SAFE GUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLCY

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Amity English School Dubai (AESD) believes that all children have the right to be safe, protected from abuse, and able to flourish in their learning. The safety, wellbeing, and dignity of every child is our highest and non-negotiable priority.

All staff have a pastoral duty towards all pupils. The needs of pupils are paramount and underpin all our work. AESD strives to create an environment in which every pupil feels secure, safe, and valued — one in which they are listened to and taken seriously.

This policy provides all staff with the guidance necessary to ensure that all pupils are safe whilst in our care. It also informs parents and guardians how the school safeguards its pupils. The school endeavours to work openly with parents and guardians whenever it is safe to do so. However, the school reserves the right to contact the police and KHDA directly, without first informing parents or guardians, if this is deemed to be in the pupil's best interests.

This policy applies to all students, teaching and non-teaching staff, volunteers, contractors, governors, and visitors on school premises or engaged in school-related activities.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy is developed and implemented in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 Concerning Child Rights (Wadeema's Law) — reporting suspected abuse is mandatory; non-reporting is a criminal offence.
- UAE Federal Decree Law No. 34 of 2021 on Cybercrime — governs online abuse and digital safeguarding.
- KHDA Child Protection and Safeguarding Framework for Private Schools in Dubai.
- Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework (2017) — relevant to safeguarding of students of determination.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024 — applied as international best practice.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children — applied as international best practice.

KEY DEFINITIONS

Child / Pupil	Any student under the age of 18 enrolled at AESD, or who is in full-time education at the school.
Safeguarding	The protection of children from risks of harm, including maltreatment and other types of risk that impact their overall health, development, wellbeing, and safety.
Child Protection	The processes undertaken to keep children safe. A process that supports children who have been harmed or are at risk of harm.
Maltreatment	Physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, including neglect, exploitation, and bullying or cyberbullying.
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	The appointed, trained member of staff responsible for safeguarding and child protection across the school. The DSL is the first point of contact for all safeguarding concerns.
Safeguarding Team	Trained representatives across each phase of the school who support the DSL in managing and responding to safeguarding concerns.
Staff	All those in paid employment working for or on behalf of AESD, whether full-time, part-time, peripatetic, or on a temporary basis.
Volunteer	Any person working for or on behalf of AESD without payment.
Parent	Birth parents, guardians, and other adults who hold parenting responsibility for a child enrolled at AESD.
Mandated Reporter	Under UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 2016, any person who is required by law to report suspected child maltreatment to the relevant authority.

AIMS

The aims of this policy are to:

- Safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils in compliance with UAE law, KHDA regulations, and international best practice.
- Ensure all staff understand their responsibilities in identifying and responding to safeguarding concerns.
- Ensure appropriate action is taken where it is alleged or suspected that a child is being abused.
- Provide all staff with clear procedures for reporting, recording, and escalating concerns.
- Ensure parents and guardians understand the school's commitment to child protection and how concerns will be managed.
- Embed a culture in which every child feels safe, heard, and respected.

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING TEAM

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) holds overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection at AESD. Every member of the Leadership Team sits on the Safeguarding Team, ensuring that any concern is heard, escalated, and acted on quickly.

Role	Member of Staff
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Reema Sanjay
Principal	Mr Samuel Holliday
School Nurse	Sharon Sebastien
EYFS Safeguarding Representative	Reema Sanjay
Primary Safeguarding Representative	Joanna Santiago
Secondary Safeguarding Representative	Anju Matthew

In the absence of the DSL, a designated deputy assumes full responsibility. The name of the deputy DSL is communicated to all staff at the start of each academic year and at induction. All members of the Safeguarding Team are Level 3 trained in Safeguarding and Child Protection.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Stakeholder	Responsibilities
Principal	• Ensure this policy and all safeguarding procedures are implemented and followed by all staff, including external contractors and visitors. • Ensure formal procedures for criminal record checks on all adults working with children are carried out and logged centrally. • Ensure key staff engaged in recruitment are trained in safer recruitment practices. • Ensure an up-to-date copy of this policy is always accessible and available. • Ensure concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the Whistleblowing Policy.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	• Maintain accurate, secure, and confidential child protection records. • Monitor the attendance and development of children who are at risk. • Ensure all relevant information about a child is disseminated to appropriate staff within the school. • In consultation with the Principal, refer alleged cases of child abuse to KHDA and/or the police. • Ensure all staff are aware of the DSL, their role, and their contact details. • Provide appropriate training and support to all staff. • Provide information and guidance to parents where it is safe and appropriate to do so. • Ensure complete safeguarding records are transferred to receiving schools when a child leaves.
Safeguarding Team Members	• Fully investigate any reported safeguarding concern within their phase. • Ensure all relevant information about a child is shared appropriately with the DSL. • Provide regular training to all staff and maintain a log of attendance. • Inform families, where it is safe to do so, when making a report to KHDA or relevant authorities. • Develop effective links with KHDA, the police, and relevant UAE support services.
All Staff	• Be alert to the possible signs of abuse and take all concerns seriously. • Report all suspicions or concerns immediately to the DSL. Staff must not act on information alone. • Record all suspicions or disclosures as soon as possible, accurately, factually, and in their own words. • Maintain the confidentiality of all safeguarding information, sharing only on a need-to-know basis.
	• Cooperate with enquiries from relevant agencies in connection with child protection matters. • Complete annual safeguarding training as required by the school.
Parents and Guardians	• Ensure they understand, cooperate with, and support the school in implementing this policy. • Disclose any concerns they have about the safety or welfare of their child or any other child. • Treat their own children and all other children in accordance with safeguarding standards. • Understand the school's responsibility to investigate concerns and take appropriate action.

SAFEGUARDING AND THE CURRICULUM

AESD ensures that the curriculum addresses safeguarding through age-appropriate teaching across all phases. This includes:

- Developing students' self-esteem, self-regulation, and understanding of personal boundaries.
- Fostering a sense of respect and civility towards other people.
- Enabling the development of communication skills and understanding of consent.
- Developing an understanding of risk, including online behaviours and responsible use of social media.
- Assisting students in developing strategies for self-protection and responses to peer pressure.
- Developing an understanding of how to be responsible for their own and others' safety.

ONLINE SAFETY AND DIGITAL SAFEGUARDING

AESD recognises that safeguarding risks extend into the digital environment. Cyberbullying, online grooming, inappropriate content, and the non-consensual sharing of images are all treated as serious safeguarding concerns and are handled through the same procedures as other forms of abuse.

All staff are trained in online safety as part of their annual safeguarding training. The school's Cyber Security and Online Safety Policy sets out the school's full expectations and response procedures. Any online safeguarding concern — whether identified by staff, reported by a student, or brought to the school's attention by a parent — is reported to the DSL immediately.

RECOGNISING CHILD ABUSE

Definitions of Abuse

Child abuse and neglect is a generic term encompassing all ill-treatment of children, including serious physical and sexual assaults as well as cases where the standard of care does not adequately support the child's health or development. Children may be abused or neglected through the infliction of harm, or through the failure to protect from harm. There are four broad categories:

Category	Description
Neglect	Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development.
Physical Abuse	Causing injury or suffering to a child, including hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, or fabricating illness.
Sexual Abuse	Involving a child in sexual activity, including access to pornography, non-contact acts, and online sexual abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adults.
Emotional Abuse	Persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child that severely impacts emotional development. This includes bullying, cyberbullying, and age-inappropriate expectations.

Signs and Indicators

Staff should be alert to the following signs, which may indicate abuse or neglect:

- An injury that is inconsistent with the explanation given, or an atypical injury.
- Frequent injuries, even where apparently reasonable explanations are offered.
- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, performance, mood, or attitude.
- Knowledge of sexual matters beyond what would normally be age-appropriate.
- Sexual behaviour that is unusually explicit or age-inappropriate.
- Signs of neglect: poor hygiene, inadequate clothing, persistent hunger, or tiredness.
- Withdrawal from friends, activities, or trusted adults; social isolation.
- Unexplained absences or persistent reluctance to go home.

These signs are indicators, not proof. Staff should never investigate themselves but must report concerns to the DSL immediately.

Students of Determination and Vulnerable Learners

Students of determination and those with additional learning needs or vulnerabilities may face heightened safeguarding risks and may find it more difficult to communicate a concern or disclosure. Staff must be particularly vigilant with these students. The Inclusion Lead works in close coordination with the DSL to ensure appropriate safeguards and reasonable adjustments are in place, and that the voices of vulnerable students are heard and acted upon.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

All safeguarding concerns must be reported to the DSL on the same day. No staff member should investigate a concern themselves, act on information alone, or delay a referral.

First, ask: Is the safeguarding concern in relation to an adult working within the school?

YES — Concern involves an adult working in school	NO — Concern involves a student
Inform the Principal immediately. Do not discuss with any other member of staff.	Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately. Do not discuss with any other member of staff.
In both cases: record all concerns on the same day using the appropriate recording form.	The DSL, in consultation with the Head of School, will decide whether to report to KHDA and refer to the police (999 / 11611).

The DSL, in consultation with the Principal, will decide whether the concern should be reported to KHDA and/or referred to the police. All concerns are recorded on the same day using the school's designated recording form (Form A). Records are stored securely and marked strictly confidential.

RECORD KEEPING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

All safeguarding records are maintained by the DSL and stored securely, separate from a student's general school file, and marked strictly confidential. Records are retained in line with KHDA data retention requirements and are not destroyed.

When a student transfers to another school, the DSL ensures that safeguarding records are forwarded directly to the receiving school's DSL, separately from the student's general records, and within an agreed timeline. This transfer is documented.

Information about a safeguarding concern is shared only on a strict need-to-know basis. Confidentiality is maintained throughout, with the exception of situations where confidentiality must be broken to protect the child.

DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE

If a student discloses abuse or makes a comment that gives rise to a safeguarding concern, the staff member receiving the disclosure must:

Staff Should:

- Accept what the child says and reassure them they were right to tell you.
- Keep calm and listen. Allow for silence and pauses.
- Be honest. Let the child know you may need to tell someone and do not promise confidentiality.
- Let the child know that even if they have broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse.
- Be aware the child may have been threatened. Never push for information.
- Tell the child what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.
- Refer immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Make accurate, factual, signed, dated, and timed written notes as soon as possible of what was said, observed, and done. Use Form A.
- Record any visible injury on the body map (Form A).

Staff Must Not:

- Question children or ask leading questions.
- Suggest alternatives to what a child has said.
- Ask the child to write about or depict their experience in any way.
- Question parents, or inform them of the referral in cases of sexual abuse or other complex cases.
- Question potential witnesses.
- Conduct medical examinations.
- Delay referral to the DSL.
- Destroy any original notes, as they may be needed as evidence.

CUSTODIAL AND FAMILY DISPUTES

In cases where family legal proceedings may affect the safety or custody arrangements of a student, the school requires parents to provide relevant court orders and rulings. The school will apply and enforce final judgements issued by UAE courts and will not become a party to any ongoing dispute between parents or guardians. The safety and stability of the student remains the primary consideration at all times.

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

All who work for AESD are prohibited from applying more than the specified, minimal types and levels of physical intervention to children for whom they are professionally responsible. Positive physical intervention may only occur where there is a genuine risk of injury to the student or others, and only the minimum necessary intervention is acceptable.

Volunteers working with children are expected to maintain standards of conduct comparable to those required of staff in paid employment.

All complaints against staff will be fully investigated by the Principal and appropriate team members. Investigations will be conducted in the strictest confidence. In the case of serious allegations, the member of staff is likely to be suspended immediately until the investigation is concluded. In other cases, duties may be modified to ensure the staff member is not left unsupervised with children. The school follows KHDA guidelines in all such situations.

Where an allegation is made against the Principal, the matter is referred directly to the Chair of the Governing Board and the relevant KHDA authority.

SAFER RECRUITMENT

AESD follows safe recruitment procedures for all appointments. Prior to taking up any role, all staff — including full-time, part-time, peripatetic, support, and volunteer staff — are subject to:

- Criminal Record Check (DBS or equivalent, including local UAE security clearance).
- Verification of identity, qualifications, and right to work.
- Reference checks, including at least one reference from a previous employer where the applicant worked with children.
- Prohibition and barring list checks where applicable.

All recruitment records are maintained centrally and are available for inspection by KHDA. Key staff involved in recruitment are trained in safer recruitment practices. A single central record of all pre-employment checks is maintained and kept up to date.

TRAINING

All teaching staff, including teaching assistants, support staff, bus supervisors, drivers, and administration staff, receive annual safeguarding and child protection training covering the signs and symptoms of abuse, this policy and associated procedures, and staff responsibilities under UAE law.

All members of the Safeguarding Team hold Level 3 Safeguarding and Child Protection certification. Training records and attendance logs are maintained by the DSL and are available for KHDA inspection.

WHISTLEBLOWING

AESD is committed to creating an environment in which all staff, students, and community members feel safe to raise concerns about the behaviour or actions of any adult associated with the school. Young children in particular cannot always be expected to raise concerns themselves about adults they work with.

All concerns raised are taken seriously and acted upon. Details provided and decisions made are recorded and filed. All staff have a duty to raise concerns where they exist about the conduct of colleagues. Staff should refer to the school's Whistleblowing Policy for full guidance. No member of staff who raises a concern in good faith will be penalised as a result of doing so.

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT — SAFE PRACTICE GUIDELINES

All staff working at AESD must adhere to the following safe practice guidelines at all times:

Do:

- Inform another adult if you are going to be in a situation where you are alone with a student.
- Leave the door open and position yourself where you can clearly be seen by others.
- Inform the DSL immediately if a student discloses sensitive information to you.
- Inform management if you feel a student is placing you in a compromising position.
- Familiarise yourself with any student who has specific medical needs and know the appropriate procedures.
- Refer to the school's Behaviour Policy for the correct procedure when managing challenging behaviour.

Do Not:

- Allow suspicions to go unreported. If in doubt, report.
- Transport a student alone in a vehicle, except in a genuine emergency.
- Get into a situation where you are alone and unobserved with a student.
- Use physical contact with students beyond what is professionally appropriate.
- Take photographs of students on a personal mobile phone or camera.

- Make contact with students outside of the school setting, whether online, physical, or verbal.
- Disclose personal information to students or request personal information from students unnecessarily.
- Use words towards, or in the presence of, children that might be deemed negative, defamatory, or aggressive.
- Leave a class unattended or allow students to leave the room without proper permission.
- Assume safeguarding incidents cannot occur in this school or to you personally.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy is reviewed annually by the Principal and the Designated Safeguarding Lead. It will be reviewed earlier in the event of a significant safeguarding incident, a material change in KHDA regulations or UAE law, or an KHDA inspection recommendation. An annual review of all safeguarding procedures is conducted by the Head of School and SLT. The Governing Board is informed of the review outcome and approves any material changes.

RELATED POLICIES

This policy should be read alongside the following AESD school policies:

- Safe Learning Environment Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Cyber Security and Online Safety Policy
- Community and Parental Engagement Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Complaints and Feedback Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Home Learning Policy

KEY EXTERNAL CONTACTS

Authority / Service	Contact Details
KHDA — Knowledge and Human Development Authority	www.khda.gov.ae | +971 4 364 0000
Dubai Police	Emergency: 999 | Non-emergency: 901
Child Protection Hotline (UAE)	800-CHILD (800-24453)
Dubai Foundation for Women and Children	800-DFWAC (800-33922)
UAE Ministry of Interior	www.moi.gov.ae

APPENDIX A — SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION REPORT (FORM A)

To be completed by any member of staff as soon as possible following a safeguarding concern or disclosure. This form is confidential and must be passed to the DSL on the same day.

Student Name:	
Class / Year Group:	
Date of Incident or Disclosure:	
Time:	
Location:	
Reported By (Name & Role):	
Date of This Report:	

Details of Concern / Disclosure (factual, in your own words. Include direct quotes where possible. Note if information was overheard or third-party. DO NOT question or lead the student):
Any visible injuries? If yes, describe and indicate on body map below:
Action taken and next steps:

Staff Signature: _____ *Date:* ____/____/_____ *Time:* _____
Received by DSL: _____ *Date:* ____/____/_____ *Time:* _____

This form is STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL. Pass to the DSL on the same day.

Authorised by: Principal
Review date: August 2027