



**THE INDIAN HIGH SCHOOL  
AL GARHOUD CAMPUS**

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**SAFEGUARDING POLICY  
INCLUDING CHILD PROTECTION**

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**Academic Year 2026 - 2027**



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## 1. Rationale

**The Indian High School, Al Garhoud campus**, is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the students. The school creates safe environments for all stakeholders through robust safeguarding practices and ensures that adults who work in the school, including volunteers, don't pose a risk to the children in **both Phases (Pre-Kg to Gr 4)**.

## 2. Policy Statement

Students should be treated with respect, consideration, and dignity. Every student (Pre-KG to 4) has the right to privacy and confidentiality. All learners should be allowed to participate in decisions involving their healthcare when such participation is not contraindicated.

## 3. Scope

This policy applies to all stakeholders of the school community. All stakeholders are made aware and trained to respond to concerns and keep up to date with the policies and practices.

## 4. Purpose

The purpose of this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is to ensure that all students learn in a safe, secure, and supportive environment where their wellbeing is prioritized at all times.

The policy outlines the school's commitment to protecting children from all forms of abuse, neglect, harm, and exploitation, in line with UAE regulations and KHDA expectations. It establishes clear procedures for identifying, reporting, and responding to safeguarding concerns.

The policy also promotes a culture of vigilance, accountability, and shared responsibility among staff, parents, and the wider school community to ensure that every child is protected and supported to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

## 5. Types of Abuses

Abuse of students can cause serious behavioral problems. Abuse can be classified under physical, emotional, sexual, cyber and potential abuse.

### **Physical Abuse:**

An action that causes actual or likely physical injury to a student or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering is called Physical abuse.

- Beating (with hands or objects).
- Pinching / Pushing.
- Hurling objects at a person.
- Making a student kneel for an extended period.
- Being made to stand for hours inside the class / outside the class / in the sun.
- Making a student-run in the playground for a long period proves injurious to health.
- Bullying.

**Emotional Abuse:**

- Any action that causes mental trauma for a student by severe or persistent emotional ill-treatment or rejection resulting in behavioral problems
- Humiliating with a student by calling him/her names (especially in front of his peers, teachers, and parents).
- Hurling verbal abuses at a student.
- Startling a student by banging the desk or striking the desk with an object.
- Misrepresenting a student's learning disability as a discipline problem.
- Denying a student adequate time for Recess/Games.
- Abusing a student's parents in the class.
- Making negative comparisons to other students/siblings.
- Turning a blind eye to bullying.

**Sexual Abuse:**

Sexual abuse is the physical exploitation of a student that violates social taboos or family roles, resulting in serious emotional damage.

**Cyber Abuse:**

Cyber abuse is to harm or harass a student in a deliberate, repeated, and hostile manner through the use of the internet and social media. Cyber abuse includes posting rumors or gossip about a student on the internet bringing about hatred in other's minds, or it may go to the extent of personally identifying the student and publishing materials severely defaming and humiliating him/her.

**Potential Abuse:**

Situations where medical and social assessments indicate a high degree of risk that a student may be abused in future, including the situation of another student in the same household having been abused or where there is a known abuser, is classified as potential abuse.

**6. Procedure to be Followed in Case of Abuse of a Student**

Any child, in any family, or in any school, could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here". Key points for staff to remember when taking actions are:

- In an emergency, take the necessary action to help the child.
- Report your concerns to the DCPO (Designated Child Protection Officer) as quickly as possible, immediately when there is evidence of physical or sexual abuse and certainly by the end of the day.
- Do not start your own investigation
- Share information on a need-to-know basis only, and do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends, or family.
- Seek support for yourself if you are distressed or need to debrief.

## **What to do if a student makes a disclosure:**

If a student discloses directly to a member of staff or volunteer, he/she must:

- Listen carefully to what is said and keep an open mind. You should not decide as to whether or not the abuse has taken place,
- Ask only open questions such as 'How did that happen'? What was happening at the time? Anything else you want to tell me?
- Do not ask leading questions which may be considered suggesting what might have happened, or who has perpetrated the abuse, as this can later be interpreted as putting ideas into the child's mind. Depending on the situation, suggest it would be helpful to continue the discussion with the Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) present but do not force the child to repeat what he/she said in front of another person.
- Never give undertakings of absolute confidentiality to a student: breaking a child's confidence would be inappropriate, it is better to say that you might have to tell someone who will ensure the correct action is taken, make notes of the details of the disclosure using the child's words where possible.
- Reassure the child they have done the right thing and tell them they are not to blame
- Offer ongoing support.

## **Records should:**

- Be accurate and descriptive, including the date, time and place of the conversation and the essence of what was said and done by whom and in whose presence.
- Not having assumptions or any opinions.
- Indicate sources of information be clear and concise.
- Be signed by the person making it and use names, not initials.
- Be kept securely and handed to the Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) as soon as possible.
- All evidence, for example, scribbled notes, mobile phones containing text messages, clothing, computers, must be safeguarded and preserved and passed to the DCPO.

All suspicions or complaints of abuse must be reported immediately to the DCPO except in the case of an allegation which itself involves a Designated Child Protection Officer; in which case the matter should be reported directly to the headmistress.

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions will be recorded in writing and securely stored by the DCPO.

## **Staff should be concerned if a pupil:**

- Has any injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with children's activities.
- Regularly has unexplained injuries.
- Frequently has injuries, even when apparently reasonable explanations are given; offers confused or conflicting explanations on how injuries were sustained; exhibits significant changes in behavior, performance or attitude.
- Indulges in sexual behaviour which is unusually explicit and/or inappropriate to his or her age;
- Discloses an experience in which he or she may have been significantly harmed.

## **Children missing from education**

All children, regardless of their age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs they may have, are entitled to a full-time education. Our school recognises that a child missing education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and will follow the school procedures for unauthorised absence and for children missing education. Parents should always inform us of the reason for any absence. Where contact is not made, a referral may be made to another appropriate agency.

### **7. Care and Protection of Students of Determination**

Based on Law No. (2) of 2014 Concerning Protection of the Rights of Students of Determination in the Emirate of Dubai, the school prohibits exploiting or demeaning students of determination or abusing them in any way. Basic care and necessary protection are provided for students of determination.

Keeping in line with Federal Law No. (29) of 2006 concerning the Rights of People of Determination, the school guarantees students of determination equal opportunities in education in regular classes. The school provides transport service to its students without prejudice to its responsibility for student safety and for transporting them from and to the school. Student affairs are administered professionally and impartially, and the school provides equality amongst students and prevents discrimination based on race, gender, nationality, religion, or social class.

### **8. Support for pupils and staff**

The headmistress will make all reasonable attempts to protect and otherwise support pupils who have disclosed information about child abuse incidents. Dealing with a disclosure from a child is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff concerned should consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the DCPO.

### **9. Confidentiality**

Members of staff have access to confidential information about pupils in order to undertake their everyday responsibilities. Staff and volunteers are expected:

- to treat information, they receive about pupils in a discreet and confidential manner.
- to seek advice from the headmistress if they are in any doubt sharing information they hold, or which has been requested of them.
- to be cautious when passing information to others about a pupil.
- never to guarantee confidentiality about a safeguarding concern (including parents / care givers or pupils) or promise to keep a secret. In accordance with statutory requirements, where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the designated safeguarding lead and may require further referral to and subsequent investigation by appropriate authorities.

### **10. Safeguarding Records, Monitoring and Escort ID Cards**

Keeping clear and accurate records is a key part of good safeguarding practice. Any concerns or disclosures should be written down by the staff member who receives them and passed to the DCPO (Designated Child Protection Officer) without delay. The DCPO, along with the Headmistress, will decide

on the next steps and whether the pupil needs to be monitored. These records are stored securely in the DCPO's office. When a student moves to a new school, the Headmistress will share any relevant information with the new school as needed. To improve student safety, the school has introduced **Escort ID Cards** for students who do not use school transport. These cards must be carried by parents or other adults authorised by the parents when picking up the child.

## 11. Staff Training

All staff (Teaching and non-Teaching) receive safeguarding training annually once as part of the CPD program. All Staff members (Teaching and non-Teaching) are informed of any changes subsequently made. Additionally, all the newly recruited staff members are trained on safeguarding as a part of induction. Need-based training is arranged for all staff members at the beginning of new terms.

## 12. Investigation, Referral and Reporting

The DCPO will ensure that members of staff, students and other members of the school community, including Governors and volunteers are aware that it is their responsibility to:

- Protect children from abuse.
- Be aware of the school's child protection procedures in this policy.
- Know how to access and implement the procedures independently, where necessary, maintain accurate records of any significant complaint, conversation or event, and report all concerns to the DCPO without delay.
- Undertake appropriate safeguarding training, including regular refresher training in accordance with KHDA requirements.

It is not the responsibility of school staff to investigate suspected abuse. The school is not an investigation or intervention agency for child protection, but it plays a vital role in recognising and referring concerns.

On being notified of a complaint or suspicion of abuse, the DCPO will:

- Operate safeguarding procedures in line with local requirements.
- Consider the nature and seriousness of the concern. Any allegation involving a serious criminal offence will be referred to the police.
- Take into account the wishes and feelings of the student; however, safeguarding decisions may override these where necessary to ensure safety.
- Respect confidentiality in line with safeguarding and legal obligations.

If there is doubt about making a referral, the DCPO will consult relevant authorities on a no-name basis. Where there is reasonable concern that a child may be at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made without delay (within 24 hours) and followed accordingly.

The DCPO will keep the Headmistress informed of all cases unless the complaint involves her.

Staff must not investigate suspected abuse or allegations against other staff and must refer all concerns immediately to the DCPO.

If the child's situation does not improve, the DCPO or the reporting staff member will escalate the concern to ensure appropriate action is taken and the child's safety is protected.

## 13. Notifying to Parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively, and the DCPO will contact the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion, or disclosure.

However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problems, advice will be sought first from relevant UAE agencies.

## 14. Responsibilities of the whole school staff

There is a named person(s) in our school who is the DCPO (Designated Child Protection Officer). The DCPO, from the circle of happiness, inclusion and wellbeing works closely with the school headmistress.

All members of the school staff have a responsibility to identify, and report suspected abuse and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the students in the school. In doing so, they should seek advice and support as necessary from the DCPO.

All staff are expected to attend regular and relevant professional development sessions.

All staff are expected to provide a safe and caring environment in which children can develop the confidence to voice ideas, feelings and opinions. Children should be treated with respect within a framework of agreed and understood behavior.

All staff are expected to be aware of symptoms of abuse, report concerns to DCPO as appropriate, and keep clear, dated, factual and confidential records of child protection concerns.

### **Specific responsibilities of the Health and Safety Officer:**

The Health and Safety Officer plays a critical role in ensuring a safe physical environment for all students and staff, thereby supporting the broader safeguarding framework of the school. Their responsibilities include:

- Risk Assessment and Mitigation: Conduct regular risk assessments of school premises, facilities, and activities to identify potential hazards and implement measures to mitigate them.
- Incident Reporting and Investigation: Ensure all accidents, injuries, and near-miss incidents are promptly reported, documented, and investigated, and that appropriate corrective actions are taken.
- Emergency Preparedness: Develop, implement, and regularly review emergency response plans (e.g., fire drills, lockdown procedures) in coordination with the DCPO and school leadership.
- Health and Safety Training: Provide training and guidance to staff and students on health and safety protocols, including safe evacuation procedures and first aid awareness.
- Collaboration with DCPO: Work closely with the Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) to ensure that the physical environment does not pose a risk to students' safety and wellbeing.
- Monitoring of Safety Equipment: Ensure that all safety equipment (e.g., fire extinguishers, alarms, first aid kits) is regularly inspected, maintained, and accessible.
- Support for Students of Determination: Ensure that all safety measures are inclusive and accessible for students of determination, in line with UAE laws and school policies.
- Compliance with Regulations: Ensure the school complies with all relevant UAE health and safety laws and guidelines and maintain up-to-date records of compliance.

### **Specific responsibilities of the school doctor/nurse and counsellor:**

- The school Doctor/Nurse or Counsellor may be requested to provide physical treatment and emotional support after a child has been abused
- The doctor or nurse may be required to conduct an examination if there are physical injuries and write an initial report about the child's physical and emotional condition
- The doctor/ nurse and/or counsellor can provide positive encouragement to the child, liaise

with family members to determine how best to promote the child's safety both at school and at home.

- Child abuse can leave deep emotional scars and the School Doctor or Nurse should recognize these and help develop a rehabilitation plan in liaison with the DCPO and other appropriate staff in the case team.
- In some cases, the child may have to take medication as a result of abuse. The school doctor or nurse should ensure that all standards and procedures for administering medications in the school setting are met.

### **15. Relevant Legislation or Authorities**

- KHDA Child Protection and Safeguarding Regulations and Guidelines.
- Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 Concerning Child Rights (Wadeema's Law).
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), 1989 – ratified by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on 3 January 1997.
- Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 Concerning Child Rights (Wadeema's Law), which provides the legal framework for child protection in the UAE.

### **16. Involvement of Outside Agencies**

#### **Dubai Foundation for Women and Children (DFWAC)**

The first licensed non-profit shelter in the UAE for women and children who are victims of domestic violence, child abuse and human trafficking. It was established in July 2007 by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to offer victims immediate protection and support services

In accordance with international human rights obligations, the Foundation provides a helpline, emergency shelter, and support services to women and children victims. DFWAC aims to protect physically, sexually and emotionally abused women and children, prevent ongoing abuse and the escalation of violence and promote social awareness through education and outreach.

DFWAC provides:

- Case management medical care
- Psychological support counselling
- Legal, consular and immigration assistance
- Helpline 800 111 or email [help@dfwac.ae](mailto:help@dfwac.ae)
- Website – [www.dfwac.ae](http://www.dfwac.ae)

#### **Dubai Police Human Rights Department 24/7 Duty Officer 056 6862121**

Latifa Hospital Child Welfare Unit Tel: 04  
2193000 Fax: 04 3241717  
PO Box 4115 Dubai, UAE Working Hours: 24 Hours

#### **Community Development Authority (Centre)**

Any child in Dubai who needs help, protection from abuse, or advice can pick up the phone and dial 800-988 any time. Four social workers and psychologists at the Child Protection Centre in Al Barsha are on

standby to assist residents under 18 years of age to ensure their rights are protected and upheld. The recently opened centre under the Community Development Authority (CDA) is part of CDA's comprehensive strategy to make Dubai the most secure and ideal environment for children to live. It is tasked with rehabilitating, providing counselling, visiting and assisting children in need

### **Al Ameen Reporting (Dubai & Federal Police)**

The Al Ameen Service was officially launched in September 2003. Using this service, the people of Dubai can communicate confidentially with the authorities to keep abreast of development in Dubai and on issues that concern them [www.alameen.ae/en/](http://www.alameen.ae/en/)

### **Preventative Safeguarding Through Training & External Partnerships**

As part of our proactive safeguarding commitment, we do not rely solely on reactive reporting mechanisms. We actively engage external government authorities and certified organisations to deliver ongoing training, awareness programmes, and emergency preparedness workshops for staff and students.

Regularly conducted programmes include:

- **Road Safety & Transport Awareness Workshops** by the Roads and Transport Authority (RTA)
- **Fire Safety Awareness & Fire Drill Training** conducted in collaboration with Dubai Civil Defence
- **Drug prevention and Cyber safety & security awareness sessions** delivered by Dubai Police
- **First Aid & CPR Training** facilitated by certified medical professionals, including Aster Volunteers

These sessions ensure that staff are equipped to:

- Recognise and respond to safeguarding risks
- Act confidently during medical or safety emergencies
- Maintain a safe learning environment
- Comply with UAE safety regulations and child protection standards
- The School Medical Centre operates under the guidance of the Dubai Health Authority (DHA), strictly adhering to all current regulations, approved medical applications, reporting systems, and updated healthcare guidelines to ensure the highest standards of student health and safety.

This structured collaboration with external agencies strengthens our safeguarding framework, enhances staff competency, and reinforces our commitment to creating a secure, responsive, and child-centred environment.

### **17. Effectiveness, Review and Revision**

This policy has been in effect since 2017. It is reviewed annually and/or whenever regulatory and licensing authorities amend their requirements. The policy was last revised in April 2022, March 2023, June 2024, September 2025, and February 2026.