



دار المعرفة
dar al marefa

Dar Al Marefa

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

2025/2026

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1 Our Vision

Our vision is to create a community that fosters lifelong learning, is rooted in its values and beliefs, is open minded, tolerant and appreciates diversity. Our graduates are principled and courageous individuals, ready to contribute to a more just and peaceful world.

2 Our Mission

Our mission is to build a consistent, challenging and safe learning environment that supports each child in exploring their capabilities, encourages them to respect other cultures and embrace the world with open-mindedness, tolerance and confidence.

3 Rationale

The safeguarding and child protection policy at Dar Al Marefa, is founded on the principle that every child has the right to a safe and secure learning environment. The rationale behind this policy stems from the school's unwavering commitment to prioritising the well-being and protection of its students. By implementing robust safeguarding measures, including comprehensive staff training, clear reporting procedures, and regular risk assessments, the school aims to create a culture of vigilance and accountability, ensuring that all students are protected from any form of harm or abuse. This policy also emphasizes the importance of open communication channels, fostering a safe and supportive environment where students feel comfortable reporting any concerns. By prioritizing safeguarding and child protection, the school endeavors to provide a nurturing educational experience that enables students to flourish academically, emotionally, and socially.

4 Key Safeguarding Contacts

Within School:

- Designated Safeguarding Leads:
 - Primary: David Sellars (david.s@daralmarefa.ae) and
 - Secondary: Rama AlMasri (rama.a@daralmarefa.ae)
- Designated Safeguarding Officer
 - KG: Engy Olama (engy.o@daralmarefa.ae)
 - Primary: Alison Dawson (alison.d@daralmarefa.ae)
 - Secondary: Inas Al Derbashi (inas.d@daralmarefa.ae)
- Allocated Safeguarding Officers:
 - Steven Giles, Principal (steven.g@daralmarefa.ae)
 - Sahar Dorra, Head of Inclusion (sarah.d@daralmarefa.ae)
 - Sahar Moosa, Head of Teaching and Learning (sahar.m@daralmarefa.ae)

Within The Local Area:

- CDA, Child Protection Section: 800988, www.cda.gov.ae
- MOI, Child Protection Centre: 116111, www.moi-cpc.ae
- Dubai Foundation for Women and Children: 046060300, www.dfwac.ae
- Al Ameen Service: 8004888, www.alameen.gov.ae

Alternative Referrals:

- Should you be unable to contact the people above, in an URGENT and IMMEDIATE concern, please contact any member of the Senior Leadership Team.

5 Introduction

All personnel at Dar al Marefa school take Safeguarding and Child Protection seriously, along with their responsibility to protect the welfare of students in its care. It is recognised that all Dar al Marefa staff play a role in safeguarding due to the regular contact they have with students, putting them in a position to identify concerns. They are trained to provide direct support in preventing harm to any child in our care. Students should be treated with respect, consideration and dignity, having the right to privacy and confidentiality. The student or his/her parents should be provided with relevant information concerning the evaluation and potential solutions. The student should be given the opportunity to participate in decisions involving his/her welfare when possible and age appropriate.

6 Purpose

6.1 An effective whole-school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is one which provides clear direction to staff and others about expected behaviour when dealing with child protection issues. An effective policy also makes explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child

6.2 There are three main elements to our child protection policy:

6.2.1 Prevention through the creation of a positive school atmosphere and the teaching, and wellbeing support offered to students.

6.2.2 Protection by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.

6.2.3 **Support** to students who may have been abused.

6.3 This policy applies to all students, staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to Dar al Marefa.

6.4 The school recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation.

7 Dubai's Context

Child protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate school procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Designated Safeguarding Officers.

In Dubai and the United Arab Emirates there is currently no infrastructure of Educational Safeguarding and/or Social Care Services. Following cases which caused concern in the Emirati community, Sheikh Mohammed, the Ruler of Dubai, supported the drafting of Federal law No. 3 regarding child protection "to ensure a secure and stable future for children in the U.A.E."

In April 2012, it was reported that Dubai had "embraced a new policy to protect children against all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect and offer support and care for those in need." The policy "aims to provide protection to Emirati and expatriate children under the age 18 who live permanently or temporarily in Dubai." The Dubai Strategic Plan 2015 calls for the provision of "proper social services to meet the requirements of the local community."

In November 2012, the UAE Cabinet approved "Wadeema's Law" to "protect children in the UAE". The law includes creating special units that intervene when children are at risk and stresses that all children have rights regardless of religion and nationality."

In present circumstances, the lack of direct educational Child Protection infrastructure means that the school's scope for onward referral is limited. The Dubai Consulate or Embassy of the child's country of nationality could be one option. Professional counsellors, consultants, psychologists could also be considered, but there would be financial implications. Extreme cases can be referred to the CPC(MOI) which could lead to direct referral to the Police.

8 Roles & Responsibilities

- All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect and safeguard them. There are, however, key people within the school who have specific responsibilities under safeguarding & child protection procedures. The names of those carrying out these responsibilities for the current year are listed at the start of this document.
- It is the role of the Child Protection Officer (Designated Safeguarding Lead) to ensure that all of the child protection procedures are followed within the school, and to make appropriate, timely referrals if necessary. If for any reason the Designated Safeguarding Lead is unavailable, the Designated Safeguarding officers have been identified to act in their absence. Additionally, it is the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure all staff employed, including temporary staff and volunteers within the school are aware of the school's internal procedures, to advise staff and to offer support to those requiring this.
- The Governing Body and school leadership team are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes. As part of the school's recruitment and vetting process all possible external agencies and intelligence checks will be sought on all staff that have substantial and unsupervised access to children.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will keep the governing body aware of cases, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures, training undertaken by all staff and governors and other relevant issues.

9 Policy & Procedures

We recognise that for our students, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult help to prevent abuse. Dar al Marefa will therefore:

- a) Establish and maintain an environment where students feel safe and secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- b) Ensure that students know that there are adults within the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- c) Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for Positive Behaviour, Social Interactions and Moral Education, which equip students with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse. Moral Education, homeroom times and assemblies are the key means of delivery. Further information can be obtained from the school's Heads.
- d) Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from outside agencies.

9.1 All action is taken in line with the following guidance.

Local Safeguarding Guidelines/Child Protection Procedures - UAE Ministry of Interior <http://www.moi-cpc.ae/en/default.aspx> <https://government.ae/en/information-and-services/social-affairs/children>

9.2 Staff are kept informed about child protection responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings and awareness training. The Principal will ensure all adults are aware of the school's policy and the identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Training is provided to all staff at the start of each academic year.

9.3 Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse, an allegation or suspects that abuse may have occurred **must report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead** or in their absence, Designated Safeguarding Officers.

9.4 The Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputies will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations in accordance with the procedures outlined within this policy.

9.5 The school will always undertake to share an intention to refer a child with the parents unless to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On these occasions advice will be taken.

10 Training & Support

10.1 The Principal and all other staff who work with children will undertake appropriate child protection awareness training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, that is kept up to date by refresher training **annually**. Priorities for training will be (see also Appendix A):

- a) what is considered a safeguarding matter (Emotional, Sexual, Physical, Neglect)
- b) do not investigate it yourself (Just receive information)
- c) how to record it (ISAMs)
- d) who to report it (Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Officers)
- e)

10.1 The school will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding officers also undertake training and refresher training at an Advanced Level on a **biannual basis** to keep knowledge and skills up to date.

Temporary staff and volunteers who work with children in the school will be made aware of the

10.2 school's arrangements for safeguarding and child protection and their responsibilities.

10.3 All staff should have access to advice and guidance on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction.

11 Professional Confidentiality

11.1 Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. **A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a student**, nor should they agree with a student to keep a secret, as where there is a child protection concern this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.

11.2 Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a "need to know basis" only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held confidentially to themselves.

12 Records & Monitoring

12.1 Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Dar al Marefa is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.

12.2 Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event in context, and giving the date, time and location.

12.3 These file notes are kept confidential and stored securely in Wellbeing Manager on ISAMs,

12.4 If a student transfers from the school, these files will be copied for the new establishment and forwarded to the student's new school marked confidential and for the attention of the receiving school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

CCTV cameras are used in various locations around the school site to ensure students' safety. These security cameras are clearly visible. Only SLT can view CCTV footage in the first instance to assist with any investigation, however, further assistance can be sought from a member of DMS staff to clarify the video footage. Any requests from parents or students to view the CCTV footage will be declined due to safeguarding, however, if needed, the footage can be viewed by the KHDA. Any enquiries about the CCTV system should be directed to the Head of Wellbeing.

13 Supporting Students at Risk

13.1 The school recognises that children who are abused or who witness abuse may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth or view the world as a positive place.

13.2 School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, whilst at school their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

13.3 The school will endeavour to support students through:

- 13.3.1 The curriculum, to encourage self-management and protection.
- 13.3.2 The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all students and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- 13.3.3 The implementation of the school's behaviour management policies.
- 13.3.4 A consistent approach agreed by all staff which will endeavour to ensure the student knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, but s/he is valued.
- 13.3.5 Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the students and their families.
- 13.3.6 A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's best interest to do so.
- 13.3.7 The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.
- 13.3.8 Recognition that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse so staff who work in any capacity with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and / or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.
- 13.3.9 Recognition that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug

or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

13.4 This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in school; the policy for the teaching of positive education, the policy for the management of students' behaviour, including our policy on anti-bullying and the health and safety policy.

14 Use of School Premises by Outside Organisations

Where services or activities are provided separately by a third-party, using the school premises, the management team will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place regarding safeguarding children and child protection.

15 Whistleblowing

15.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

15.2 All staff are expected to fully comply, always, with the School's Professional Code of Conduct.

15.3 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If a member of staff has concerns about the conduct of another member of staff, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

15.4 If a member of staff has concerns about the conduct of a member of the School's Senior Leadership Team, they should contact the Principal

15.5 If a member of staff has concerns about the conduct of the Principal, they should contact the Chairman of the Board of Governors.

16 Appendix A - Definitions of Abuse

Type	Definition	Examples (but not limited to)	Signs of this Abuse (but not limited to)
Neglect	Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs.	Left hungry or dirty, lack in proper clothing, shelter, supervision or health care.	Smelly, dirty, hunger, eating quickly, stealing, under/overweight, absence, rash, tiredness, missing developmental milestones, clingy, obsessive, lacks concentration, aggressive
Emotional	Emotional abuse is any type of abuse that involves the continual emotional mistreatment of a child.	Scaring, humiliating, always criticising, making jokes at their expense, blaming, isolating, making them do degrading acts, over control pushing a child too hard, limiting positive emotions towards a child.	Unconfident, low self-esteem, over emotional, difficulty making/retaining friendships, lacks social skills, acting inappropriately for age
Physical	Physical abuse is when someone hurts or harms a child on purpose.	Hitting, slapping, kicking shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scratching, breaking bones, drowning.	Bruises, black eye, broken bones, burns, scars, breathing problems, vomiting, difficulty moving.

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Sexual	When a child is forced or tricked into sexual activity, either contact or non- contact	Touching inappropriate areas (whether clothed or not) or making a child touch another person, using any body part or object to penetrate a child, making child taking part in any sexual activity, making a child undress under inappropriate circumstances, making,	Avoiding being alone, appearing frightened in someone's presence, using sexual language or behaviour unusual for their age, nightmares, bed wetting, self- harm, eating disorder, secretive behaviour. Bruises, bleeding, soreness, infections, pregnancy.
Potential Abuse	Situations where a child may not have been abused but where social and medical assessments indicate a high degree of risk that they may be abused in the future	Siblings have been abused, parents have been abused, SEND students, children young enough to not understand abuse	

Source: NSPCC, <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/>

17 Appendix B - Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

In the event of a disclosure, staff should:

- Never promise confidentiality - explain you may have to tell the Designated Safeguarding Officer
- Find a safe space
- Listen to them carefully
- Let them know they've done the right thing by telling you • Tell them it's not their fault

For Safeguarding concerns, staff must:

- Write a record of the conversation using exact words, where possible, on the Wellbeing Manager on ISAMS.
- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately (if there is imminent danger) or before the end of the school day
- Cooperate with the Designated Safeguarding Team whenever required

All staff must recognise that failing to report something that could have prevented a child being harmed may be breaking UAE law

Reviewed by: David Sellars, Abdelbasset Ouaissa

Final review: Sahar Moosa

Approved by: Steven Giles

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"Enhancing life by nurturing minds."