



CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

2024-2025

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 Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO)/Child Protection Team. 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 and young people from harm is the highest priority here at Beaconhouse Al Ain 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.

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. (Refer Appendix A Categories of Abuse)

Aims

This policy ensures that all staff in our school 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.

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 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
- Not criticize the perpetrator
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.

Procedures

When a child reports abuse, the teacher will inform the Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) within 48 hours. The teacher should also inform the DCPO as soon as possible if there is reasonable cause to believe that abuse is occurring. The DCPO 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 DCPO 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 DCPO 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 DCPO 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 external professional counselling.
- Consultation with local authorities.

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

- The DCPO will maintain contact with the child and family to provide support and guidance as appropriate.
- The DCPO will provide the child's teachers with ongoing support, and provide strategies for the teacher to use.
- The DCPO 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.
- 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 DCPO. This is normally the Principal but he/she may delegate this responsibility in some circumstances.
- 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 behaviour.
- All staff are expected to
 - be aware of symptoms of abuse.
 - report concerns to DCPO 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 DCPO 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.

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 Beaconhouse Al Ain School.

The staff at Beaconhouse Al Ain 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 Designated Child Protection Officer's (DCPO's). The following persons are DCPO's for all child protection issues here at Beaconhouse Al Ain School. Senior Management (Principal, Vice Principal, Head of Foundation Stage, Head of Primary, Head of Secondary, Middle Leaders

- The School Doctor
- The School Nurse

The DCPO's will:

Follow the agreed procedures (refer to Appendix B What to do on Disclosure)

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

Relevant legislation or authorities

This Policy is underpinned by the fundamental principle of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989 of which the United Arab Emirates (UAE) ratified on the 3rd January, 1997 along with the UAE local laws (the Emirates Human Rights Association have launched a Federal Law, the Child Rights Law, which is to be established December, 2014).

School Commitment-Recruitment, Training and Selection

The school safer recruitment procedures will be followed for all staff employed by the school. All staff (both teaching and non-teaching), including volunteers who apply to work at the school, will be subject to a rigorous recruitment process to ensure, as far as possible, their suitability to work with children and eligibility to work in the UAE. All candidates are to provide Police Clearance Certificate prior to them joining school. 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

Child Protection is the responsibility of all staff and especially those working with children. The Designated Senior Person for Child Protection at Beaconhouse Al Ain is the Principal and in his/her absence the Vice Principal and in case of the VP being absent, the relevant Head of Section is in charge of child protection/safeguarding matters. Heads of Section are Designated Persons (DPs) within their own Section. The Principal will be assisted by the Vice- Principal and each Head of Section including the Middle Leaders in the section where possible /alleged abuse has taken place.

The Principal and Vice Principal will inform any concerns regarding Child Protection with the relevant Head of Section. The Head of Section will then consult with the Vice Principal who will advise on the monitoring of

children and the making of referrals to the appropriate organizations.

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

Policy Review

This policy is to be reviewed annually, though any deficiencies or weaknesses in children protection arrangements will be remedied without delay. The Principal and Regional 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 (e.g., 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 e.g. 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



Appendix B

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 DCPO



Appendix C

Disclosure of Abuse Form

Name of Person Making Allegation/Disclosure:

Time and Date:

Student Name and Year/Section:

Parent(s) Name and Contact Details:

Nature of Disclosure:

(Continue on separate sheet as required, recording as close to verbatim as possible)

Name and Signature:

Role:

Date and Time:



Recording Form for Safeguarding Incidents

Staff, volunteers and regular visitors are required to complete this form and pass a copy to the principal, if they have a safeguarding concern about a child at Beaconhouse School, Al Ain.

Please ensure that the safeguarding incident is reported as soon as possible.

Full name of child	Date of Birth	Tutor/Year group	Your name and position in school
Nature of incident/ concern/disclosure			
<p><i>If the child made a disclosure, please include where you were, what you saw, who else was there, what did the child say or do and what you said.</i></p> <p>Time & date of incident:</p>			
Was there an injury? Yes / No		Did you see it? Yes / No	
Describe the injury:			
Have you filled in a body plan to show where the injury is and its approximate size?			Yes / No
Was anyone else with you? Who?			
Has this happened before?		Did you report the previous incident?	
Who are you passing this information to?	Name: Position:	Date: Time:	
Your signature: Date:			

Time form received by Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

Action taken by DSL:

Parents informed? Yes / No (If No, state reason)

Feedback given to...?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Pastoral team	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child
<input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Person who recorded disclosure

Further Action Agreed:

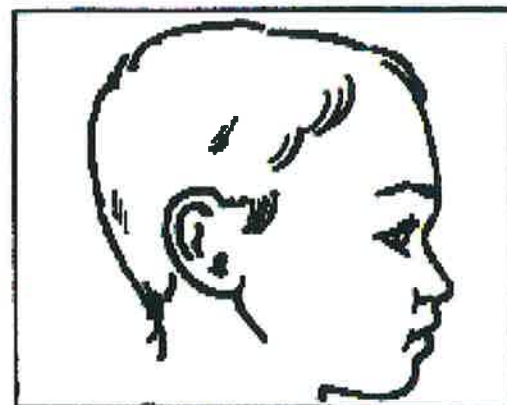
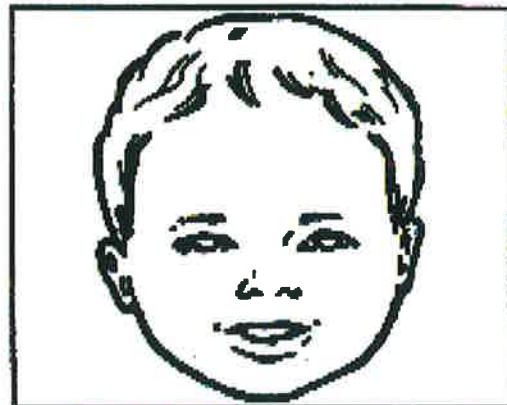
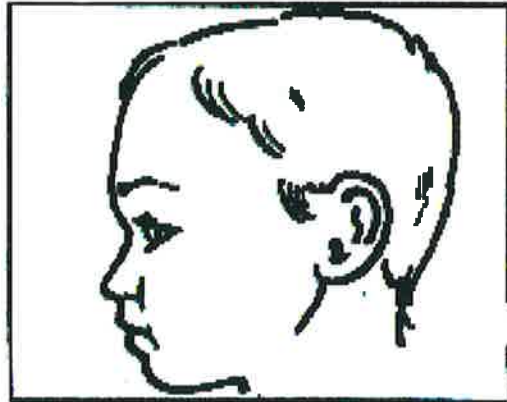
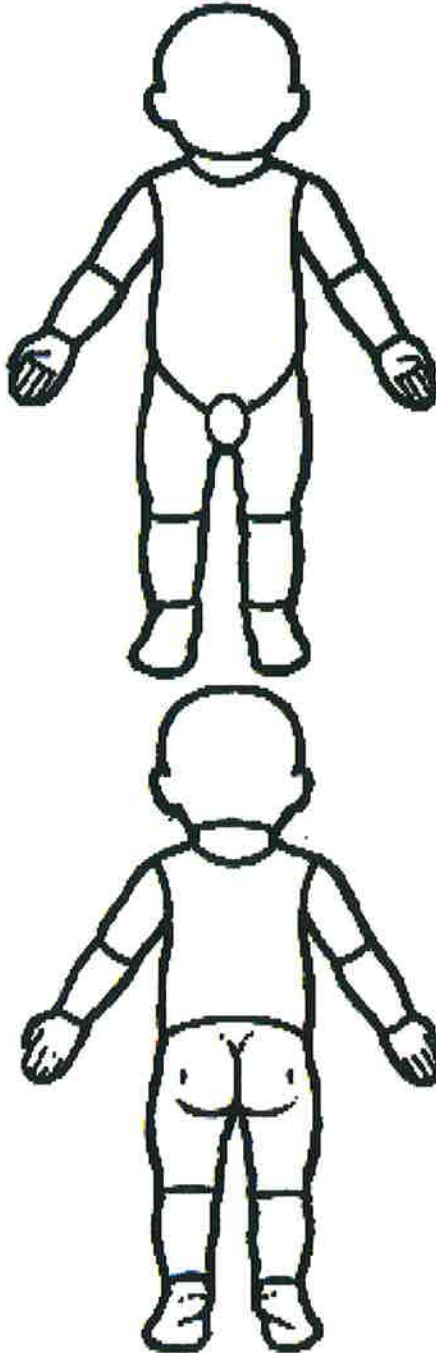
Designated Safeguarding Lead

Full name:

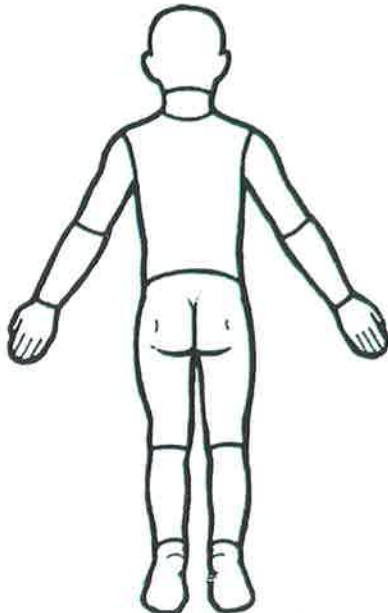
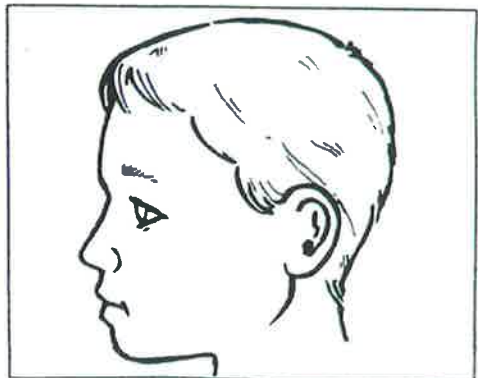
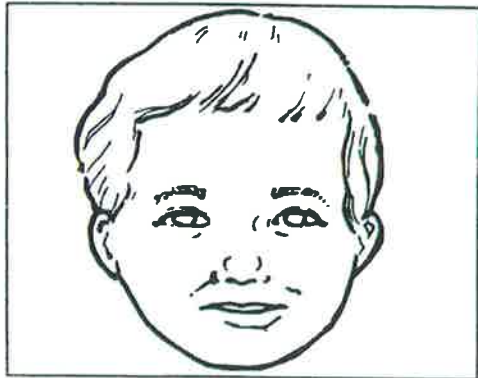
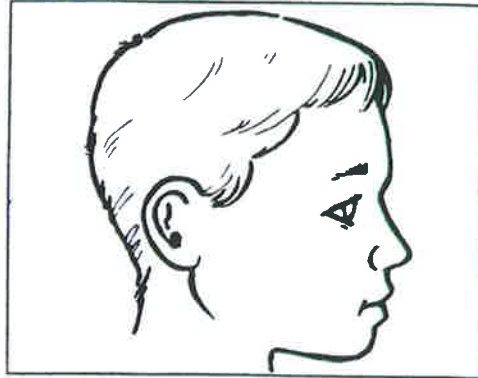
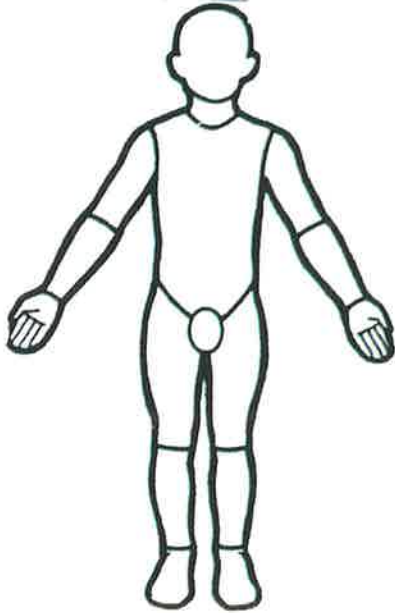
Signature:

Body Map

Young Child



Older Child



Appendix E

Safeguarding Induction Sheet for new or supply staff and regular visitors or volunteers.

We all have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and at our school we take this responsibility seriously.

If you have any concerns about a child or young person in our school, you must share this information immediately with our Designated Safeguarding Lead: Ms. Jaana

Do not think that your worry is insignificant, if it is about hygiene, appearance or behaviour – we would rather you told us as we would rather know about something that appears small than miss a worrying situation.

If you think the matter is very serious and may be related to child protection, for example, physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect, you must find one of the designated professionals detailed below and provide them with a written record of your concern. A copy of the form to complete is attached to this and others can be obtained from the DSL and the staffroom pin boards. Please ensure you complete all sections as described.

If you are unable to locate them ask a member of the school office staff to find them and to ask them to speak with you immediately about a confidential and urgent matter.

Any allegation concerning a member of staff, a child's care or a volunteer should be reported immediately to the principal. If an allegation is made about the principal, you should pass this information to the Administration marked for the attention of the Board of Governors. The people you should talk to in school are:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Principal

Location of office: Ground floor

Contact Number: 0505674555

Chair of Governing Body: TBC

Contact Number: TBC

At Beaconhouse School, Al Ain we strive to safeguard and promote the welfare of all of our children.

Review Date:	Nov 2024
Next Review Date:	OCT 2025

Principal		Date:	1.11.2024
RO		Date:	

