

المدرسة الهندية
الجديدة
أم القيوين



THE NEW
INDIAN SCHOOL
Umm Al Quwain

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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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 have a duty and will report any suspected or disclosed issues of child protection to the Counselor. If the threat is immediate or ongoing it will be reported to the appropriate local safeguarding authorities as set in place by the UAE.

Purpose of the Child Protection Policy

The safeguarding of children and young people from harm is the highest priority here at NIS. 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. This policy should be read in conjunction with the behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies.

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 NIS staff can follow the necessary procedures with regard to a child protection issue. It aims:

- 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.

Bullying and Anti-Bullying Procedures

We believe that bullying is very damaging to children and if left unchecked can become extremely widespread. We will have a definite plan on how to deal with cases of bullying. We not only will protect children against bodily harm, we will also ensure that threats and intimidation will be dealt with just as seriously as violence itself. We will reinforce positive peer bonding and buddy groups, but we will be extremely vigilant to peer pressure.

CYBER BULLYING

As technology has become so integrated into education, the possibility now exists that children will access offensive content. Workshops on cyber bullying will be conducted to make aware of the emotional and psychological trauma suffered by victims of cyber bullying. A pledge will be taken by the students to never indulge in such cowardly, anonymous attacks at the beginning of the academic year.

Bullying hurts and is wrong. Every student has a right to study in a secure, safe environment. We disapprove of bullying in all its forms and consider it a very serious offence. Bullying may be verbal bullying, physical bullying, emotional bullying and cyber bullying.

*Being called names

*Being pushed, kicked or hit

*Being targeted through cyber bullying or internet posting that are harmful and cruel

*Having personal effect damaged, taken away or destroyed.

All reports of bullying will be investigated and acted upon. The teachers and staff will work to develop an atmosphere of trust where students can report an incident of bullying with the expectation that it will be dealt with appropriately. Our school will be a bullying free school.

Our school will be committed to providing all students and staff with a healthy and safe environment free from bullying. Any one who experiences or witnesses bullying should report it as soon as possible.

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 behavior, performance or attitude

- Indulges in sexual behaviour which is unusually explicit and/or inappropriate to his or her age.

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 that it might 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 tell
- Listen rather than ask direct questions
- Ask open questions rather than leading questions
- Do not criticize the perpetrator
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told

PROCEDURES

When a child reports abuse, the staff member will inform the designated counselor immediately. In the event of the counselor's absence, the supervisor is to be informed. The Counselor will take initial steps to gather information regarding the reported incident. At this stage 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 Counselor will then form a school-based response team to address the report. The team may include the Head of School, school doctor, nurse, teacher, and other individuals of Behaviour Management Committee. 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 Counselor in order to gain more information.
- In-class observations of the child by the teacher, counsellor, or administrator as appropriate
- Meetings with the family to present the school's concerns where appropriate and without further endangering the child.
- Referral of the student and family to external professional counselling.
- The Counselor will maintain contact with the child and family to provide support and guidance as appropriate.
- The Counselor will provide the child's teachers with ongoing support, and provide strategies for the teacher to use.
- The Counselor will maintain contact with outside therapists, in order to update the therapist about the progress of the child in school, and to keep the school informed about the progress of the therapy.

Responsibilities of all NIS staff members

- 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 counselor

- 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 NIS staff are expected:

- To be aware of symptoms of abuse
- To report concerns to Counselor as appropriate
- To keep clear, dated, factual and confidential records of child protection concerns.

Specific responsibilities of the School Doctor/Nurse

- The school Doctor/Nurse 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 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 counselor and other appropriate staff in the case 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.

Reporting and Dealing with Allegations against staff or the Head of School

Teachers who hear an allegation of abuse against another member of staff should report the matter immediately to the Head of School, who will inform the counselor. If the Head of School is absent, the allegation should be passed to the NIS founder, If the allegation is against the Head of School, the person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the NIS founder, without notifying the Head of School first.

Enquiries and Investigation

Child protection enquiries by the police are not to be confused with internal, disciplinary enquiries by the school. The school may be able to use the outcome of external agency enquiries as part of its own procedures.

- The school will hold its own internal enquiries while the formal police or social services investigation proceeds; to do otherwise may prejudice the investigation.
- During the investigation by external agencies, the principal (or designated person) will be involved and the school will give every assistance. He/she will ensure that appropriate confidentiality is maintained in connection with enquiries in the interest of staff about whom the allegation is made.
- Parents of the child making the allegation have to be informed about the like process involved.
- The member of staff against whom the allegation was made should be informed about the investigation and likely process involved.
- Principal shall keep a written record of the action taken in connection with the allegations.

School Transportation Safety Procedure

- When students board the bus from the pick-up points, younger students must be permitted to board first.
- Do not let the child board the bus until it comes to a complete halt and the stop arm of the bus is opened out.
- Parents are not permitted to board the bus for any reason. A complaint, if

- any, should be lodged at the school with the Administration department.
- While in school, when students embark the bus for field trips or outings, buses will remain stationary until all students are on board.
- There will be no movement of buses when students are walking around the campus.

In order to ensure safety while the child is travelling in the school bus,

- All students are expected to be seated in the places assigned by the conductor on the bus.
- Students must not walk when the bus is moving.
- Playing in the bus is not permitted.
- In order to ensure student safety in case of an injury on the bus, first aid kits have been made available on all buses.
- If the injury is of a nature that needs medical attention, the conductor will inform the Administration department who in turn will inform the principal before the student is transferred to the nearest hospital.
- If there is an inordinate delay in route (more than 20 minutes) to a destination due to a traffic jam, conductors must inform the school Admin& parents.

DISEMBARKING THE BUS

- Students and staff who are disembarking from the vehicle must not get up until the bus has come to a complete halt.
- Students in the front seats must move out first followed by students who are seated at the back.
- Conductors should assist younger children with their trolley bags when they are disembarking.
- When all the students have disembarked, the conductor and driver of the bus should carry out a physical check of their respective buses to ensure that no child has been accidentally left behind in the bus.
- On arrival once students have disembarked, they should be guided to their classes.
- During dispersal, teachers of Grades must present in the class and follow the dispersal order.
- The conductor of each bus must be present near the door to help students board the bus.
- The Administration department and supervisors of all sections must be present to ensure that dispersal is a smooth affair.

IDENTITYCARDS

All students must wear the identity card issued by the school. If the card is lost a new one will be issued on payment.

EXITPASSES

If a student has to leave the school accompanied by a parent, he/she must have exit pass issued by reception. Exit passes will be issued to parents/ guardians who are taking the children home after the verification. Students will not be allowed to leave the school with unauthorized persons.

MANNING OF GATES

All gates are manned by ancillary staff on duty and all gates are kept locked when students are on the campus except the front gate where watchman will be always present.

OTHER SAFETY ISSUES

SHARP IMPLEMENTS IN CLASSES:

- Scissors that are used during the craft period should be locked and out of reach of children when not in use.
- Compasses and dividers should not be used for play and teachers must remain vigilant at all times.
- Students are not allowed to bring any objects from home which is not requested by the concerned teacher.

SAFETY IN CLASSROOMS:

All the doors and windows in class rooms are child friendly with stoppers and rubber beadings and without automatic locks.

CLINIC

If an injury or serious illness occurs, the teacher should immediately notify the school Nurse and the Supervisor. The teacher of the class or subject teacher must escort the pupils to the clinic case of a serious injury while ensuring that her class has been left under control. The school nurse will be responsible for administering the first aid.

FIRE DRILLS AND EVACUATION PROCEDURE

This procedure is designed to reduce the number of potential fire incidents in schools. All staff members should be familiar with the school alarm system and should know the location of the nearest exit route and assembly point. Always take school fire drills seriously and evacuate the students when the alarm sounds. Be familiar with the location of the fire alarm and the extinguisher. Evacuation drills are held to familiarize the staff and the students with the signals, evacuation routes and the exits so that in case of fire there are no hesitations or confusion in evacuating the students. Students should be informed about the fire drill in advance and all staff & students should participate in the fire drill.

