



PROGRESSIVE ENGLISH SCHOOL (L.L.C.)

(Approved by the Ministry of Education, UAE, Affiliated to CISCE (ICSE / ISC), New Delhi)

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CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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VISION

Expanding knowledge and understanding leads to wisdom

MISSION

PESS enables students to become self-motivated, competent, lifelong learners to generate creative ideas to do the right things for the growth of the society.

MOTTO

Learn Progress Lead

Mission:

To provide effective and empowering child protection, positive communication, advocacy, personal safety, and self-defense skills for all ages, abilities, cultures, beliefs, genders, and identities, locally and around the world.

Identity Statement:

The purpose of this policy, is defined as all measure, steps and actions that must be taken to protect students from risks that may cause harm or injury while they are in the school care, travelling to and from the school using school transport, and moving between, waiting for, and taking part in all activities organized by the school inside or outside the school campus.

Policy Statement:

We recognize our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students. We endeavor to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors and are consistent with those of PESS.

Policy Aims:

- To provide extensive resources in teaching effective, upbeat, and empowering child protection, positive communication, and personal safety programs for all ages and abilities – locally and around the world.
- To prepare children, teens, and adults, including those with special needs, to prevent and stop bullying, abuse, harassment, assault, and other emotional, social, or physical violence.
- To establish an international community of leaders who are dedicated to establishing a long-lasting organization that can sustain this work.

Policy Principles

- The school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance.
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
- Students and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support.
- Children who are safe and feel safe are better equipped to learn
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm at home, in the community or in school.
- If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral will be made to relevant statutory body and public services. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving, any staff member with concerns should press for reconsideration. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some stage.
- All staff members will maintain an attitude of 'It could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child.

Safeguarding Legislation and Guidance

- The law and guidance set within the UAE is as follows
- UAE Federal Law No.3 of 2016 on Child Rights
- Ministry of Interior - Child Protection center website (www.moi-cpc.gov.ae)
- UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 1987 on Penal code
- UAE School Inspection Framework 2016, Section 5 The Protection, Care, Guidance and Support of students.
- UAE Department of Health, School Guidelines for Private Schools 2011

Roles and Responsibilities

Principal Will

- Comply with the provisions of this policy.
- Ensure that procedures to prevent situations that could lead to the abuse or neglect of students are in place and understood by all school staff and leaders
- Ensure the supervision of students at all times while in school's care.
- Ensure that there is priority emphasis within the school on the protection of the students and for taking immediate actions when there is suspicion of cases of student abuse or neglect
- Ensure that students can safely report their concerns about abuse and/or neglect without fear of retribution or punishment
- Ensure that staff and others can safely report their concerns about the potential exposure of any student to abuse and/or neglect without fear of retribution or punishment
- Gain views from students and parents regarding security and protection within the school
- Immediately report any case of potential abuse and/or neglect of students as stated by the policy
- Ensure that all staff and administrators targeted for student protection training are fully attend and protection training sessions
- Conduct orientation sessions for parents/guardians upon student registration or enrollment and at the start of every school year to promote this policy and to inform them of their roles and responsibilities, and their rights and duties.
- Maintain student's records in compliance with the Students Records Policy, and ensure confidentiality of open and closed cases.
- Immediately suspend any staff member who is suspected of an offence involving student abuse and/or neglect on a temporary basis until the suspicion is adjudicated

All School Staff Will

- Report a suspected case of abuse and/or neglect upon immediate discovery
- Supervise students at all times while in school's care
- Understand this policy to address suspected or alleged student abuse or neglect cases
- Attend and participate in mandated student protection training

Parents/Legal Guardian Will

- Cooperate with the school administration and staff, answer all inquiries related to the student's behavior, academic performance and respond to their feedback and guidance
- Attend all scheduled school parent meetings
- Communicate any concerns, observations or changes in their child's behavior to the school administration or to the concerned school staff

Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards students, we need to agree standards of good practice which form a code of conduct for all staff. This includes -

- Encouraging positive, respectful and safe behavior among students
- Being a good listener
- Reading and understanding the school's child protection policy, Staff Behavior Policy (code of conduct) and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, behavior, e-safety, safer recruitment etc.
- Setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- Maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between students
- Being alert to changes in students' behavior and to signs of abuse and neglect and exploitation

- Referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the CPO or, if necessary, to higher authorities at school
- Treating all students with respect

Safer recruitment procedure

When recruiting a new member all reasonable steps are taken to ensure compliance with the following:

- Reference check from at least two previous employers
- Background check of the applicant
- For the volunteers and other visitors to school, the school security staff to be vigilant and follow all procedures governing the access, keeping records of all visitors, providing a visitor pass to be worn by all visitors for ease of identification and monitoring

Early Help

The school recognizes that providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. All school staff are trained to notice any concerns about children which may help to identify that they would benefit from early help.

- Undertake an assessment of the need for early help; and provide targeted early help service to address the assessed needs of a child and their family, developing an action plan that will focus on activity to improve the child's outcomes.
- Identify situations in which children and/or their families would benefit from early help.

Attendance

The school understands that attendance at school is important to the well-being of all our students and enables them to access the opportunities made available to them at school. Attendance is monitored closely.

Whistle blowing if staff have concerns about a colleague

Staff are expected to report all concerns about poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues – to the section supervisor, Vice Principal to facilitate an early intervention in order to maintain appropriate boundaries and a safe culture that protects children and reduces the risk of serious abuse in school.

Allegations against staff

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen. A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to students and we must act on every allegation. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress.

Staff training

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to know what to do if they have a concern. New staff who will have direct contact with children and volunteers will receive an explanation during their induction which will include:

- Reporting and recording arrangements
- The school's child protection and safeguarding policy
- Responding to disclosure of abuse or neglect by a child
- Signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect

All staff will receive appropriate and regularly updated safeguarding and child protection training.

Behavior Management

Our behavior policy is set out in a separate document and is reviewed regularly. This policy is transparent to staff, parents and students.

Record keeping

The school will maintain safeguarding (including early help) and child protection records.

- Keep clear detailed written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to relevant agencies immediately;
- Ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations;
- Ensure all relevant child protection records are sent to the receiving school, college or other education establishment when a pupil moves.

Where possible and without interpretation, the exact words spoken by the child or parent/carer will be recorded. Records will be signed, dated and timed by the member of staff making the record.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil, family and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence. All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

Extended school and off-site arrangements

All extended and off site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. When our students attend outbound learning activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place. Where after school activities are provided by and managed by the school, the school's child protection policy and procedures apply. If other

organizations provide services or activities on the school site, the school will check that those organizations have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

Photography and images

To protect students, the school -

- Encourage students to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.
- Seeks consent of the parents (for photographs to be taken or published)
- Ensure students are appropriately dressed

Bullying

Our Anti bullying policy is set out in a separate document and is reviewed regularly. This policy is shared with staff, parents and students. Bullying can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying can have a disastrous effect on a child's well-being. All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. All students and parents receive a copy of the procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals.

Online Safety

Refer to E-Safety Policy

The school's e-safety policy explains how we try to keep students safe in school and protect and educate students in the safe use of technology. Cyberbullying by students will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. Serious incidents may be managed in line with our child protection procedures.

Child protection procedures

Recognizing abuse

To ensure that our students are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behavior constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm

Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.

It is very important that staff report all of their concerns, however minor or insignificant they may think they are – they do not need ‘absolute proof’ that the child is at risk.

Signs and Symptoms

There are primarily four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact and /or including assault. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways of grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);

It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused or neglected may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss school or arrive late
- how signs of not wanting to go home

- display a change in behavior – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their school work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol and/or
- Display sexual knowledge or behavior beyond that normally expected for their age and/or stage of development
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends' or adults recently acquainted with the child's family

Taking Action

Any child in any family 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 action are:

- In an emergency take the action necessary to help the child
- Report your concern to the CPO as quickly as possible
- Do not start your own investigation
- Share information on a need-to-know basis only, do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- Seek support for yourself if you are distressed or need to debrief

During their conversations with students staff will:

- Allow them to speak freely
- Remain calm and not overreact
- Give reassuring nods or words of comfort
- Under no circumstances ask investigative questions
- At an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on

- Tell the pupil what will happen next
- Let them know that someone (either you or another named person, e.g. the CPO) will come to see them before the end of the day
- Report verbally to the CPO
- Write up their conversation as soon as possible
- Seek support if they feel distressed or need to debrief

Notifying parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the CPO will make contact with 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 problem, advice will be sought first from relevant UAE agencies.

Making a referral to Children's Social Care

The Principal will escalate it to the higher authorities, who will then make a referral to UAE agencies, and the police, if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering harm. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child or create undue delay. In deciding the most appropriate response, relevant considerations will include:

- The nature and extent of the inappropriate/abusive behaviors. In respect of sexual abuse, it is necessary to distinguish between normal childhood sexual development and experimentation; and sexually inappropriate or aggressive behavior
- The context of the abusive behavior's
- The child/young person's development, family and social circumstances
- The need for services, specifically focusing on the child/young person's harmful behaviour as well as other significant needs; and/or The risks to self and others, including other children in the school, household, extended family, peer group and wider social network.

- The school is committed to participating in plans both to provide students who are at risk from other children and those students who may present a risk to other children with appropriate services to address any concerns and, wherever possible, to facilitate ongoing access to education in school for all children concerned, subject to appropriate risk assessments and risk management plans.

Staff reporting directly to child protection agencies

Staff should ordinarily follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, any staff member can refer their concerns directly to UAE agencies, or the police if:

- The situation is an emergency and the Principal, the HMs, the Supervisors and/or the chair of governors are all unavailable
- They are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety, or
- For any other reason they make a judgement that a direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

However, staff should inform the Principal and/or supervisors at the earliest opportunity that they have done so unless in their judgement doing so would increase the risk of harm to the child.

Process for review and development

The Child Protection and Safeguarding policy is reviewed every year to ensure that it is an accurate reflection of current practices at the school. The provision is monitored, and information records of students are updated and reviewed. School leadership team is consulted during the review.

SAFE SCHOOL

All adults on campus (including teaching staff) must wear ID badges and/ or visitor's passes

It is essential that the high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted with regard to alleged child abuse by parents be similarly displayed when members of staff are accused of abuse.

Only authorized agencies may investigate child abuse allegations (Currently, in Sharjah this would mean the Police only). Whilst it is permissible to ask the child/children simple, non-leading questions to ascertain the facts of the allegation, formal interviews and the taking of statements are not.

If for any reasons it is decided that a referral is not appropriate, at all times it will be necessary to address matters in accordance with the school's complaints/disciplinary procedures.

USE OF THE SCHOOL PREMISES BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Where another body provides services or activities separately, using the school premises, PESS will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection.

POLICY REVIEW

The School's Senior Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy. The Leadership Team is also responsible for ensuring that the list of key contacts on the cover sheet is kept up to date.

1. Principal
2. Vice- Principal
3. Senior Leadership team
4. Inclusion Champion
5. Medical Team
6. Counsellor
7. Health and Safety

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Possible signs of physical abuse can include:

1. Unexplained bruises or injuries
2. Injuries which have not received medical attention
3. Repeated abdominal pain
4. Withdraw from physical contact
5. Arms and legs covered in scalds
6. Fear of contacting caregivers/parents
7. Self-destruction tendencies
8. Displaying aggression towards others
9. Unusual passive behavior
10. Repeated running away from home
11. Cigarette burns
12. Human bite marks.
13. Broken bones
14. Multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge
15. Fear of returning home

APPENDIX 2

Possible signs of emotional abuse can include:

1. Regular tiredness
2. Fear of a new situation

3. Low self esteem
4. High levels of anxiety
5. Unusually passive or aggressive
6. Delayed speech
7. Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
8. Running away
9. Lying
10. Fear of making mistakes
11. self-harm
12. Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress

APPENDIX 3

Possible signs of sexual abuse can include:

1. Unusual behavior which could be general or sexual
2. Age inappropriate sexual behavior
3. Sexually transmitted diseases
4. Physical indicators in the genital and anal areas
5. Pain or itching in the genital area
6. Bruising or bleeding near genital area
7. Vaginal discharge or infection
8. Discomfort when walking or sitting down
9. Pregnancy

APPENDIX 4

Possible signs of neglect abuse can include:

1. Stealing
2. Poor social relationships
3. Failure to thrive
4. Poor personal hygiene
5. Frequent hunger
6. Untreated medical complaints
7. Frequent lateness or absence from school
8. Inappropriate clothing
9. Substance or alcohol misuse

APPENDIX 5

What to do on disclosure

1. Stay calm (Don't over-react, however shocked you may be)
2. Listen, hear and believe (Listen carefully, take it seriously)
3. 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)
4. 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)
5. 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)

