



**AMITY**  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL  

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ABU DHABI

# **Child Protection Policy**

**Final Version**

## **Introduction**

At Amity International School we believe that all children have a right to be safe, protected from abuse and able to flourish in their learning. Our prime concern must be the interests and safety of the child. All staff have a pastoral duty towards children. Due to our day to day contact with individual children, we are well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop.

The needs of children are paramount and underpin all our work. Staff have a central role both in the initial identification of possible abuse and in monitoring the development and progress of children who have been identified as being at risk of significant harm.

The intention of this policy is to ensure that appropriate action is taken where it is alleged that a child is suspected of being abused, or is actually being abused. The problems of identifying and dealing with child abuse can only be tackled effectively when all concerned have a heightened awareness of the subject. Once child abuse is suspected the aim should be to minimise the damage to the child and promote recovery.

However, we view Child Protection as more than simply acting when suspicions arise or information is revealed. We also have a vital role to play in preparing children to resist abuse and to become responsible, caring and confident adults.

Working in the staff team are the School Counsellor; Clare Madden, Child Protection Officer: Mohammed Awwad and school SENCO: Caitriona Fallon. They work together to support our students and keep them safe.

### **Definitions of Child Abuse**

'Child abuse and neglect' is a generic term encompassing all ill treatment of children including serious physical and sexual assaults as well as cases where the standard of care does not adequately support the child's health or development.

Children may be abused or neglected through the infliction of harm, or through the failure to act to protect harm.

There are four broad categories of abuse which are generally recognised

- Neglect: failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs
- Physical abuse: causing injury or suffering to a child
- Sexual abuse: involvement of a child in sexual activity, including access to pornography
- Emotional abuse: persistent emotional ill treatment of a child

These categories overlap and an abused child does frequently suffer more than one type of abuse.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The school has a responsibility to child protection through the:

- Provision of a safe environment in which children can learn and develop
- Practice of safe recruitment
- Use of curriculum to understand what is and is not acceptable behaviour, how to speak up regarding their concerns and how to become (as an adult) safe and effective parents
- Recognition of significant harm and possible offences against children
- Support to pupils who have been abused
- The appointment of a designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection

### **The role of Teachers and Support Staff**

Child protection is everybody's business. When not at home or another 'caring base', children spend more time in school than anywhere else. Teachers have a very close relationship and contact with children who generally trust them unreservedly. Our school may be providing a safe haven and perhaps the only place where a child feels comfortable and able to talk to adults. Teachers are in a unique position to detect changes in a child's behaviour over time, or to observe a child's failure to thrive.

Class teachers or support members of staff may be the first to pick up early warning signs that a child is being exposed to abuse of a physical, emotional, or sexual kind. Abused children may turn to teachers or support staff to discuss their worries and request their help. Young children, particularly, may view the teacher as a neutral figure whom they can confide in.

Teachers and support staff are frequently chosen by children when they need an adult to talk to about their abuse (the point of disclosure). An important aspect of the teacher's or support staff's role is in the early detection of abuse, knowing what to suspect and how to respond.

Child Protection is a theme which is interwoven with many aspects of the National Curriculum, particularly PSHE and the Values Curriculum. Relevant opportunities can also be found for reinforcing Child Protection themes in science, drama, writing and art as well as in more informal aspects of school life and during assemblies.

**Each individual teacher will:**

- establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- record any concerns over the welfare of children in their class, (facts not opinions or interpretations) See Appendix A form
- inform the Child Protection designated person if any form of Child Abuse is suspected. They in turn will inform relevant parties.
- if appropriate, communicate concerns to other adults working with the child
- integrate child protection issues into relevant teaching and learning to help children protect themselves.

**All staff will:**

- communicate **any** concerns to the Principal and Child Protection designated person and keep written records of concerns in a locked filing cabinet, even where there is lack of evidence
- respect the confidentiality of all concerned regarding the welfare of children
- respect children as individuals and engage them in conversations
- cooperate as required with enquiries from relevant agencies regarding child protection matters

**How to react when a child wants to talk about abuse**

Staff should:

- Accept what the child says
- Reassure the child s/he was right to tell you and that you believe the story
- Keep calm and listen. Listen and allow for silence and pauses.
- Be honest
- Let the child know you may need to tell someone - don't promise confidentiality
- Let the child know that even when s/he has broken a rule, s/he is not to blame for the abuse
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened
- Never push for information
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let him/her know what happens
- Immediately refer to the Principal and Designated Child Protection person
- Make accurate, factual, signed, dated and timed written notes as soon as possible of what was said, observed and done. (See Appendix A)

**Staff must not:**

- Question children
- Suggest alternatives to what a child has said
- Get the child to write about, or depict their experience in some other way
- Question parents (or inform them of the referral in cases of sexual abuse or other complex cases)
- Question potential witnesses
- Conduct medical examinations
- Delay referral

**The Designated Child Protection member of staff is responsible for:**

- The provision of advice and support to staff
- Maintaining accurate and secure child protection records (body maps and Critical Incident Record see School Nurse) These records are stored with the School Counsellor in a locked filing cabinet.
- Monitoring attendance and development of children who are at risk
- Ensuring that all relevant information about a child is disseminated to appropriate staff within the school
- Ensuring complete records are sent to receiving schools, whether a child changes as a natural progression or for any other reason
- In consultation with the Principal, referring an alleged case of child abuse to ADEC for further support and guidance

**Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children**

Thorough pre-appointment checks will be made by Amity International School on people who will come into unsupervised contact with children. Teachers are asked to produce a current DBS check. References are taken up on all staff employed within Amity Head Office.

Staff appointed from countries without DBS checks should produce an Abu Dhabi Police Check.

**Allegations against staff**

All who work for Amity are prohibited from applying more than specified types and levels of restraint to those children for whom they are professionally responsible.

Volunteers who work with children are also expected to maintain standards of conduct comparable to those prescribed for colleagues in paid employment.

All complaints against staff will be fully investigated by the Principal and a manager from Amity. Please see complaints policy.

Enquiries will be conducted in the strictest confidence so that information can be given freely and without fear of victimisation and in a way that protects the rights of staff and children.

In the case of serious allegations it is likely to be necessary to suspend the member of staff immediately until the investigation is concluded, in other cases it may be appropriate to modify the individual's duties to ensure they are not left unsupervised to care for children. We will refer to ADEC guidelines in these situations.

It is important in dealing with allegations of child abuse for there to be the fullest co-operation possible between all concerned.

### **Whistleblowing – Letting People Know**

Young children especially cannot be expected to always raise concerns about the behaviour and actions of an adult who they work with in school.

It is important that an atmosphere is created in school where it is acceptable to raise concerns. This should be encouraged from both staff and children. Concerns that are raised should be taken seriously and acted upon. Details provided and decisions made should be recorded and filed.

All staff should therefore be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

### **Physical Intervention**

- Physical punishment of any kind must never be used on pupils.
- Staff should avoid holding children, picking children up or sitting children on their knee unless they are distressed and the child initiates it themselves.
- Our policy is that staff must only ever use physical intervention / restraint as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimum force necessary to prevent injury to another person.

Physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

**Appendix A**

**INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

*(Please use a computer, type, or print all information.)*

**Student's name:** ..... **Class:** .....  
**Witnesses to incident:**

**Details of Incident**

**Date of the incident:** ..... / ..... / 201....

**Time of the incident:** .....

**Location of the incident:** .....

**Statement of what occurred / observed**  
**Cite every detail you can remember in bullet points.**

*(This area is intentionally left blank for the student to provide details of the incident.)*

**Parents contacted Y/N**

*If yes, please state the school/home dialogue in bullet points:*

*(This area is intentionally left blank for the student to provide dialogue.)*

**Next steps:**

*(This area is intentionally left blank for the student to provide next steps.)*

**Review date if set:**

*(This area is intentionally left blank for the student to provide a review date.)*

*Reported by*

*Reported to*

**Name:** .....

*School Principal / Counsellor/SENco*

**Designation:** .....

.....

**Date:** ..... / ..... / 201....

*(Continue on a new sheet as necessary but ensure all sheets are attached)*

## **Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored on a yearly basis by the Principal and SLT.

## **Change History Record**

<b>Version No.</b>	<b>Description of Change</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Date of Issue</b>
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Adoption of Policy</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>Aug 2015</b>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Revision of Policy</b>	<b>Principal / SLT</b>	<b>Oct 2015</b>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Revision of Policy</b>	<b>Child Protection Officer</b>	<b>Jan 2016</b>