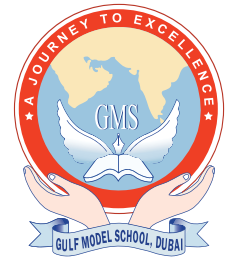


# مَدْرَسَةُ الْخَلِيجِ النَّمُوذَجِيَّةِ

## Gulf Model School



## SAFEGUARDING POLICY



## INTRODUCTION

The health, safety and well-being of all our children is of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our school. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school.

Protecting children is everyone's responsibility at our school and this includes reporting any act committed by a parent, guardian or any other person, to a child enrolled in the school which results in neglect, physical or emotional injury or sexual harm.

All staff has a duty and will report any suspected or disclosed issues of child protection to the Child Protection Officer (CPO). If the threat is immediate or on-going it will be reported to the appropriate local safeguarding authorities as set in place by the UAE.

## PURPOSE

The safeguarding of children from harm is the highest priority here at Amled School. Our students have a right to feel safe and protected from significant physical and emotional harm both inside and outside of school. This policy is a crucial part of promoting the welfare of our students; it is designed to inform our staff regarding the signs of child abuse and to equip them with the knowledge on what to do in the event of suspected abuse. This policy defines abuse, outlines signs of abuse and explains the procedures for investigating and reporting suspected cases.

## DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse refers to any act committed by a parent, guardian or any other person to a child under the age of 18, which results in injury to the child. These acts include situations where there is neglect, emotional, physical or sexual harm.

## AIMS

This policy ensures that all staff in our school can follow the necessary procedures with regard to a child protection issue.

### It aims

- In the safeguarding our students
- To raise awareness and identify responsibility in reporting possible cases of abuse;
- To ensure effective communication between all staff when dealing with child protection



issues

- To inform all parties of the correct procedures to use in the case of a child protection issue.

## WHEN TO BE CONCERNED

**Staff should be concerned if a student:**

- Has any injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with the child's activities
- Regularly has unexplained injuries
- Frequently has injuries even when apparently reasonable explanations are given
- Offers confused or conflicting explanations about how injuries were sustained
- Exhibits significant changes in behaviour, 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 harmed.

## DEALING WITH DISCLOSURE

If a student discloses that he or she has been harmed in some way, the member of staff should:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is being said
- Allow the child to talk freely
- Reassure the child but not make promises which not be possible to keep
- Not promise confidentiality, as it might be necessary to refer the case to the appropriate authority
- Reassure the pupil that what has happened is not their fault
- Stress that it was the right thing to discuss
- Listen rather than asking direct questions
- Ask open questions rather than leading questions
- Not criticize the perpetrator / Guilty person whoever it might be.
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.

## PROCEDURES

When a child reports abuse, the teacher will inform the Child Protection Officer (CPO). The teacher should also inform the CPO as soon as possible if there is reasonable cause to believe that abuse is occurring. The CPO will take initial steps to gather information regarding the reported incident.



At this stage he/she will:

- Interview staff members as necessary and document information relative to the case.
- Consult with school personnel to review the child's history in the school.

The CPO will then form a school-based response team to address the report. The response team may include the school doctor, nurse, counsellor, teacher, and other individuals as the CPO sees fit. In all cases, follow up activities will be conducted in a manner that ensures that information is documented factually and that strict confidentiality is maintained.

Based on acquired information, a plan of action will be developed to assist the child and family.

**Actions that may take place are:**

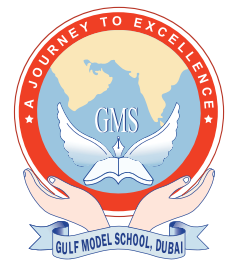
- Discussions between the child and the CPO in order to gain more information.
- In-class observations of the child by the teacher, counsellor, or administrator.
- Meetings with the family to present the school's concerns.
- Referral of the student and family to Students Development Centre or to external professional counselling after the report by the Inclusion Champion of GMS school.
- Consultation with local authorities if needed.

**Subsequent to a substantiated case of child abuse or neglect, the following actions may take place:**

- The CPO will maintain contact with the child and family to provide support and guidance as appropriate.
- The CPO will provide the child's teachers with on going support, and provide strategies for the teacher to use.
- The School Principal refers the case to local authorities for further action.

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE WHOLE SCHOOL STAFF**

- There is a named person(s) in our school who is the CPO.
- 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 CPO.
- 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 behaviour.

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

#### **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 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 CPO and Senior Level Management team.
- In some cases, the child may have to take medication as a result of the abuse. The School Doctor or Nurse should ensure that all standards and procedures for administering medications in the school setting are met.

#### **Specific responsibilities of the HR department and Security**

When recruiting any member of the teaching staff or support staff with access to children, all reasonable steps should be taken to ensure compliance as far as possible with the following:

- Provision of an up-to-date police 'good conduct' letter and/or criminal records check
- That two or more references are taken up from previous employers with follow-up questions with regard to the applicant's compliance with any Child Protection procedures
- A declaration signed by the prospective employee on any application form and/or contract that s/he has not been convicted or undergoing court or disciplinary proceedings for any offence involving child abuse and/or breach in exercising a duty of care for children

The Security staff undertake to be vigilant and adhere to the procedures governing the



access, detailed record-keeping, provision of a Visitor's Pass to be worn for ease of identification and monitoring of visitors to the school

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and visitors to GMS School.

The staff at GMS School have a responsibility to promote the safety and well-being of our students. All staff must report any suspected incidents of child abuse to any one of the Child Protection Officer's (CPO's). The following committee will enquire about the child protection issues and ensure the safety of all the students of GMS School

- **Senior Level Management Team**
  - Ms. Shiny Davison (Academic Director)
  - Ms. Annie Mathew (Principal)
  - Mr. Gahfoor ( GM)
  - Mrs. Princiya ( Inclsion Champion )
- **CPO's**
  - Mr. Sumesh
  - Mrs. Sisira
- **The School Doctor**
- **The School Counsellors**

### **The CPO's will:**

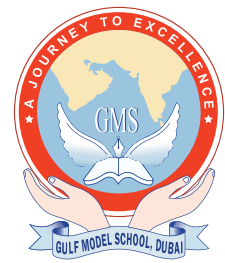
Follow the agreed procedures

- Know how to identify the signs and symptoms of abuse
- Provide advice and support to staff
- Maintain relevant records of incident reports
- Keep all information confidentially and safe in a locked cabinet
- Know when and how to submit a referral to outside agencies

### **School Commitment-Recruitment, Training and Selection**

The following procedures will be used in the recruitment and selection process of any staff member

- All prospective employees are required to submit a completed GMS application form, a copy of their full curriculum vitae and a covering letter.



- These will be checked initially by the HR Manager, when any gaps or discrepancies will be followed up.
- Following this initial check, a member of the SLT will review the application  
The application form and accompanying submissions will be kept on file along with the required original copies of relevant attested qualifications in order to meet the requirements of Dubai's Knowledge and Human Development Agency (KHDA). This can be done once an offer of appointment has been made.
- All prospective employees are required to have a reference check and must have at least two references, one being from their last Line Manager, Senior Leader or Principal or in the case of non-educational staff, the person's current or most recent employer.
- The school does not accept open references. Formal, written references will be sought directly from the referees.
- Once received, at least one reference will be authenticated by the HR Manager, the Principal or their appointed deputy, by a phone call to the supplier of the reference, who may also be asked to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. Where this is the case, detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges.
- Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees may be contacted in order to clarify any such anomalies or discrepancies. Where this is the case, detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges.
- Among other things, referees will be asked specific questions about the following: (i)  
(i) the candidate's suitability to work with children and young people;  
(ii) any substantiated allegations;  
(iii) any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, relating to the Safeguarding of children and young people;  
(iv) the candidate's suitability for the post.
- Wherever possible, references will be requested in advance of interview. All references will be kept on file.
- All prospective appointments will be checked against the 'Barred List' before the appointment is confirmed. The procedures set out above will not normally be necessary for:  
(i) visitors to the school, who have no unsupervised contact with pupils;  
(ii) building or other contractors provided they have no unsupervised contact with students;  
(iii) those on the school site only when students are not present.



- All visitors and contractors sign in and are given an ID badge and are fully supervised at all times as appropriate
- Staff will be provided with a copy of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and code of behaviour and will be required to sign a document certifying that they have read it and agree to abide by its contents.
- All these policies are applicable when students go on trips away from school. At least one male and one female will be present to support students.

### **Framework**

The CPO, Principal and Heads of Section will disseminate policy and provide INSET training for all staff. Staff should discuss any concerns regarding Child Protection with the CPO. The CPO will then consult with the School Counsellor and the Principal who will advise on the monitoring of children and the making of referrals to the appropriate organisations.

The Principal is responsible for reporting issues related to this policy to the CEO/ Board. Board members will not be given specific details relating to child protection situations.

### **Allegations against staff**

Teachers who hear an allegation of abuse against another member of staff should report the matter immediately to the CPO's.

### **Policy Review**

This policy is to be reviewed annually, though any deficiencies or weaknesses in children protection arrangements will be remedied without delay. The CPO, Principal, Vice Principal and Academic Director (on behalf of the Board) will undertake an annual review of the school's Child Protection / safeguarding policies and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.

## **APPENDIX A CATEGORIES OF ABUSE PHYSICAL ABUSE:**

Is actual or attempted physical injury to a child where there is definite knowledge, or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.





- Unexplained injuries or burns (particularly if they are recurrent)
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Fear of returning home
- Fear of medical help
- Aggression towards others
- Self-destructive tendencies

### **EMOTIONAL ABUSE:**

Failure to provide for the child's basic emotional needs such as to have a severe effect on the behaviour and development of the child. This includes conveying to children the feeling that they are worthless or unloved.

- Physical / mental / emotional developmental lags
- Admission of punishment which seems excessive
- Over reaction to mistakes
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional response to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviour (eg, rocking, thumb sucking etc)
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Self-mutilation
- Extremes of passivity or aggression

### **SEXUAL ABUSE:**

Where a child may be deemed to have been sexually abused when any person(s), by design or neglect, exploits the child, directly or indirectly, in any activity intended to lead to the sexual arousal or other forms of gratification of that person or any other person(s) – including organised networks. This definition holds whether or not there has been genital contact and whether or not the child is said to have initiated the behaviour.

#### **Signs and Symptoms:**

- Age-inappropriate sexual knowledge, language, behaviours
- Loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Regressive behaviours such as thumb sucking, needing previously discarded cuddly toys

- Becoming withdrawn, isolated
- Inability to focus
- Reluctance to go home
- Bed-wetting
- Drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Trying to be 'extra good'
- Over-reacting to criticism
- Have outbursts of anger / irritability

### **NEGLECT:**

Refers to persistent or deliberate failure to meet a child's physical or psychological needs for example a failure to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter, failure to protect a child or failure to provide adequate medical care. It may also involve neglect or failure to give adequate response to a child's emotional needs.

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Frequent lateness and/or unexplained non-attendance
- Untreated medical problems
- Low self-esteem
- Poor peer relationships
- Stealing

### **WHAT TO DO ON DISCLOSURE**

**Stay calm**

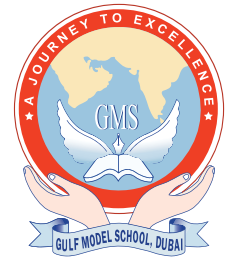
(Don't over-react, however shocked you may be)



**Listen, hear and believe**

(Listen carefully, take it seriously)





**Give time for the person to say what they want**

(Don't make assumptions and don't offer alternative explanations, ask questions beginning with  
Tell me about...Explain...Describe... Avoid 'who, what, when, where' questions)



**Reassure and explain that they have done the right thing in telling.**

(Do not promise confidentiality; explain that only those professionals who need to  
know will be informed)



**Record in writing as near verbatim as possible and as soon as possible on a Disclosure Form**

(Use the child's own words, make your record as soon as possible after the event, so that you  
don't forget anything, and include information about what action was taken afterwards)



**Report to the CPO**