

Introduction

The health, safety and wellbeing of all children are of paramount importance to all adults who work in our school. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. All staff has a duty to report any suspected or disclosed cases relating to child protection to the Child Protection Team. If the threat is immediate or ongoing it will be reported to the appropriate local safeguarding authorities as set in place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Guidelines from United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the International Taskforce on Child Protection were used to create the SISD Child Protection and Safeguarding policy. SISD aims to ensure that all members of staff can secure children's safety and wellbeing by having the best interest of the child. This policy introduces the Child Protection Team and raises awareness about child protection and safeguarding. It also identifies systems in place to identify and report child protection and safeguarding concerns.

Definition

The Child Protection team is designed to protect students and staff. The team meets every four weeks to review best practice in Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures at SISD.

Members of the team include the following:

Head of School

Collate information from the Child Protection Team and support decision making. Responsible for reporting all child protection concerns to local authorities. In his absence, the Child Protection Coordinator assumes this responsibility.

Child Protection Coordinator

Assist Deputy Heads in receiving concerns and support staff, students and parents. Acknowledge all concerns and interview all relevant parties, in collaboration with the Deputy Head. Ensure consistent and complete documentation of all concerns.

Deputy Head Early Years

Receive child protection concerns from section staff, parents and children. Document all concerns and report to the Child Protection Coordinator for review.

Deputy Head Primary Years

Receive child protection concerns from section staff, parents and children. Document all concerns and report to the Child Protection Coordinator for review.

Deputy Head Secondary School

Receive child protection concerns from section staff, parents and children. Document all concerns and report to the Child Protection Coordinator for review.

Important Definitions

Child

At SISD, we define a child as a person under the age of 18. We define a child as any student of the school or child visitor to the school.

Child Abuse

Child abuse is any action by another person – adult or child that causes significant harm to a child. It can be physical abuse, verbal/emotional abuse, sexual abuse or child neglect. Child abuse also includes any other form of behavior recognized as Child Abuse by the laws of UAE.

Safeguarding

Responsibility of our school to ensure our staff, operations and programs do no harm to children or expose children to the risk of harm and to ensure that any concerns about children's safety is reported to an appropriate authority.

Types of Child Abuse

Physical

Hitting, shaking, slapping, burning, and leaving a mark on the body.

Verbal/Communication/Emotional

- Shouting, threatening, insulting, undermining, blaming, judging and intimidating,
- Neglecting, saying or doing things that make a child feel unsafe, unloved and unwanted.
- Engaging in any form of inappropriate communication (including digital) with a child, including messages of sexual nature.
- Bullying of any form, including incitation to harm one-self or develop suicidal thoughts.

Sexual

- Occurs when a person tried by force to have sexual contact with another
- Inappropriate touches, rape and watching pornography (a child or an adult in the presence of a child).
- Encouraging a child to engage in prostitution or any conduct of sexual nature either with a peer or an adult.

Child Neglect

- Absence of adequate basic needs for the child including food, hygiene and shelter.
- Neglecting children emotionally, medically and educationally.
- Inadequate supervision by parent/ guardian or caregiver.

Peer on Peer Abuse

A 'peer' is a person within the same age range, and someone of equal worth. All students, co-teachers, co-staff are considered as each other's peers. Peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways which may include; bullying, sexual exploitation and child harm. All forms of peer on peer abuse are reported and are managed in compliance with the Staff Conduct Policy and whole school Anti-Bullying Policy.

Child Protection from Technological Risks & Threats

The Internet has the potential to offer children and young people a wide range of opportunities. However, there are ranges of risks and dangers online that threatens children's safety and are widely known as follows:

- Children and young people inadvertently or deliberately accessing illegal or inappropriate sexual or violent material online.
- Targeting and grooming of children by predatory adults through chat rooms, possibly adults posing as children.
- The abuse of children, in some cases in real time using web cams, in order to provide material for pedophile news groups.
- The use of email, instant messaging etc. to bully and harass other – this may be more likely to occur between children and young people.

Reporting Procedure

MyConcern

MyConcern is a safe platform for recording and managing child protection and safeguarding concerns. All information documented on MyConcern remains confidential and is only accessible to members of the child protection and safeguarding team.

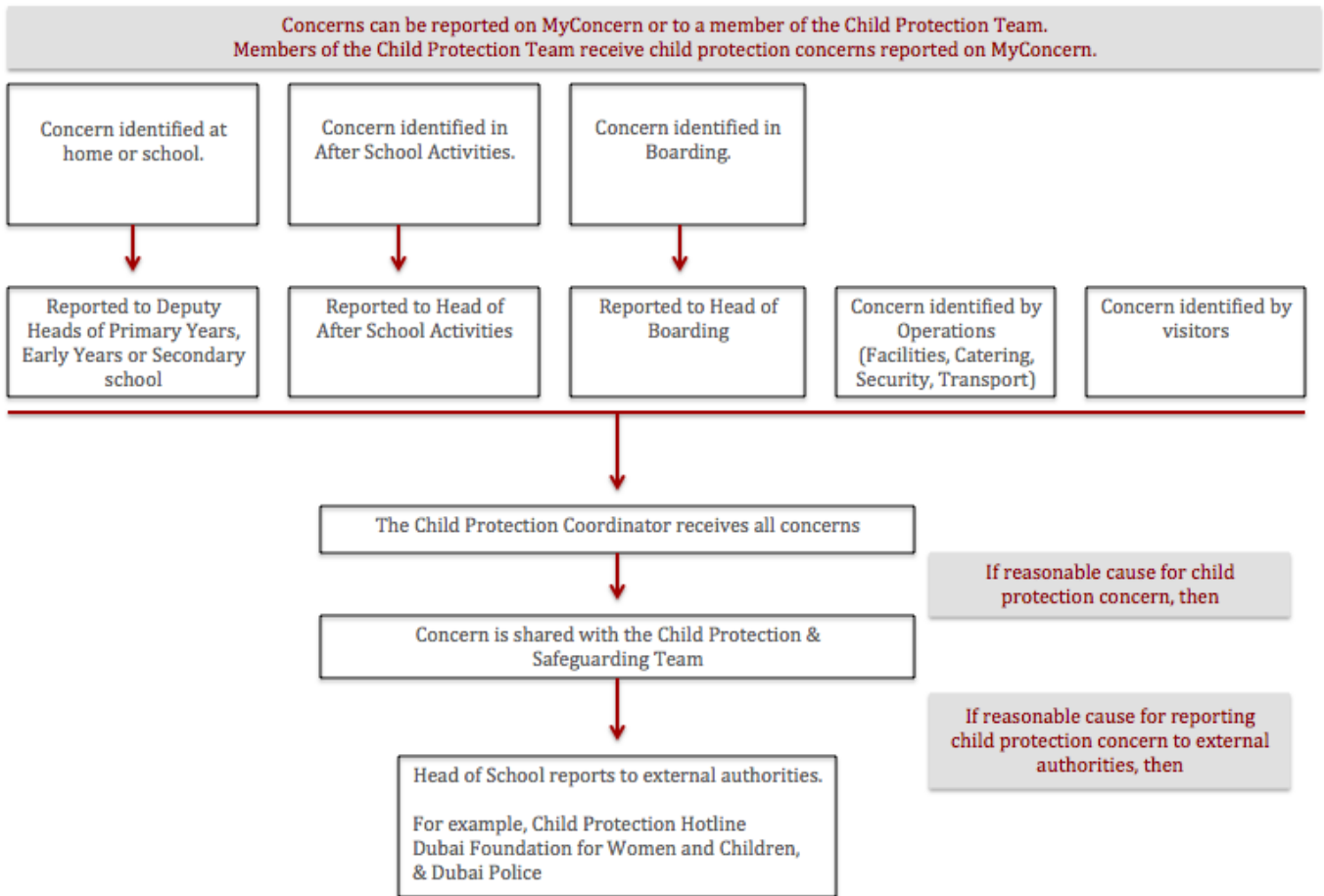
Identified concerns are reported on MyConcern or to a member of the Child Protection & Safeguarding team. Each school section displays posters that identify safe adults to whom children can report concerns and seek help. The receiving member of the team documents the concern on MyConcern. All concerns are received by the Child Protection Coordinator.

Reports shared with a member of the Child Protection & Safeguarding Team

Reports should include a detailed description of the event incorporating a clear, sequential and factual account of the concern. For example, exchange of dialogue should be stated in the concerned person(s) exact words. Reports should include the following;

- Dates and/or time of the suspected concern.
- Name(s) of the child/staff involved.
- Name(s) of external parties involved.
- State the concern and how you learnt about it, including names.
- Share any additional information about the student/staff or others involved.

Reporting procedures are strictly confidential. The following visual presents the procedure.



The Interview Process

All concerns are documented on MyConcern and received by the Child Protection Coordinator. The Child Protection Coordinator collaborates with the reporting member of the team to initiate the interview process. The interview process may be extended to other people in the child’s environment. All findings are documented on MyConcern.

The interview questions must be non-leading and relate strictly to the child’s wellbeing. The interview process is conducted in a confidential manner.

Action

- Following the interview process, the Child Protection Coordinator shares the concern with suitable members of the child protection team.
- Concern is reviewed for further action.
- Based on acquired information, the child protection team creates a support plan for the child.
- The pastoral team, including counselors may be asked to support the child.
- The Child Protection Coordinator confirms the conclusion of the case with concerned parties.

Decision to report to external bodies is made by the Head of School. The school reports to the Child Protection Hotline; **+97180098**. Other external bodies include; Dubai Police, Dubai Foundation for Women and Children, Al Tamimi Law firm and Child Safe ME. The school has identified individual counselors that work in these institutes that we maintain a strong relationship with.

Please note that the Child Protection Team will respond as soon as possible. The team will collect feedback from all concerned parties and share it with the complainant

If you have a concern about a child being at risk of harm or you receive a disclosure, please contact the main reception and ask to speak to the Child Protection Coordinator. For emergencies, please contact the nearest security desk.

In compliance with the UAE Law, the school has a duty to report all concerns of suspected abuse (including domestic abuse) to the local authorities.

Responsibilities of all members of the SISD Community

All members are expected to cultivate a safe, trusting and caring environment. They should educate themselves about the definition, signs and identification of child abuse and understand the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy with support from the Child Protection Team. They have a duty to report all suspected cases of child abuse while maintaining strict confidentiality and following procedures that deal with disclosure as recommended. The child protection team refers and adheres to the UAE Child Rights Law of 2016 in all matters concerning the protection and safeguarding of students.

Child Rights Law

https://www.khda.gov.ae/CMS/WebParts/TextEditor/Documents/Children_Law_English.pdf

Child Protection Team

The Child Protection Team consists of the Head of School, Child Protection Coordinator and Deputy Heads of Early Years, Primary and Secondary School. Support specialists for example, counselors, nurses, doctors may be involved as per need under a confidentiality agreement.

- Ensure that all members of staff are equipped with accurate and up to date information on child protection procedures, in compliance with local authorities.
- Review the Child Protection Policy, when necessary, considering changes in policies and the specific needs of the SISD community. The review will be completed in agreement with the Leadership Team.
- Communicate any developments and changes to child protection procedures and policy to staff biannually and when necessary.
- Provide additional support to members of staff in addressing cases of suspected abuse. For example, counselling support with professionals at Dubai Foundation for Women and Children.
- Maintain partnerships with local authorities to ensure practices are compliant with the UAE Child Rights Law.

School Doctor/Nurse

The Doctor or Nurse will be required to conduct an initial examination if there are physical injuries and write an initial report about the child's physical and emotional condition. The Head of School, also a Child Protection Team member can request information for case reviews.

In some cases, the child may have to take medication because of the abuse. The School Doctor or Nurse must ensure that all standards and procedures for administering medications in the school setting are met.

Pastoral Care Team

The pastoral care team will offer the child a safe space accompanied with support as outlined in the Anti-Bullying policy. This policy defines instances in which behaviors may be referred to the child protection team.

Please refer to the SISD Anti-Bullying Policy.

Parents/Guardians

Parents understand the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy at SISD. They comply with the procedures in place to protect their children. Parents must alert the school of any concerns relating to the safety and welfare of an SISD student. Parents are always advised to maintain confidentiality. They are encouraged to collaborate with the school in supporting the child both, inside and outside of school.

The child protection team organizes awareness talks on child protection and safeguarding annually. In addition, the Parent Forum Committee undertakes a child protection training course with ECIS facilitated by the school.

After School Activities

All external providers have a duty of care towards our students. They are responsible for understanding the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy at SISD. All providers are required to submit background checks, Good Conduct certificate and to attend a training course on Child Protection and Safeguarding facilitated by SISD.

Reporting: All providers agree to report child protection concerns to the Head of After School Activities. The Head of After School Activities is responsible for reporting concerns to the Child Protection Coordinator as soon as possible with complete documentation.

Transportation

All adults responsible for SISD students in transportation have a duty of care to report any suspicious activities or concerns that may risk a child's health and safety. They undertake the Child Protection & Safeguarding training and are required to comply with the procedures in place.

Reporting: All transportation staff agree to report child protection concerns to the Transportation Manager. The manager is responsible for reporting it to the Child Protection Coordinator as soon as possible with complete documentation. All buses are under vigilant camera surveillance. The surveillance is aligned with the UAE transportation Law.

Boarding

Boarding staff is responsible for student wellbeing. They are encouraged to build trust with students and close partnerships with the families and local guardians. Staff members must also understand and practice the employee code of conduct at SISD.

Boarding staff and parents/guardians are expected to comply with SISD school wide Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures. If a concern is raised about a student, parents/guardians are expected to be available to support.

Reporting: Child protection concerns in the boarding section are reported by the Head of Boarding directly to the Child Protection Coordinator.

Operations

Members of the facilities, security, maintenance and catering teams understand the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy at SISD. They also attend a training on Child Protection and Safeguarding to ensure

a thorough understanding of possible concerns. They report all concerns directly to the child protection coordinator.

Facilities

The SISD campus is always under vigilant surveillance. Camera recordings of specific areas in the school can be accessed with legitimate child protection concern. Recordings are at times used as supporting evidence in child protection concerns.

Maintenance & Catering

All adults have a duty of care towards all SISD students and child visitors. They are responsible for ensuring their correct behavior and reporting any suspicious activities in compliance with the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

Security

Security staff undertakes to be vigilant and adhere to the procedures governing access to the school campus. A visitor's pass must be worn to facilitate identification and monitoring of visitors to the school. A record of relevant personal details will also be kept.

Visitors

Child safety and well-being is important to SISD and visitors to the school have a responsibility towards the school community. *Please see the SISD Visitor's Policy for reference.*

Academic Advisory Board

Child Protection and Safeguarding practices are shared with the members of the academic advisory board at SISD. The members collaborate with the Child Protection Team to review the policy and systems in place for safety and wellbeing of our community. Concern data collected, such as numbers of concerns logged and nature of concerns, is shared with the board and used to guide the review.

External Trips

International

All international trips should ensure enough adult capacity to support all students. Both, male and female staff should accompany students on International trips. All accompanying adults, including parents must recognize that they have a responsibility towards health, safety and child protection. Child protection concerns on international trips are reported directly to the head of school. In emergencies, local authorities of the site must be contacted.

Local

Local trips are facilitated by the SISD Transportation system. The buses are under camera surveillance and the staff is equipped with child protection training. All accompanying adults, including parents must recognize that they have a responsibility towards health, safety and child protection. All accompanying staff are trained in safeguarding practices. Child protection concerns on local trips are reported directly to the child protection coordinator.

Reporting: Suspicious activity or child protection concerns on international and local trips must be documented and reported to the Child Protection Team for review and support.

Safer Recruitment

Employees will be provided with a copy of the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and will be required to sign a document confirming that they have read and understood it.

Recruitment of SISD Employees is conducted in compliance with the following safer recruitment requirements:

- Police certificate(s) of good conduct or equivalent police clearance certificate(s) confirming no criminal convictions and giving clearance to work with children. If the Employee is residing in Dubai, a Dubai Police Certificate of Good Conduct plus a criminal background/child protection clearance certificate from the Employee's last country of residence and home country is required. If the Employee is coming from outside Dubai a criminal background/child protection clearance certificate from his/her current/last country of residence and home country is required. For Employees from UK an Enhanced DBS certificate or ICPC certificate is required.
- All other criminal background/child protection clearance certificates for all countries in which the Employee has resided (if available).
- ID documentation (passport, visa, Emirates ID, birth certificate, change of name declaration, marriage certificate(s)).
- A minimum of 2 written references is required. Any anomalies or discrepancies in a reference will be taken up through direct contact with the referee and a note made of the same. A referee will be requested to comment on the following:
 - the candidate's suitability to work with children and young people
 - any allegations or disciplinary actions to include warnings and dismissals
 - any allegations or disciplinary proceedings involving issues relating to the safety and welfare of students, children and young people
 - the candidates' suitability for the role
- Once references are received, at least one reference will be authenticated by HR through a telephone call to the referee. A note will be kept on file of the authentication phone call.
- In the application form submitted as part of the recruitment process an applicant must declare all convictions they may have, and all addresses they have lived at during the past 10 years. The applicant is required to confirm whether they are disqualified from working with children or subject to any sanctions imposed by a regulatory body.

Please see the SISD Recruitment Policy and Procedure for reference.

Whistleblowing

Human Resources at SISD supports staff members who report colleagues of unethical or suspicious conduct. This may include illegal practices, criminal offences, physical or sexual abuse, risk of damage to the school environment, someone covering up a wrongdoing and matters relating to health & safety.

Where child protection concerns related to staff overlap with the whistleblowing policy the reporting procedure should follow the guidelines set out within the child protection and safeguarding policy.

Please refer to the SISD whistleblowing policy for reference.

Training

SISD places a strong emphasis on quality training for all employees. We have formed a partnership with the Educational Collaborative for Internationals schools, ECIS to facilitate Child Protection & Safeguarding training for all staff. This training supports updated practices recommended by the International Taskforce on Child Protection. The training is supplemented by biannual workshops delivered by the child protection team on how practices are aligned with the UAE Children's rights law.

Application of the Policy

This policy applies to all school events inside and outside of school, for example, performances, social events, school trips, educational events etc. Child Protection is a shared responsibility across the SISD community. Any suggestions should be shared with the Child Protection Coordinator who will then share with the Child Protection Team for review. An outcome will be shared with a view to ensuring best practice.

Relevant legislation or Authorities

This Child Protection Policy is underpinned by fundamental principle of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child UNCRC 1989 ratified by United Arab Emirates (UAE) on the 3rd January 1997 along with the UAE local Child Protection Laws, last updated in June 2016. The child protection team may refer to the laws defined in the International Center for Missing and Exploited Children guidelines established in February 2018.

Prevention

- All staff members undertake a course in child protection and safeguarding.
- The child protection team meets with all staff biannually to review case studies, updated practices and developments with regards to the local UAE Laws.
- All staff members are required to read and understand the SISD Child Protection and safeguarding policy.
- A record of the signed copies is maintained by the Child Protection and Safeguarding team.
- All facilities are monitored by cameras to secure evidence of suspicious activities.
- Non-compliance of the SISD Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is taken seriously and may lead to removal of the individual from the SISD campus.
- SISD has an Emergency Response Plan which clearly indicates preventive steps taken to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the community.

Please refer to the SISD Crisis and Emergency Response Plan.

Useful Contacts

Child Protection Hotline: +971800988

Child Protection Center: +971111022

Dubai Foundation for Women and Children: +97146060300

Email:

help@dfwac.ae

Website:

www.dfwac.ae

Email:

info@dfwac.ae

Dubai Police: +971 460 9999

Email: mail@dubaipolice.gov.ae