

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

### *Policy Statement*

Woodlem Education is unequivocally committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, dignity and rights of every child.

The school adopts a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, neglect, exploitation and harassment, discrimination and any conduct that compromises student wellbeing.

Child protection is a whole-school responsibility embedded in leadership, governance, teaching, supervision, recruitment and school culture. The best interest of the child is paramount in all safeguarding decisions.

This policy applies to all students under 18 years of age and all members of the school community including staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors and parents during school-related activities.

### *Legal and Regulatory Compliance (UAE)*

This policy is aligned with UAE Federal Law No.3 of 2016 (Wadeema's Law- Child Rights Law). UAE Federal Penal Code Federal Law No. 3 of 1987, and applicable educational authority safeguarding standards.

Under UAE law:

- Any act endangering a child's physical, emotional, psychological or moral wellbeing is a criminal offence.
- Corporal punishment is prohibited
- Failure to report suspected abuse may result in legal consequences.

Woodlem Education strictly complies with all mandatory reporting obligations and fully cooperates with competent UAE authorities.

### *Definition of Child Protection*

Child protection refers to the school's commitment and systematic safeguards designed to prevent harm, identify risks early, protect vulnerable children and maintain safe learning environments.

Safeguarding extends to all periods when a child is under school responsibility, including on campus, during transport, extracurricular activities, school trips and digital learning environments.

### *Recognized Threat to Students*

The school recognizes that risks to students may arise from individuals, environments or systems. These include.

- Physical harm including aggression, unsafe supervision or corporal punishment.
- Emotional and psychological harm including humiliation, intimidation, discrimination or persistent criticism.

- Sexual abuse and exploitation including grooming, harassment, inappropriate contact or exposure to explicit material.
- Neglect including failure to provide supervision, medical care or basic needs.
- Bullying and cyberbullying including repeated aggression or online harassment.
- Online and digital risks including exposure to harmful content or privacy breaches.
- Increased vulnerability among students of determination or those facing personal hardship.

### *School Safeguarding Commitments*

Woodlem Education Schools commits to:

- Maintaining a safe, inclusive and respectful environment.
- Embedding safeguarding within leadership accountability structures.
- Enforcing professional boundaries and ethical conduct.
- Implementing safer recruitment and vetting practices.
- Ensuring appropriate supervision at all times.
- Promoting a safe reporting culture.
- Providing safeguarding training to all staff.
- Monitoring emerging risks, including digital threats.
- Upholding confidentially while prioritizing child safety.

### *Leadership & Accountability*

The principal holds ultimate accountability for safeguarding the effectiveness and legal compliance. The Child protection team will oversee safeguarding implementation and ensure alignment with UAE legislation and regulatory expectations.

All staff members are personally responsible for maintaining vigilance and upholding child protection standards. Any breach of this policy may result in disciplinary and legal consequences.

### *Partnership with Parents.*

The school values partnership with parents in promoting students' welfare. However, where a child's safety is at risk, the school will prioritise child protection and fully mandatory reporting obligations under UAE law. The school fully cooperates with child protection authorities and law enforcement.

### *Declaration*

Woodlem Education affirms that child protection is a legal obligation and moral responsibility and a foundational value. The safety, dignity and well being of every child remain non-negotiable.

\* For detailed operational guidance, please refer to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedure added below, which outlines the school-specific safeguarding processes followed at Woodlem Park School, Al Qusais, Dubai.

## Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedure

**Including visitor rules, safe physical contact guidelines, disclosure procedures, reporting, documentation, confidentiality, and safeguarding escalation.**

(This procedure applies specifically to Woodlem Park School, Al Qusais, Dubai)

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### 1. Purpose of the Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the school-level processes followed at Woodlem Park School, Al Qusais, Dubai, to safeguard students, prevent harm, identify risks early, report concerns appropriately, and respond to child protection matters in a timely, professional, confidential, and legally compliant manner. This procedure supports the school's Child Protection Policy by explaining how safeguarding and child protection arrangements are implemented in practice.

This procedure applies to:

- All students under 18 years of age;
- All teaching and non-teaching staff;
- Senior leaders and governors;
- Volunteers, visitors, contractors, external professionals, and service providers;
- Parents and guardians during school-related activities;
- School transport, trips, events, online learning, extracurricular activities, and any situation where the school has responsibility for student supervision.

The best interests, dignity, welfare, and safety of the child remain the primary consideration in all safeguarding decisions.

### 2. Regulatory and Policy Alignment

This procedure is grounded primarily in UAE child protection laws, KHDA expectations, and applicable Dubai safeguarding requirements. It is also informed by CBSE child protection expectations and internal school frameworks, including POSH, where relevant to staff conduct, reporting, and protection from harassment.

This procedure is guided by:

- UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 on Child Rights, commonly known as Wadeema's Law;
- applicable UAE child protection and penal provisions;
- KHDA safeguarding expectations and inspection requirements;
- Dubai School Inspection Framework expectations related to protection, care, guidance, and support;
- UAE school health and safety expectations;
- Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework, where safeguarding relates to vulnerable students or Students of Determination;
- CBSE child protection and student welfare expectations, where applicable;
- School policies related to safeguarding, behaviour, anti-bullying, online safety, mobile devices, staff conduct, safer recruitment, inclusion, wellbeing, educational visits, and health and safety.

Where there is any concern about a child's safety, child protection and safeguarding procedures take priority over routine disciplinary or administrative processes.

### 3. Glossary

<b>Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
CBSE	Central Board of Secondary Education
CDA	Community Development Authority
CPO	Child Protection Officer
DCPO	Designated Child Protection Officer
DHA	Dubai Health Authority
IHP	Individual Healthcare Plan
KHDA	Knowledge and Human Development Authority
POSH	Prevention of Sexual Harassment, applicable as part of the school's internal staff and safeguarding framework
UAE	United Arab Emirates

## 4. Safeguarding Principles

Woodlem Park School follows these safeguarding principles:

1. Safeguarding is a whole-school responsibility.
2. The safety, dignity, and wellbeing of every child are non-negotiable.
3. The best interests of the child are paramount.
4. Abuse, neglect, exploitation, harassment, discrimination, corporal punishment, and unsafe conduct are not tolerated.
5. Concerns must be reported immediately through the correct safeguarding route.
6. Staff must not investigate child protection concerns independently.
7. Confidentiality must be maintained, but secrecy must never be promised when a child may be at risk.
8. Safeguarding decisions must be evidence-based, documented, timely, and proportionate.
9. Students of Determination and vulnerable students may require additional safeguarding awareness, monitoring, and support.
10. The school will cooperate fully with competent UAE authorities where child protection concerns require external reporting.

## 5. Definitions

### 5.1 Child

A child is any person below the age of 18 years.

### 5.2 Child Protection

Child protection refers to the measures, systems, and actions taken to protect students from harm, abuse, neglect, exploitation, unsafe conduct, or risk of harm while they are under school responsibility.

This includes:

- Time spent on school premises;
- School transport;
- Extracurricular activities;
- Educational visits and trips;

- School events;
- Online and digital learning environments;
- Any school-authorised activity where the school has responsibility for student supervision.

### **5.3 Safeguarding**

Safeguarding is the broader duty to promote the welfare, safety, dignity, health, and wellbeing of students by creating a safe environment, preventing harm, identifying risks early, responding appropriately to concerns, and maintaining a culture of vigilance.

### **5.4 Abuse**

Abuse refers to any act or omission that causes, or is likely to cause, harm to a child. Abuse may be a single incident or a pattern of behaviour. It may occur directly, indirectly, physically, emotionally, sexually, digitally, or through neglect.

Abuse includes, but is not limited to:

- Physical abuse;
- Corporal punishment;
- Emotional abuse;
- Sexual abuse and exploitation;
- Bullying and cyberbullying;
- Neglect;
- Online exploitation;
- Exposure to harmful material;
- Discrimination or harassment that compromises student wellbeing.

## **6. Recognised Threats and Risks to Students**

The school recognises that risks to students may arise from individuals, environments, systems, or digital platforms.

Recognised risks include:

- Physical harm, aggression, unsafe supervision, or corporal punishment;

- Emotional and psychological harm, including humiliation, intimidation, discrimination, or persistent criticism;
- Sexual abuse, grooming, exploitation, inappropriate contact, or exposure to explicit material;
- Neglect, including failure to provide supervision, medical care, emotional support, hygiene, attendance, or basic needs;
- Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, social exclusion, and online aggression;
- Online and digital risks, including privacy breaches, harmful content, unsafe communication, image sharing, or exploitation;
- Unsafe contact with visitors, contractors, unauthorised persons, or external adults;
- Unsafe physical contact or boundary violations;
- Increased vulnerability among Students of Determination, students with wellbeing concerns, students facing family hardship, or students with communication difficulties.

## **7. Forms of Abuse**

### **7.1 Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse includes deliberate physical injury, physical harm, or the intentional or negligent failure to prevent physical injury or suffering.

Examples include:

- Hitting, slapping, shaking, pushing, pinching, or punching;
- Throwing objects at a student;
- Burning, scalding, poisoning, drowning, suffocating, or confinement;
- Administering drugs or substances not prescribed by a medical professional;
- Excessive physical exertion used as punishment;
- Forcing a student to kneel, stand for prolonged periods, run excessively, or remain in physically painful positions;
- Any act that causes physical harm, pain, or injury.

### **7.2 Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment is any physical punishment inflicted on a child by an adult in authority, including staff, guardians, or caregivers, as a form of discipline.

Corporal punishment is strictly prohibited at Woodlem Park School. It is treated as a safeguarding concern and may result in disciplinary and legal action.

### 7.3 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is persistent emotional ill-treatment that may cause adverse effects on a student's emotional development, mental health, dignity, or wellbeing.

Examples include:

- Humiliating, ridiculing, insulting, or name-calling;
- Persistent criticism or verbal abuse;
- Threatening, intimidating, frightening, or shaming a student;
- Conveying that a student is worthless, unloved, inadequate, or unwanted;
- Misrepresenting learning needs as discipline issues;
- Ignoring or condoning bullying;
- Denying reasonable emotional support, rest, or care;
- Discriminatory treatment or repeated exclusion.

### 7.4 Sexual Abuse and Exploitation

Sexual abuse and exploitation include forcing, enticing, manipulating, grooming, or exposing a child to sexual activity, sexualised behaviour, sexual images, or inappropriate sexual communication.

This may include:

- Inappropriate physical contact;
- Non-contact abuse such as exposure to sexual images or content;
- Sexualised comments, hints, grooming, or coercion;
- Encouraging sexually inappropriate behaviour;
- Involvement in the production, sharing, or viewing of pornographic or explicit material;
- Online sexual exploitation or grooming.

Any sexual abuse concern is a serious safeguarding matter and will be escalated immediately through school safeguarding procedures and, where required, to relevant authorities.

## 7.5 Bullying and Cyberbullying

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour involving a real or perceived power imbalance. It may be repeated or likely to be repeated.

Bullying includes:

- Physical bullying, such as hitting, pushing, or kicking;
- Verbal bullying, such as name-calling, threats, insults, or teasing;
- Social or relational bullying, such as exclusion, spreading rumours, humiliation, or isolation;
- Cyberbullying, including abusive messages, harmful posts, image sharing, impersonation, or digital harassment.

Bullying may be treated as a safeguarding concern when it causes harm, emotional distress, risk to safety, discrimination, exploitation, or repeated victimisation.

## 7.6 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a student's basic physical, emotional, medical, educational, or supervision needs, resulting in actual or potential harm.

Neglect may include failure to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing, hygiene, or shelter;
- Protect the child from physical danger;
- Provide appropriate supervision or caregiving;
- Ensure access to healthcare or prescribed medical support;
- Ensure regular school attendance;
- Provide emotional care and stimulation;
- Respond to serious concerns raised by the school.

Neglect is often cumulative and requires careful monitoring, documentation, professional judgement, and appropriate escalation.

## 8. Grave Concerns and At-Risk Situations

A grave concern refers to a situation where a student may not clearly fall under one single category of abuse

but is assessed to be at significant risk.

Indicators may include:

- Presence of a known abuser in the family or close environment;
- History of abuse involving siblings or family members;
- Exposure to inappropriate sexual content;
- Domestic violence or serious conflict within the household;
- Online exploitation risks;
- Persistent emotional distress or behavioural change;
- Self-harm or suicidal ideation;
- Serious peer-related harm, exploitation, or coercion;
- Unsafe adult contact or boundary concerns.

Such situations must be reported immediately to the DCPO.

## **9. Signs of Stress, Distress, Abuse, or Risk**

Students experiencing abuse, neglect, distress, or risk may display:

- Decline in academic performance;
- Aggression, hostility, or withdrawal;
- Mood changes, anxiety, fearfulness, depression, or unusual sadness;
- Regression in behaviour;
- Disturbed sleep or appetite;
- Self-harm or suicidal thoughts;
- Truancy or attempts to avoid school;
- Sudden personality changes;
- Unexplained injuries;
- Fear of specific people or places;
- Reluctance to go home;
- Unusually sexualised language or behaviour;
- Persistent tiredness, poor hygiene, or signs of neglect.

These indicators must not be ignored. Staff must report concerns even where they are unsure.

## 10. Safeguarding Governance Structure

Safeguarding at Woodlem Park School is a whole-school responsibility, supported by clear leadership oversight and defined roles.

The Principal holds ultimate accountability for the effectiveness and legal compliance of safeguarding arrangements.

The DCPO has operational responsibility for coordinating safeguarding and child protection arrangements across the school, under the overall accountability of the Principal.

The Child Protection and Safeguarding Committee supports implementation, monitoring, review, and improvement of safeguarding practices.

## 11. Designated Child Protection Officer

The Vice Principal – Administration, Student Affairs and Inclusion is appointed as the Designated Child Protection Officer for Woodlem Park School.

The DCPO is responsible for coordinating safeguarding and child protection processes across the school.

### 11.1 Core Responsibilities of the DCPO

The DCPO shall:

- Act as the primary point of contact for safeguarding concerns, disclosures, and referrals;
- Ensure safeguarding procedures are established, implemented, reviewed, and updated;
- Provide advice and confidential guidance to staff who have concerns about a student's welfare;
- Maintain secure, accurate, and confidential safeguarding records;
- Ensure all staff are aware of child protection expectations and reporting procedures;
- Coordinate monitoring and support for students identified as at risk;
- Liaise with the Principal and keep the Principal informed of safeguarding concerns and actions;
- Make timely referrals to external agencies such as CDA, Dubai Police, DHA, or other competent authorities where required;
- Attend or represent the school in safeguarding meetings, case conferences, or authority-led processes where required;
- Ensure allegations involving staff are reported to the Principal without delay;

- Maintain updated safeguarding records and monitoring lists;
- Ensure safeguarding information is transferred securely when a student moves school, where required and appropriate;
- Escalate safeguarding concerns without delay where a child's safety is at risk.

The DCPO has authority to escalate safeguarding matters without prior permission where immediate action is required to protect a child.

## 12. Deputy Safeguarding Arrangements

In the absence of the DCPO, safeguarding responsibilities will be delegated to a senior leader trained in child protection, as authorised by the Principal.

This arrangement ensures safeguarding continuity, availability, and timely response.

All staff must know whom to contact if the DCPO is unavailable.

## 13. Child Protection and Safeguarding Committee

Woodlem Park School has a Child Protection and Safeguarding Committee to support, oversee, and strengthen safeguarding practices.

### 13.1 Committee Composition

The Committee may include:

- Principal – Chair;
- Vice Principal – Administration, Student Affairs and Inclusion – DCPO;
- Phase Heads / Heads of Section;
- School Counsellors;
- School Doctor;
- Head Nurse;
- Admin Officer;
- Head of Physical Education Department;

- other relevant senior staff, where required.

This multidisciplinary structure ensures safeguarding decisions are informed by educational, medical, pastoral, behavioural, operational, and wellbeing perspectives.

### **13.2 Roles of the Committee**

The Committee shall:

- Monitor the implementation of safeguarding policies and procedures;
- Review safeguarding incidents, trends, risks, and patterns;
- Ensure follow-up actions and student support plans are implemented and reviewed;
- Oversee safeguarding training, awareness, and compliance;
- Ensure school practice aligns with UAE, KHDA, Dubai Government, and relevant curriculum expectations;
- Review safeguarding procedures and recommend updates;
- Support a culture of vigilance, accountability, and child-centred decision-making;
- Strengthen coordination between safeguarding, inclusion, wellbeing, medical, administration, and behaviour teams.

The Committee will meet at least once every term or immediately when serious safeguarding concerns arise.

### **14. Expectations from All Stakeholders**

All adults working in or visiting the school, including teaching staff, non-teaching staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors, parents, external professionals, and service providers, are expected to:

- Act in the best interests of the child at all times;
- Remain vigilant to signs of abuse, neglect, distress, or risk;
- Report safeguarding concerns immediately to the DCPO or authorised safeguarding lead;
- Cooperate fully with safeguarding procedures;
- Maintain confidentiality and professionalism;
- Follow school visitor, supervision, conduct, and safety procedures;
- Avoid any conduct that may compromise student safety, dignity, privacy, or wellbeing.

Failure to report safeguarding concerns may result in disciplinary and legal consequences.

## 15. Reporting Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to report concerns. Staff do not need to prove abuse before reporting.

Concerns must be reported when a staff member:

- Sees or hears something that causes concern;
- Receives a disclosure from a student;
- Notices signs of abuse, neglect, harm, distress, or risk;
- Becomes aware of unsafe behaviour by an adult or student;
- Receives information from a parent, peer, staff member, visitor, or external party;
- Observes online, transport, trip, or off-campus behaviour that raises safeguarding concerns; is unsure but believes a child may be at risk.
- When in doubt, report.

## 16. Rules for Visitors

Woodlem Park School recognises its responsibility to protect students from risks posed by unauthorised, unsuitable, or unsupervised adults on school premises.

The following rules apply to all visitors, including parents, contractors, external service providers, volunteers, and guests:

- All authorised visitors must report to reception.
- Visitors must sign in and sign out.
- Visitors must wear a visitor identification badge at all times.
- Visitors without identification may be challenged immediately by staff or security.
- Visitors are not permitted to move freely around the campus.
- Visitors must be accompanied by an authorised staff member where required.
- Access to student areas is controlled through school procedures, staff supervision, and CCTV surveillance.
- Any suspicious individual, intruder, or person loitering near the school or approaching students must be reported immediately to school leadership and security.
- Where required, the school may contact Dubai Police or relevant authorities.

## 17. Photography and Filming

Photography and filming must be controlled to protect student privacy, dignity, and safeguarding.

The following expectations apply:

- Parents, visitors, staff, and external parties may only take photographs or videos of students with prior school approval.
- Photography and filming are permitted only in approved or designated areas.
- Where parents have formally requested that their child should not be photographed or filmed, the school will respect the request.
- Images or videos of students must not be shared publicly without appropriate authorisation.
- Unauthorised photography, filming, recording, or sharing may be treated as a safeguarding concern.
- Recording students secretly or using images to mock, harass, exploit, or threaten students is strictly prohibited.

## 18. Safer Recruitment

Woodlem Park School follows safer recruitment practices to ensure that adults working with students are suitable, competent, and safe to do so.

Safer recruitment applies to planning, selection, appointment, induction, and ongoing employment.

### 18.1 Safer Recruitment Measures

Safer recruitment measures include:

- Job descriptions that clearly reference safeguarding and child protection responsibilities;
- Person specifications that include suitability to work with children;
- Interviews that explore safeguarding awareness, professional boundaries, and attitudes towards student welfare;
- Verification of identity and original documents;
- Verification of academic and professional qualifications;
- Review of employment history;
- Reference checks;
- Confirmation of fitness to perform the role where applicable;

- Police clearance and background checks as required by UAE regulations;
- Induction on safeguarding expectations and reporting procedures.

## 18.2 Staff Records

The school maintains central staff records, which may include:

- Full name and personal details;
- Job title and role;
- Date of birth;
- Start date and contract type;
- Qualification verification;
- Clearance and verification records;
- Safeguarding induction or training record, where applicable.

The school is committed to continuous vigilance and does not tolerate complacency in safeguarding.

## 19. Allegations Against Staff

Woodlem Park School recognises that allegations may be made against staff members or other adults working with students. Such allegations will be treated seriously, with student safety prioritised while ensuring fair, confidential, and appropriate procedures.

### 19.1 Procedure for Managing Allegations Against Staff

Where an allegation or concern involves a staff member:

1. The concern must be reported immediately to the DCPO.
2. The DCPO must inform the Principal without delay.
3. The school will take immediate steps to ensure that no child is placed at further risk.
4. Where required, the matter will be referred to external authorities.
5. Confidentiality will be maintained, and information will be shared strictly on a need-to-know basis.
6. The staff member involved will be managed in line with school procedures, KHDA expectations, UAE law, and HR requirements.
7. The school will keep appropriate records of the concern, decisions, actions, and outcomes.

No staff member will be allowed to continue duties that may place a child at risk while an investigation or review is ongoing.

## **19.2 Allegation Involving the DCPO or Principal**

Where the allegation involves the DCPO, the concern must be reported directly to the Principal.

Where the allegation involves the Principal, the matter must be escalated to the authorised school owner/governance representative and relevant external authority as required.

This ensures that no safeguarding concern is blocked, delayed, or handled by a person directly involved in the concern.

## **20. Safe Physical Contact Between Students and Staff**

Woodlem Park School operates within the United Arab Emirates, where cultural, religious, and social values must be respected alongside safeguarding best practice.

All physical contact between students and staff must be:

- Professional;
- Minimal;
- Purposeful;
- Necessary;
- Transparent;
- Respectful;
- Culturally appropriate;
- Clearly linked to safety, care, instruction, first aid, or justified educational support.

The child's dignity, comfort, and safety must always come first.

### **20.1 Principles of Safe Physical Contact**

Staff must ensure that:

- Physical contact respects UAE cultural and religious norms;
- Physical contact between staff and students, particularly across gender, is avoided unless necessary for safety, care, first aid, or clearly justified educational support;

- Contact is never secretive, unnecessary, prolonged, punitive, or inappropriate;
- Contact is explained clearly where possible;
- Student consent is sought where appropriate and possible, except in urgent safety or emergency situations;
- Another staff member is present where possible, especially in sensitive situations;
- Any contact that may be misunderstood is documented.

## 20.2 First Aid and Medical Assistance

Physical contact may be necessary during first aid or emergency care.

### In such situations:

- Trained staff should provide medical assistance where possible;
- Hygiene protocols must be followed;
- Gloves and appropriate protective measures should be used where required;
- Another staff member should be present where possible;
- The incident must be recorded according to school health and safety procedures.

## 20.3 Comfort and Reassurance

A student may require reassurance when distressed. Staff must use professional judgement and should prioritise verbal reassurance and calm, supportive presence.

Physical comfort must be minimal, age-appropriate, culturally appropriate, and based on the student's needs, not the adult's preference.

## 20.4 Physical Intervention for Safety

Physical intervention must be avoided unless necessary to prevent immediate harm.

It may be used only when:

- A student is at risk of harming themselves;
- Another person is at risk of harm;

- There is an immediate safety concern;
- Non-physical de-escalation is insufficient or not possible.

Any physical intervention must be reasonable, proportionate, minimal, and documented immediately.

## 20.5 Reporting and Documentation of Physical Contact

Any incident involving physical contact that could be misinterpreted must be documented.

Records should include:

- Date and time;
- Location;
- Reason for contact;
- Nature of contact;
- Names of staff or witnesses present;
- Student response;
- Follow-up action taken;
- Parent communication, where appropriate;
- Report to DCPO, where safeguarding concerns arise.

## 21. Disclosure of Abuse, Reporting Procedures, and Confidentiality

### 21.1 What to Do When a Student Discloses

If a student begins to disclose information relating to physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying, online harm, or any safeguarding concern, staff must respond calmly and appropriately.

Staff must:

- Remain calm, patient, and reassuring;
- Listen carefully without interrupting;
- Take the student seriously;
- Avoid expressing shock, disbelief, anger, or judgement;
- Avoid asking leading questions;

- Avoid pressing for unnecessary details;
- Avoid investigating the matter themselves;
- Avoid confronting the alleged perpetrator;
- Explain in age-appropriate language that the information may need to be shared to keep them safe;
- Reassure the student that they have done the right thing by speaking up;
- Report the concern immediately to the DCPO.
- Staff must not promise secrecy.

### **21.2 Appropriate Open Prompts**

Where clarification is necessary, staff may use open prompts such as:

- “Tell me about what happened.”
- “Explain what you mean.”
- “Describe how that made you feel.”
- “Tell me who was there.”
- “Tell me when this happened.”

Staff must not lead, coach, pressure, or influence the student’s account.

### **21.3 Immediate Reporting to the DCPO**

All safeguarding disclosures or concerns must be reported to the DCPO immediately.

If the DCPO is unavailable, the concern must be reported to the authorised deputy safeguarding lead or Principal.

If there is an immediate risk of serious harm, the school may escalate to relevant external authorities without delay.

## **22. Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is essential in safeguarding, but absolute confidentiality cannot be promised where a child may be at risk.

**Safeguarding information must be shared only:**

- With authorised staff;
- On a need-to-know basis;
- For the purpose of protecting the child;
- In line with legal, regulatory, and school safeguarding requirements.

**Staff must not:**

- Discuss safeguarding matters casually;
- Share details with unauthorised persons;
- Disclose student information to other parents;
- Store safeguarding documents insecurely;
- Take safeguarding records outside approved systems;
- Communicate sensitive details through inappropriate channels.

### 23. Safeguarding Records

The school will maintain secure safeguarding records.

Safeguarding records may include:

- Concern forms;
- Disclosure notes;
- Incident reports;
- Witness accounts;
- Records of meetings;
- Parent communication;
- Referrals to external authorities;
- Support plans;
- Monitoring notes;
- Medical or counselling input where relevant;
- Decisions taken and reasons for decisions;
- Follow-up actions and review notes.

Records must be factual, dated, signed or attributed, and stored securely.

## 24. Safeguarding Record-Keeping Expectations

When recording safeguarding concerns, staff must:

- Record the student's words as accurately as possible;
- Avoid personal opinions unless clearly identified as professional observation;
- Include date, time, location, and names of persons involved;
- Describe visible injuries or concerns factually;
- Record actions taken and persons informed;
- Submit records promptly to the DCPO.

Safeguarding records are confidential child protection records and must not be placed casually in general files or shared without authorisation.

## 25. Transfer of Safeguarding Information

**When a student leaves Woodlem Park School:**

- Safeguarding records may be transferred securely and confidentially to the receiving school where appropriate and required;
- Information will be shared only with authorised personnel;
- Records will be clearly marked as confidential child protection information;
- The transfer must be documented.

The purpose of transfer is to ensure continuity of safeguarding support and protection.

## 26. Working with Students at Risk

Safeguarding practice at Woodlem Park School recognises that a student who has experienced abuse, neglect, trauma, or serious distress may:

- Struggle with self-esteem;
- Feel helpless, fearful, ashamed, confused, or unsafe;
- Show challenging, withdrawn, anxious, or unpredictable behaviour;
- Find it difficult to trust adults;
- Require consistent emotional, pastoral, and educational support.

The school may be one of the few stable environments in a child's life. Staff must therefore respond with vigilance, consistency, professionalism, and care.

## **27. Support for Students at Risk**

**Woodlem Park School may support students at risk by:**

- Providing a safe and trusted reporting environment;
- Offering pastoral, counselling, and wellbeing support;
- Implementing monitoring and support plans;
- Working with parents where appropriate and safe;
- Coordinating with external professionals or authorities where required;
- Providing cyber safety and anti-bullying awareness;
- Supporting self-esteem, assertiveness, and resilience;
- Applying reasonable adjustments where the student has additional needs;
- Maintaining regular review by the safeguarding or wellbeing team.

Where a parent or family member may be part of the risk concern, the school will act carefully and follow safeguarding escalation procedures.

## **28. Online and Digital Safeguarding**

Online safety is part of child protection.

Safeguarding concerns may include:

- Cyberbullying;
- Online grooming;
- Exposure to harmful or explicit content;
- Unauthorised image sharing;
- Inappropriate digital communication;
- Misuse of school platforms;
- Privacy breaches;
- Online harassment;
- Impersonation;
- Digital coercion or exploitation.

Such concerns must be reported to the DCPO and addressed through the Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedure, Online / E-Safety Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Procedure, and relevant regulatory requirements.

## **29. School Transport, Trips, and Off-Site Safeguarding**

Safeguarding responsibilities extend to school transport, trips, events, competitions, and off-site activities where students are under school responsibility.

The school will ensure, where applicable:

- Appropriate supervision;
- Risk assessment;
- Emergency contact arrangements;
- Student medical or support information is available to authorised staff;
- Clear reporting routes;
- Safe handover and dispersal procedures;
- Staff awareness of safeguarding and professional boundaries;
- Immediate reporting of concerns to the DCPO.

## **30. Partnership with Parents**

The school values partnership with parents in promoting student safety and welfare.

However, where a child's safety is at risk, the school will prioritise child protection and mandatory reporting obligations.

**The school may share information with parents unless doing so could:**

- Place the child at further risk;
- Compromise an investigation;
- Expose the child to pressure, retaliation, or intimidation;
- Conflict with advice from competent authorities;
- Be inappropriate due to the nature of the concern.

In such cases, the school will follow safeguarding procedures and seek guidance from relevant authorities

where required.

### **31. Training and Awareness**

All staff will receive safeguarding awareness appropriate to their role.

Training and awareness may include:

- Child protection responsibilities;
- Signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying, and distress;
- Disclosure handling;
- Reporting procedures;
- Confidentiality and record keeping;
- Safe physical contact;
- Professional boundaries;
- Cultural sensitivity;
- De-escalation;
- Online safety;
- Safer recruitment;
- Safeguarding risks for vulnerable students and Students of Determination.

Staff are expected to apply safeguarding training in daily practice and seek guidance where unsure.

### **32. Related Safeguarding Policies and Procedures**

This procedure should be read together with relevant school policies and procedures, including:

- Child Protection Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Online / E-Safety Policy;
- Mobile Phone / Digital Device Use Policy;
- Student Code of Conduct Policy;
- Student Discipline and Behaviour Management Procedure;
- Staff Code of Conduct and Safer Working Practices;
- Inclusion Policy and Inclusion Procedure;

- Health and Safety Policy;
- Educational Visits and Trips Policy;
- Risk Assessment and Management Policy;
- Complaints and Grievance Policy;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- POSH Policy.

These documents support a coordinated safeguarding framework.

### **33. Monitoring and Review**

The Child Protection and Safeguarding Committee, DCPO, Principal, and Senior Leadership Team will monitor safeguarding provision through:

- Incident records;
- Referral trends;
- Safeguarding case reviews;
- Training records;
- Staff awareness;
- Student wellbeing indicators;
- Parent or stakeholder feedback;
- Visitor and supervision arrangements;
- Online safety concerns;
- School transport and trip-related safeguarding records;
- Inspection and regulatory feedback.

This procedure will be reviewed annually or earlier where required due to:

- KHDA updates;
- UAE regulatory changes;
- Serious safeguarding incidents;
- Internal review findings;
- School improvement priorities;
- Changes in staffing, systems, or operational arrangements.

The next scheduled review will be in April 2027.

### 34. Conclusion

The Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedure explains how Woodlem Park School, Al Qusais, Dubai, implements safeguarding in practice. It provides clear guidance on reporting, disclosures, confidentiality, visitor management, safe physical contact, safer recruitment, allegations against staff, safeguarding records, escalation, and support for students at risk. This procedure ensures that safeguarding concerns are handled promptly, professionally, confidentially, and in line with UAE legal expectations, KHDA requirements, school procedures, and the best interests of the child.

### INCIDENT REPORT FORM

<b>Name of the student:</b>		<b>Date of incident:</b>	
<b>Grade &amp; Division:</b>		<b>Venue of incident:</b>	
<b>Incident reported by:</b>		<b>Time of incident:</b>	

**Nature of incident:**

**Action Taken:**

**Name of person reporting the incident:**

**Designation/relation with the child:**

**Signature:**


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**Action plan: Signatures with the date (If applicable):**

**Student:**

**Parent:**

**Counsellor:**

**Phase Head:**

**Vice Principal - DCPO:**

**School Principal:**

### DISCLOSURE / SAFEGUARDING CONCERN FORM

To be completed immediately after a disclosure, allegation, or safeguarding concern is received. Record facts only. Use the child's/person's own words as far as possible.

<b>Name of Student / Person Making Disclosure:</b>	
<b>Grade / Section:</b>	
<b>Parent / Guardian Name and Contact Details:</b>	
<b>Date and Time of Disclosure:</b>	
<b>Location:</b>	
<b>Name and Role of Staff Recording:</b>	

**Nature of Disclosure / Concern:**

*Record as close to the person's own words as possible. Do not investigate or add assumptions. Continue on a separate sheet if required.*

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**Immediate Action Taken / Person Informed****Action taken:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student reassured and kept safe      | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent contact deferred pending safeguarding review |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First aid / clinic support provided  | <input type="checkbox"/> External authority referral required                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student separated from possible risk | <input type="checkbox"/> No immediate action required at this stage          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DCPO / Safeguarding Lead informed    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Principal / Senior Leader informed   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent contacted                     |  |

**Name of Staff Member:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Role:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date and Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

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