and support those at risk of harm in line with **UAE child protection and education laws**, and ensure a **clear safeguarding framework** within school. It reinforces that **all staff and volunteers are mandated reporters**, clearly defines the **roles and responsibilities of principals, staff, and parents**, and places accountability on school to **coordinate and implement effective measures to safeguard every student**.


### 3. Definitions


Child	Any resident of the UAE under 18 years of age.
Child Protection Coordinator	A Child Protection Coordinator (CPC) is an appointed staff member at the school who is professionally trained and equipped with skills to act upon child protection concerns that arise within their school and is the key contact for staff and authorities where a concern is identified within the school.
Child Protection Specialist	A Child Protection Specialist (CPS) is a person licensed and assigned by the competent authority or the concerned bodies, as the case may be, to preserve the child's rights and protect them within their respective competence, as mentioned in Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights (Wadeema) and bylaws.



Invited Visitor	An individual visiting the school on a temporary basis to interact with students (e.g., a speaker, career fair representative, etc.).
Mandated Reporter	A person who is required by law (under Article 42 of Federal Decree Law No. (3) and its amendments) to report student maltreatment concerns related to students to the CPS. This includes staff and any individual on or off the school premises from which the student requests assistance in notifying the authorities (e.g., Family Care Authority (FCA), the Police, Ministry of Interior – Child Protection Center (MoI-CPC), and ADEK) about their suffering or any other student’s suffering.
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	Protecting students from all risk of harm, including maltreatment and other types of risks that impact their overall health and development, wellbeing, and safety
School Day	The school’s operating hours including time spent by the student in school buses to and from the school and in extra-curricular school activities.
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 a school in Abu Dhabi.
Maltreatment	Physical, emotional, or sexual abuse. Maltreatment includes neglect, exploitation, and/or bullying
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 utilizing its systems and taking part in all activities organized by the school, inside or outside its premises, including travelling to and from the school using its transportation, and moving between and waiting for activities.
Volunteer	An individual engaged by a school on a non-remunerated basis to interact with students (e.g., parent chaperones, etc.).

## Types of Maltreatment

Physical Abuse		An intentional physical act which results in, has a high likelihood of resulting in, or poses a threat of resulting in immediate and/or long-term physical injury or harm to the student’s health, survival, and development.
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Emotional Abuse	An act, whether consistent or inconsistent, used to make a student feel unloved, worthless, and of no value and integrity, interfering with the student's positive mental and emotional development.
Sexual Abuse	Involvement of a student in sexual activity that they may or may not fully comprehend, or that violates the laws or social taboos of society. Student sexual abuse is evidenced by the activity between an adult and a student, or between a student and another student, who by age or development, is in a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power. The intent of the activity is to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person
Neglect	Failure of a parent or any adult supervising a student to provide for the basic needs and rights of a student towards their physical safety, development, and wellbeing, which may lead to a failure to thrive in the context of the resources reasonably available to the parent and causes or has a high probability of causing significant harm to the student's health and/or physical, social, educational, mental, spiritual, or moral integrity.
Exploitation	<p><b>Exploitation</b> refers to the use of a student in work or activities that benefit others and cause harm to the student's <b>physical or mental health, education, or moral and social development.</b> This includes, but is not limited to, <b>child labour, sexual exploitation, involvement in gangs, militias, or military activities,</b> or any form of abuse for personal gain.</p> <p><b>Sexual exploitation</b> is a form of sexual abuse involving the <b>misuse of power</b> by an individual or group who <b>coerces, manipulates, or deceives</b> a student into sexual activity, either through <b>physical contact or digital/technological means,</b> for <b>financial, social, or political benefit.</b></p> <p><b>Economic exploitation</b> occurs when a student <b>below the legal minimum working age</b> is used in employment or related activities for the benefit of others, including the <b>production or delivery of goods or services,</b> in violation of child protection laws.</p>
Bullying	 <p>Repeated physical, social, or verbal aggression exercised by students who feel they are in a position of power against other students who are perceived weaker or powerless, to achieve specific gains or draw attention, in a way that hurts the student physically and/or emotionally. Bullying can be committed by groups or individuals, in online (<b>cyberbullying</b>) or offline settings.</p>
Cyberbullying	Bullying that takes place online "using the means of communication and information technology to insult, use profanity towards, threaten with violence, slander, or blackmail someone" (MoE, 2020).

Online bullying can follow the bullied student wherever they go via social networks and mobile phones and has a wider reach than bullying in the real world.

## 4. Policy Statement

### 4.1 Policy

The school places the **best interests, safety, and wellbeing of every student at the centre of all decisions and actions**. The Principal, teachers, staff, and volunteers share responsibility for **recognising, responding to, and managing any student protection concerns**.

All staff are **legally required and fully supported** to report concerns about student safety and will **never be penalised** for acting in the best interest of a child.

Every student has the right to:

- Be **heard**, express their views, and take part in age-appropriate school decisions
- Be treated with **dignity, respect, fairness, and justice**
- Receive **support and advocacy** whenever needed
- Feel **safe and protected**, and understand what constitutes risk or harm

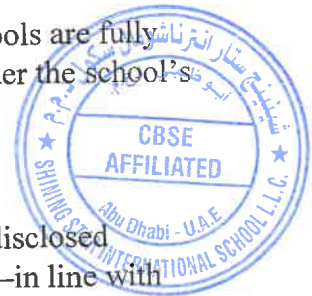
The school maintains a **zero-tolerance approach to all forms of maltreatment**, ensuring a safe and caring environment for all students at all times.

### 4.2 Legal obligations & rights

- SSIS will comply with the guide on Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions (DAA Child Protection Committee, 2024) for the management of abuse-related offenses that are reported within and/or occurring within a school.
- SSIS will ensure that the student protection policy has been communicated, understood, and agreed to by all stakeholders (board members, staff and volunteers, parents, and students). Students shall receive a student-friendly version of the student protection policy, and their assent should be obtained when any student protection concerns are raised.
- The school and its Principal are guardians of the rights of students to not be exposed to maltreatment. The Principal acts as the guardian of all students while they are under the school's supervision and shall take responsibilities that fall under this role.
- All students have equal rights for care, protection, and safety in all schools. Schools are fully responsible for the care, protection, and safety of students while students are under the school's supervision.

### 4.3 Reporting of Concerns of Maltreatment within School

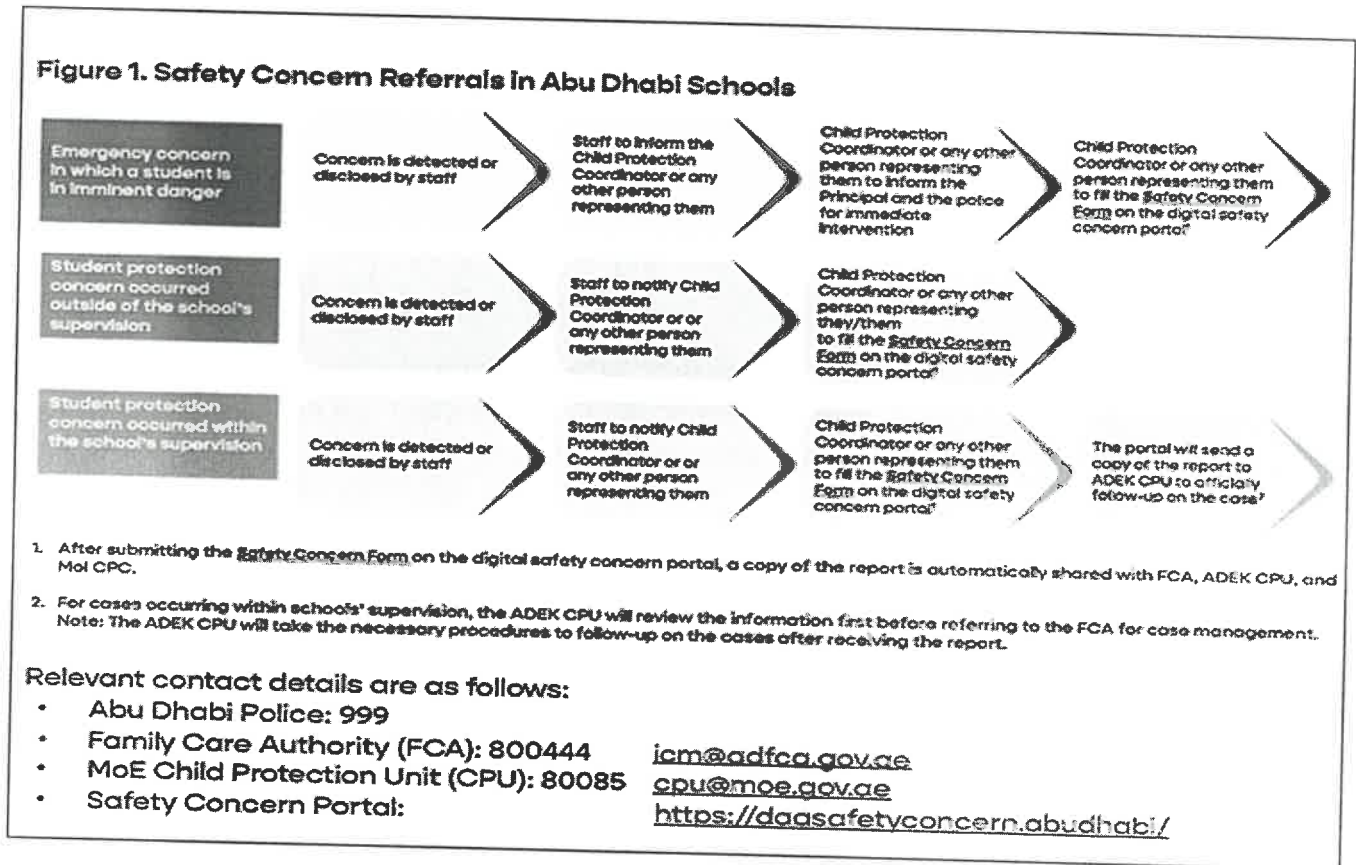
- All school staff and volunteers are legally required to report any suspected or disclosed cases of student maltreatment—whether it occurs inside or outside the school—in line with UAE Child Rights Law (Wadeema).
- Concerns must be reported within 24 hours to the ADEK Child Protection Unit (CPU), following ADEK-approved reporting procedures.
- All disclosures or suspicions of maltreatment must be immediately shared with the Child Protection Coordinator (CPC) or a member of the Child Protection Team (CPT).
- Bullying cases are handled under the Ministry of Education's National Anti-Bullying Policy. However, severe bullying that causes or risks serious physical or emotional harm is treated as maltreatment and managed under student protection procedures.
- Each school must appoint:



- w) A Child Protection Coordinator (CPC) (ADEK-trained, preferably a senior staff member)
- b) A Child Protection Team (CPT) (3–5 trained members including counsellors and senior leaders)

- If the **CPC or CPT is unavailable**, or if reporting to them is not in the student's best interest, staff must **report directly to ADEK CPU or the Family Care Authority (FCA)** using the **online Safety Concern Form**
- **Emergency cases**, where a student is in immediate danger, must be reported **immediately to the Police (999) and the Principal**, alongside submitting the Safety Concern Form.
- All reporting is carried out with the **student's safety, confidentiality, and best interests as the highest priority**.

Please refer to process of referrals in the school



#### 4.4 Data Confidentiality

- All student protection case reports and related data are strictly confidential. This includes the identity of:
  - The student involved
  - The alleged or suspected perpetrator
  - The person who reported the concern
- Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis and exclusively with authorized authorities, such as:
  - ADEK Child Protection Unit (CPU)
  - Family Care Authority (FCA)
  - Investigative teams
  - Abu Dhabi Judicial Department
- No case—whether active or closed—may be discussed with:
  - The media
  - Other staff members
  - Third parties
  - Unauthorized ADEK personnel



- **Disclosure is permitted** only when legally required **and strictly within official investigative or judicial processes.**
- **These measures are in place to protect the privacy, dignity, and safety of all individuals involved and to ensure compliance with UAE laws and ADEK regulations.**

#### **4.5 Training & Accountability**

- The Child Protection Coordinator (CPC) and Child Protection Team (CPT) are required to complete all ADEK-mandated student protection and safeguarding training. They must also sign an affidavit confirming adherence to the highest ethical standards and code of conduct when managing cases.
- All school staff must complete ADEK-required safeguarding and student protection training and formally acknowledge that they understand their roles and responsibilities.
- Volunteers and visiting personnel must receive an appropriate induction on student protection and safeguarding. All visitors are also required to confirm that they have read and understood the school's Student Protection Policy.
- Staff members who provide counselling, student support, advocacy, or work in close personal contact with students must undergo ongoing safeguarding training and operate under the supervision of the Principal.
- Any Child Protection Specialist (CPS) working within the ADEK Child Protection Unit (CPU) must hold certification from the Ministry of Community Development (MoCD).

#### **4.6 Vetting, Hiring, and Monitoring**

- All staff, volunteers, and invited visitors are thoroughly vetted and screened before being allowed to work with or access areas where students are present. This includes criminal record and background checks, including from countries of previous employment or residence, as applicable.
- The Principal holds full responsibility and accountability for ensuring that all individuals working in the school are suitable, safe, and fully compliant with student protection and safeguarding requirements. Any person who poses a risk to student safety or wellbeing is not permitted to work with students.
- The school ensures ongoing monitoring of staff conduct. Any alleged inappropriate behaviour or actions that may place a student at risk of harm are reported immediately and addressed in line with established safeguarding procedures.
- Staff members found guilty of serious misconduct following a formal written investigation will have their appointment letters revoked, in accordance with:
  - ADEK School Employment Policy
  - UAE Child Rights Law (Wadeema)
  - UAE Labour Relations laws and related regulations

#### **4.7 Student Protection Learning Resources**

- Age-appropriate student protection learning resources shall be developed/procured and distributed to students to support their knowledge and ability to understand personal safety and wellbeing and what actions they can take to report any violations and seek help.
- Student protection learning resources shall be taught in the classroom and in counselling sessions and include any media (story books, activity books, illustrations, posters, reading content, etc.) that can be discussed either individually or within a group setting.
- Student protection shall be taught by trained staff who are skilled in understanding student protection and student development.



Principals shall:

- Comply fully with this policy and make it publicly available within the school.
- Implement procedures to prevent student maltreatment and ensure all staff understand them.
- Maintain constant oversight of students under school supervision.
- Prioritize student protection and take immediate action if maltreatment is suspected.
- Ensure students know how and where to report concerns safely, without fear of punishment.
- Ensure staff, volunteers, and students are aware of safe reporting channels for suspected maltreatment.
- Incorporate feedback from students and parents on safety and protection measures.
- Immediately report any alleged or suspected cases of student maltreatment.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers attend required student protection and safeguarding training and acknowledge completion.
- Conduct parent orientation at enrolment and annually to explain the policy and their responsibilities.
- Maintain student records in line with ADEK requirements and ensure confidentiality.
- Temporarily suspend staff suspected of maltreatment until investigations are complete.
- Provide students with safe and confidential ways to report concerns about their safety and wellbeing.
- Vet, hire, and monitor all staff, volunteers, and visitors according to safeguarding standards.

Staff and volunteers shall:

- Report immediately an alleged and/or suspected case of student maltreatment upon discovery.
- Care for students at all times while under the school's supervision.
- Understand this policy to address alleged and/or suspected student maltreatment cases.
- Attend and participate in mandated student protection and safeguarding training.

Parents shall:

- Cooperate with the Principal and staff, answer all inquiries related to the student's behaviour, academic performance, and respond to their feedback and guidance.
- Attend all scheduled parent meetings with the school.
- Communicate any concerns, observations, or changes in the student's behaviour to the Principal, board members, and/or to the concerned staff.
- Support the school in ensuring safe online practices during distance learning and home work.

## 6. Compliance & Enforcement

This policy is effective from the start of the Academic Year 2024/25 (Fall term). Our school is committed to full compliance with this policy and will ensure that all requirements are met by the start of the Academic Year 2025/26 (Fall term).

We acknowledge that ADEK will actively monitor compliance with this policy.

## 7. References

- Federal Decree Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights (Wadeema)
- Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 on Crimes and Penalties, including amendments
- Federal Decree Law No. (18) of 2020 on Private Education, including amendments
- Any other applicable local or federal laws in effect at the time of the incident

