



Nurture
Lifelong
Learning

CHILD PROTECTION HANDBOOK



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Learning

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CONTENT

Introduction	4
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy	5
Staff Roles and Responsibilities	7
Safe Hiring Practices	12
Vetting Employees	13
Background Checks	14
Confidentiality Agreement and Code of Conduct	14
Child Protection Training	14
Employee Guidelines Prevention Efforts	15
Digital Communication	16
Local Resources	17
Incident Reporting Form	18

INTRODUCTION

This Handbook is written to provide guidelines and procedures for the Child Protection Policy.

Arcadia School is committed to the protection of pupils against any physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and/or neglect. The protection of children is an important part of the Arcadia School's role as an educational institution. We strive to maintain the highest levels of safety to every pupil with particular attention to the most vulnerable and pupils of determination. Child abuse and neglect are violations of a child's human rights and are obstacles not only to a child's education but also to their physical, emotional, and spiritual development.

The child protection handbook provides a single source of information to educate community members and establishes a pathway for reporting cases of possible abuse or neglect. Educating community members on Arcadia School's commitment to child protection can help prevent abuse and neglect as well as limit its scope through improved awareness and reporting. Arcadia School's Child Protection Policy is based on international best practices and is consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child to which the United Arab Emirates is a signatory as of January 1997, and on UAE Federal Law #3 of 2016 (Wadeema's Law).

This handbook serves to prevent child abuse, neglect, exploitation and harassment, protect those who may be involved or at risk, and support those involved in situations in violation of that child's rights. Arcadia School affirms its commitment to child protection and establishes zero tolerance in the community for violations of child protection. The child protection handbook details steps taken to put child protection policy into practice. In accordance with the child protection policy, our school strives to ensure understanding of child protection issues by all members of the community. Arcadia School's hiring practices include steps to ensure safety of all children. Employees have mandatory child protection training at the start of their tenure and regularly thereafter. All employees sign a code of conduct affirming their commitment to child protection and understanding of this policy.

Pupils receive age-appropriate child safety education as part of the school's curriculum to include all child protection related topics including bullying. To ensure the safety of pupils, the school shall require all employees to undergo a criminal background check, sign a code of conduct, and participate in child protection training.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Arcadia School Child Protection Policy as approved by the school board:

Rationale:

The purpose of the safeguarding policy is to provide clear direction to children, staff and any visitors to the Arcadia School about expectations, procedures and practice in relation to all safeguarding matters. All adults working at the school are aware of their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of every pupil and there is a positive commitment to ensure the satisfactory development and growth of every child. This policy makes explicit the commitment to the development of good practice in order that all safeguarding issues may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child.

Aims:

We are committed to:

- Supporting the children and adults of Arcadia School to feel safe at all times;
- Ensuring all adults who have contact with pupils have received appropriate checks and have been adequately trained and recruited using safe recruitment methods;
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe;
- Safeguarding procedures are understood and adhered to at all times by everybody in school;
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse;
- Supporting pupils in school who may be victim of abuse;
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

Arcadia School believes in keeping children safe at all times which is achieved by high-quality leadership and management that makes safeguarding a priority across all aspects of a school's work. We ensure that we have designated members of staff for child protection who have received appropriate training and support for the role and we have a nominated Governor for Safeguarding.

We will ensure that:

- Stringent vetting procedures are in place for staff and other adults to ensure suitability to work with children including robust arrangements for site security, background checks of all adults working in school and appropriate procedures expected of all visitors;
- Safeguarding practice and procedures are in place to ensure that child protection arrangements are known and accessible to everyone, allowing pupils and adults aware of who they can talk to if they are worried and which procedures they should take;
- Maintain thorough communication systems with up-to-date information records that can be accessed and shared by those who need it, adhering to confidentiality where expected;
- A high priority is given to staff training in all safeguarding areas, extending expertise widely and building internal capacity to handle sensitive issues and situations;
- Teachers deliver a curriculum that promotes safeguarding, teaching pupils how to protect themselves from harm and how to take responsibility for their own and others' safety. Pupils will take part in health education lessons to help learn how to keep themselves safe.

We expect courteous and responsible behaviour by the pupils, enabling everyone to feel secure and well-protected and have developed well thought out and workable day-to-day arrangements to protect and promote pupils' health and safety. The school will maintain rigorous monitoring of a child's absence with appropriate follow-up actions to ensure that pupils attend regularly and are monitored accordingly.

The school will support its pupils through:

- The content of the curriculum;
- The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued;
- School policies, which are aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that pupils know that certain types of behaviour are unacceptable.

STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at Arcadia School is:

Mary Donnelly (Head of Primary), mary.donnelly@arcadia.sch.ae

The Designated Safeguarding Lead Governor is:

Navin Valrani, navin.valrani@arcadia.sch.ae

All staff report concerns using the online portal, My Concern. Staff are trained in how to use this system and generated reports are analysed regularly to identify potential risk and maintain the highest safety. When visitors, visiting teaching staff and external agencies come onto school premises, they receive a printed guide on our safeguarding policy and protocol. Incident report forms are available to them should they have a concern to report.

The DSL will:

- Update his/her training every two years;
- Ensure the school's Child Protection Policy is updated and reviewed annually, working with the designated Governor for child protection;
- Keep confidential, detailed, accurate, secure written records of referrals /concerns;
- Make themselves known to all staff, volunteers and governors (including new starters and supply teachers);
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and is aware of the school's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures. This is also essential in respect of any members of staff who work part time or work with more than one school, such as peripatetic music teachers;
- Act as a source of advice;
- Ensure prompt and appropriate contact is made as required with child care agencies and police as necessary;
- Ensure the curriculum and assemblies include teaching about safeguarding, e-safety;
- Ensure that any new or key messages are passed to other staff, volunteers and governors.

School Environment:

The risk of the physical environment of the school must be considered and everything possible done to minimise the risk to children.

Social Media:

Staff should read and abide by the staff code of conduct at all times. Staff may not communicate with pupils via social media and must be aware of UK regulations on 'breach of trust' and that relationships with any pupils are not permitted.



Staff Recruitment:

In order to protect children, Arcadia has strict procedures for appointing staff. These are contained in a separate policy, which is regularly reviewed and updated. All local staff undergo a local police check. All expatriate staff have to provide a police check from the country they are coming from as well as a DBS check.

All employees at Arcadia School are mandatory reporters of suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. Reporting of children suspected to be at risk is consistent with policy as well as UAE Federal Law #3 of 2016, article 42 ("The notification shall be mandatory for educators, physicians, social specialists, or others entrusted with the protection, care or education of the child."). Arcadia School considers the term "employees" to encompass all individuals under contractual agreement to work at the school, those who undertake regular volunteer work and those who deliver services to the Arcadia School as part of a contractual agreement with an external organisation. Any employee suspecting the abuse or neglect of a child must follow the reporting pathway outlined in this policy. All employees have both a legal and an ethical obligation to report incidents where they have reasonable suspicion to believe that child protection violations have occurred.

Reports may be taken to the DSL or, if unavailable, to the deputy DSL. Reporting should occur as soon as possible and within 24 hours of any suspected violation of child protection. Reports of possible child protection violations must be documented via the MyConcern online portal or in writing via the incident report forms, available from the Reception. Anyone taking an initial report of a possible child protection violation shall document, to the greatest extent possible, exactly what the reporter says including the time, date, and place of any incident and the names of any witnesses. The reporter should not include opinions or interpretations of what is said. During the inquiry into possible child protection violations, an additional adult, a member or designee should be present to document interviews with those involved in the case. Written documentation of all reports of child protection violations and their inquiries will be maintained in the child's Confidential File in the Registrar's office. Files of any pupil victims will be maintained for five years after the pupil leaves Arcadia School after which point paper files will be shredded and electronic files deleted. If a pupil transfers to another school, a summary report of any child protection inquiry involving that pupil will be sent to the relevant administrator at that pupil's new school. Documentation of any inquiries into child protection violations involving employees will be securely maintained in the Human Resources office. Arcadia School reserves the right to inform any party requesting employment information of the status or outcome of any inquiry involving employees.

The school will not retaliate against any individual reporting or assisting with the inquiry into any instance of suspected child protection violations. Neither will the school tolerate any individual (employee, parent, pupil, or other community member) retaliating against reporters or investigators.

If any employee at Arcadia School has reasonable cause to suspect abuse, neglect, harassment or exploitation based on his/her knowledge of the victim, perpetrator and/or personal experience with children, that person must report their concern. All reports, whether the allegation is made regarding a pupil, parent or caregiver, or school employee are to be made to the DSL or, if unavailable, to the deputy DSL.

Employees will follow the procedures below upon receipt of a report or disclosure of a possible child protection violation:

- Reports should be made immediately during the work week and, if on a weekend, absolutely no later than 24 hours after becoming aware of a possible child protection violation;
- If any school employee has concerns regarding the conduct of a member of the Arcadia School administration, they should report their concern to either the DSL or the deputy DSL;
- If the concern involves the Principal, the report goes directly to the DSL who immediately shares it with the Board Chair of the School Board of Governors;
- If the concern involves the DSL, the report goes directly to the Principal who immediately shares it with the Board Chair of the School Board of Governors;
- The DSL or deputy DSL receiving the report alerts the Principal and considers any potential safety issues relating to the victim and the privacy of those involved;
- The DSL reviews the initial report of a potential child protection violation and makes the decision how to act;
- If the report involves a school employee, the DSL will notify the Principal;
- The DSL will follow the procedures below when addressing a child protection inquiry:
 - » The DSL will review currently available information regarding the incident or case.
 - » The DSL determines if they have the information to proceed or if further inquiry is necessary. If further inquiry is necessary, the DSL will determine from whom to gather that information, who will seek that information, and who will quickly report back to the DSL.
 - » The DSL will determine next steps with possible actions based on the information

In some cases, the DSL will find it necessary to report to outside authorities including UAE child protection officials such as the Women and Children's Foundation or the Child Protection Bureau of the Dubai Police, employment sponsors, embassies, and/or Child Protection entity in home country.

The DSL will inform the Principal who will inform the Board of Governors as soon as possible when these steps are deemed necessary. The DSL will produce a report at the end of the inquiry summarising the claim, results of the inquiry, note any actions already undertaken and suggest recommendations for further action. The DSL may follow-up with the reporting adult.

If the DSL determines there is no not a need for a child protection inquiry, they will ensure the following steps are taken:

- Contact the parents
- Pupil meets with a counsellor as appropriate
- Follow-up with reporting adult

All parts of the DSL report will be summarised in writing and recorded using My Concern.

The summary report on the inquiry will include actions taken and recommendations for future steps. Reports involving pupils will be kept in a confidential. If the report involves an Arcadia employee, the report will be kept in that employee's confidential file in Human Resources. If the employee leaves, this document and/or its contents may be shared with any institution requesting employment information on that individual.



SAFE HIRING PRACTICES



Arcadia School places child protection central of its priorities. To safeguard pupils, Arcadia recognises the importance of recruiting and retaining employees who have been vetted through a child protection lens, who are committed to upholding safe practices, and who participate in training to maintain knowledge and skills regarding child protection. To ensure the safety of pupils, the school shall require all employees to undergo a criminal background check, sign a code of conduct, and participate in child protection training. All employees must report any case of suspected abuse or neglect or, if unavailable, to any member of the Safeguarding Team immediately during the work week, and absolutely no later than 24 hours on a weekend, of becoming aware of a possible child protection violation. Team members in receipt of a report of potential abuse and/or neglect will immediately inform the DSL, who open a formal inquiry.

VETTING EMPLOYEES

All hired employees undergo a thorough reference-checking process. The Head of Human Resources will confirm the candidate's readiness for an offer once the reference check process has been successfully completed under the following parameters:

- Seek a written confidential reference, completed via a standard list of reference questions
- Not consider open letters of reference
- When a written reference is not possible, a verbal reference may be obtained by a member of the HR office
- All reference check notes will be documented in writing and returned to the HR Office.
- Completed reference forms will be reviewed by the Head of HR for approval to hire
- All completed forms will be documented in the employee's confidential file
- To preserve the confidentiality of the information obtained through the reference checking process, employees may not access their confidential file at any time
- Referees must have been in a position to supervise the candidate
- When contacting referees, every effort will be made to make contact at their place of business in order to verify the referee's identity
- Any information shared that is of concern will be reviewed by the Principal for further direction and decision making
- Arcadia will verify all information presented by the candidate verbally through the interview process and in writing as shared in his/her application and curriculum vitae



BACKGROUND CHECKS

The purpose of the employee vetting practices is to ensure that any adult employed by the school who comes into regular contact with pupils is free of a criminal record in his/her country of origin, and cities/countries of residence, including the UAE, for a period spanning the past ten years. Occasional volunteers are exempt from this process if their contact with children is limited and they will always be in the presence of an Arcadia employee.

Criminal background checks conducted will:

- be completed by a third party provider
- include an identity check component
- be conducted for a period spanning the past ten years of the employee's life (including all locations of prior residency as well as his/her country of origin) in the employee's first year of service, then every three years thereafter.

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT AND CODE OF CONDUCT

All employees are required to sign a confidentiality agreement and code of conduct annually, within the contract renewal timeline.

CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING

Pupils learn about child protection in an age appropriate manner through health classes. Child protection guidelines are also included in the curriculum ensuring pupils are all familiar with child protection and how to report concerns.

All employees have child protection training at the start of their employment and regularly thereafter, as requested by the school. Employees all receive a copy of the Child Protection Handbook. The child protection reporting process is made clear to every employee empowering them to report concerns should they arise. All Arcadia families will have the opportunities to participate in workshops that cover policy and procedures for dealing with abuse, neglect, harassment, and exploitation.

EMPLOYEE GUIDELINES PREVENTION EFFORTS

Safe Working Practices at Arcadia strive to create an environment in which everyone is safe from abuse, neglect, harassment and exploitation. The school maintains open avenues for reporting any situation in which a community member deems anyone to be at risk. Employees can all assist in creating a safe working environment and be positive role models for pupils and others in the community by adhering to the following guidelines:

- Work in an open and transparent way avoiding actions that would lead a reasonable person to question your motives and intentions;
- Dress in compliance with the dress code;
- Understand your power and influence over pupils and don't misuse it in any way;
- Be aware of your own personal space and that of others;
- Physical contact should only occur in the presence of another adult and may never occur without consent;
- Young pupils who need assistance with toileting should be encouraged to undertake as much as possible independently. When necessary, one adult should assist with toileting while another adult is present;
- When meeting one-on-one with pupils, doors should remain open and glass panels on doors should remain uncovered;
- Do not engage in contact with pupils outside of school except on official school trips or at official school functions;
- Tutoring or coaching of pupils outside of school hours must follow the published tutoring guidelines which includes prior approval from the school;
- Avoid non-school related digital contact with pupils including sending or responding to private texts or other messages, "friending" or "following" pupils' non-school related digital media sites or accepting requests from pupils for the same. Employees are encouraged to send and receive messages to the entire working group, class, team, or club when communicating with pupils;
- Photographs of pupils can be taken and posted only for professional and educational use within approved school forums;
- Employees may not keep photos of pupils on their personal devices and may not post photos of pupils on their personal digital/social media sites;
- Do not give gifts to or receive gifts from pupils, without the knowledge of the pupil's parents/guardians;
- Do not provide car transportation to pupils without the consent of the pupil's parents/guardians or a supervisor. Arcadia employees will ensure the presence of another adult when the pupil's parent is not available to provide his/her consent.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

Arcadia School includes digital means of contact as one area in which abuse and harassment may occur. Digital abuse is the use of technology to bully, harass, stalk, or intimidate another. Digital abuse is a form of verbal or emotional abuse perpetrated through online means of communication that may be pupil-on-pupil or involve pupils and adults. Examples of digital abuse include but are not limited to:

- Sending negative or threatening emails, texts or other digital communications
- Using social media to monitor another person's activities or whereabouts
- Sending or requesting receipt of explicit photos or communications
- Stealing or insisting upon being given another's passwords
- Tagging another in unkind photos on social media sites or making unkind comments
- Using any kind of technology to monitor another.

Digital abuse is taken as seriously as any other forms of abuse and/or bullying. Digital abuse is against the pupil and employee codes of conduct and inappropriate behaviour will be investigated by the appropriate divisions and consequences imposed as deemed necessary. Arcadia reserves the right to confiscate any pupil or employee's computer as part of the inquiry process into possible child protection violations. Inappropriate digital communication by an employee is detailed in the Employee Handbook. Employees sign a code of conduct annually that includes their commitment to use digital communications appropriately. Violations of this policy will be investigated by the Head of Human Resources and corrective actions taken as necessary.



LOCAL RESOURCES

Anyone with an immediate need for emergency treatment of any pupil or employee should call Dubai Ambulance or Police at 999. The school nurses maintain a list of doctors and therapists which may be of use to any victims of abuse, neglect, harassment, or exploitation. These resources are available from the clinic.

Additional resources in Dubai include:

Dubai Foundation for Women and Children:

T: +971 4 287 0088 | Hotline: 800 111 | E: help@dfwac.ae

Ministry of Interior Child Protection Centre:

T: +971 2 333 3999 | Hotline: 116111

Dubai Police Child Protection:

T: +971 4 266 1228 | Hotline: 800-243 | www.dubaipolice.gov.ae

Child Protection with Community Development Authority Child Protection:

Toll Free: 800 988 | CDA Toll Free: 800 2121 | Email: child@cda.gov.ae

Latifa Children's Hospital:

T: +971 4 219 3000

INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

This form must be completed whenever a community member suspects a pupil is in a situation of abuse, neglect, harassment or exploitation. A verbal report should occur immediately upon awareness of a potential child protection violation. Forms are to be submitted to the DSL as soon as possible; however, completion of forms should not delay reporting.

When dealing with child protection concerns, employees must remain as objective as possible, recording information received in child protection reporting forms in My Concern.

If in the situation of receiving a child protection disclosure, the employee should:

- Remain objective
- Receive what is said and record verbatim to any extent possible
- Remember that this is an allegation and not up to you to prove or disprove or determine motivation for the disclosure
- Listen dispassionately. Expressing shock or disbelief may affect the child and their reporting
- Respond to what the child says asking open-ended but not leading questions. Ask "what was the name of this person" not "was it your father/sister/etc". Ask "when did this happen?" not "was it on Tuesday"
- Questions such as "do you want to tell me anything else" or "could you say that again" or "what else can you remember" allow for reflection and clarification
- Acknowledge the courage the child displays in disclosing
- Assure the child that they are not to blame for what has happened
- Do not promise confidentiality. The duty to care for the child and the obligation to further inquire as to the situation disclosed supercede confidentiality. Promising confidentiality then breaking that trust may adversely affect the child
- Do not promise that everything will be ok

After the disclosure:

- Make notes as soon as possible after the disclosure or event. Record the actual words spoken by the child if possible;
- Indicate date, time, location of conversation, names of those present during the conversation. Describe the child's observable behaviour - crying, shaking, pacing, etc. Do not interpret behaviour or demeanour. Immediately report to your supervisor, or within 24 hours on a weekend.

INCIDENT REPORTING FORM



Visitors and those without access to the online form complete this form regarding an allegation or observation of concern.

Name of the Child

Age

Gender

 Male Female

Class

Year Group

 FS2 Year 1 Year 2 Year 3 Year 4 Year 5 Year 6 Year 7 Year 8

Reported By

Date

Details of Incident or Concern

Reported To

Level of Concern*

 1 2 3

* 1: High concern, immediate action required | 2: Concern/incident to be monitored | 3: One off incident

Action Taken

Signed

Date

Arcadia School takes the confidentiality of employees, parents and pupils seriously. Our primary concern is the wellbeing of our pupils. Please carefully read, sign and return the following document to the HR Office, which outlines the integrity, respect and responsibility required of you as a member of the Arcadia Community.

I understand that during my employment at the Arcadia School, I will:

1. Maintain confidentiality regarding information I read, see, or hear concerning pupils, their families, and/or other members of the Arcadia community. I will share such information only within the context of my professional role at the Arcadia School and only with the intention of benefiting those involved. I will never post or share confidential information on social networking or digital media sites.
2. Refrain from discussions on digital/social media sites that could reflect negatively upon the school and/or anyone associated with it.
3. Respect the privacy of the Arcadia community members and not post photographs of pupils on my personal social networking/digital media sites. Photographs of pupils may only be posted on school sponsored official social/digital media sites.
4. Use the contact information of pupils, families, and employees only as necessary to fulfil my professional responsibilities. I will never use contact information obtained in my role at Arcadia School to further purposes outside my professional capacity nor will I pass along contact information to others for that purpose.
5. Notify the appropriate divisional principal if I notice anything of concern regarding a pupil, or if a pupil reports anything of concern to me.
6. Report any suspicion of child abuse, neglect, harassment, or exploitation to the appropriate member of staff immediately (within 24 hours on a weekend) of awareness of its occurrence.
7. Inform the appropriate administrator, or if necessary the Head of Human Resources if I see or hear anything that raises questions about the professionalism of any Arcadia employee.
8. Hold conversations of a sensitive nature regarding any employee, parent or pupil in a professional manner and in a private space.
9. Protect any data and/or information regarding an employee, parent or pupil and not leave it on display at any time. Similarly, I will delete (or shred in the case of hard copies) any data and/or information of a personal or sensitive nature that is no longer required.
10. Ensure that no pupil has access to another pupil's data and refrain from sharing any pupil's information from any source with another pupil by:
 - *Securely logging in and out of any programs that store pupil specific data.*
 - *Ensuring that any documents I create containing pupil specific data are stored securely within a password protected environment.*
 - *Storing pupil specific data only on personal computers and/or external devices that are password protected.*



CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

11. Commit to the following upon completion of my employment with Arcadia School:
 - *returning all documents and property of school, including but not limited to reports, manuals, correspondence, community lists, computer programs and all other materials that relate in any way to school business, or are in any way obtained by me during the course of my employment.*
 - *refraining from retaining copies, notes or abstracts of the foregoing.*
12. Adhere to the Arcadia School's Core Values of Positivity, Respect, Tolerance, Creativity, Independence and Compassion at all times.

I have read this Confidentiality and Non-disclosure Agreement and fully agree to its Terms and Conditions.

First Name

Last Name

Signature

Date