

ANPS Safe-Guarding and Child Protection Policy

2024-25

1. INTRODUCTION

At ANPS, we protect and safeguard students' welfare. This policy is implemented with consideration given to the Child Protection Laws of the Ministry of Interior Child Protection Centre.

2. PURPOSE

2.1 An effective whole-school child protection policy provides clear direction to staff and others about expected behavior when dealing with child protection issues. A practical approach also makes the school's commitment to developing good practice and sound procedures explicit. The process ensures that child protection concerns, referrals, and monitoring may be handled sensitively, professionally, and in ways that support the child's needs.

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

- a) Prevention through creating a positive school atmosphere and the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils.
- b) Protection by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.
- c) Support to pupils who may have been abused.

2.3 This policy applies to all pupils, staff, Board of Trustee members, volunteers, and visitors to the school.

2.4 This school is an agent of referral and not of investigation.

3. SCHOOL POLICY

3.1 We recognize that students' high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends, and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult/teacher help prevent abuse.

Our school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where students feel safe and secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.

- Ensure that pupils know that there are adults/teachers within the school whom they can approach if they are worried or are having difficulty, such as (a teacher, supervisor, or social worker).
- The curriculum includes activities and opportunities for Personal, Social, and Health Education, which equip students with the skills to stay safe from abuse.
- Ensure that every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from outside agencies.

4.1 All adults/teachers working with or on behalf of students have a responsibility to protect them. There are, however, key people within the school who have specific obligations under child protection procedures.

4.2 the Social Worker's role is to ensure that all child protection procedures are followed within the school and to make appropriate, timely referrals if practicable. If the Social Worker is unavailable, **the Director or any delegate assigned by the Director** will act in their absence *whenever possible*. Additionally, the Social Worker's role is to ensure all staff employed, including temporary staff and volunteers, know the school's internal procedures, advise staff, and offer support to those requiring this.

4.3 The Board of Trustees and school leadership team ensure that the school follows safe recruitment processes. Local intelligence checks will be sought on all staff with substantial and unsupervised access to children as part of the school's recruitment and vetting process.

4.4 The role of the Nominated member of the Board of Trustees for Child Protection is to ensure that the school has an effective policy, that the Guidelines are complied with, and to support the school in this aspect. Board of Trustee members must not be given details relating to individual child protection cases or situations to ensure confidentiality is not breached.

4.5 The Social Worker and the Director provide the Board of Trustees with an annual report detailing policy and procedure changes, all staff training, and other relevant issues.

5. PROCEDURES

5.1 All action is taken in line with the following guidance;

- Local Safeguarding Guidelines and Local Child Protection Procedures

5.2 Staff are informed about child protection responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings, and awareness training.

5.3 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 Social

Worker or, in their absence, the Head of School. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Director.

5.4 The Social Worker or their Deputy will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations by the procedures outlined within this policy.

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

5.6 A statement from the school will inform parents about our school's duties and responsibilities under child protection procedures. Parents can obtain a copy of the school child protection policy directly from the school.

6. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

6.1 The Director 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 provided by ADEK and other external organizations where appropriate. This training will then be cascaded to the staff.

6.2 The school will ensure that the Social Worker also undertakes training and refresher training yearly to keep knowledge and skills current. Temporary staff and volunteers who work with children in the school will be made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities.

6.3 Support will be available for staff from the Director in the first instance and from members of the school's leadership team where there are concerns about queries on child protection. All staff should receive advice and guidance on appropriate behavior and conduct boundaries. These matters form part of staff induction and are referred to in the staff handbook.

7. PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

7.1 Confidentiality is an issue that 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 staff member must never guarantee confidentiality to a pupil, nor should they agree with a pupil to keep a secret, as where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the Child Protection Officer and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.

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

8. RECORDS AND MONITORING

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

8.2 Any staff member receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs/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. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken.

8.3 The notes are kept in a confidential file, separate from other files, and stored securely by the Social Worker. In the same way, messages must be kept of any student being monitored for child protection reasons.

If a pupil 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 Social Worker.

9. ATTENDANCE AT CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES

9.1 It is the responsibility of the Social Worker to ensure that the school is represented or a report is submitted to any child protection conference called for children on their school roll or previously known to them. Whoever attends should be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and be prepared to make decisions on registration at the end of the conference.

9.2 When a child is placed on the Child Protection Register and is, therefore, a child with a plan, it is the Social Worker's responsibility to ensure that the child is monitored regarding their school attendance, welfare, and presentation.

10. SUPPORTING STUDENTS AT RISK

10.1 Our school recognizes that children who are abused or witness violence may find it challenging to develop a sense of self-worth or view the world as a positive place. This school may be the only stable, secure, and predictable element in the lives of at-risk children. Nevertheless, their behavior may still be challenging and defiant at school, or they may be withdrawn.

10.2 This school will endeavor to support students through:

- The curriculum encourages self-esteem and self-motivation.
- The school ethos promotes a positive, supportive, and secure environment and gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- We are implementing the school's behavior management policies (Code of Conduct).

- A consistent approach agreed upon by all staff will ensure the student knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, but s/he is valued.
- ANPS regularly liaises with other professionals and agencies supporting students and their families.
- We are committed to developing productive, supportive relationships with parents whenever it is in the child's best interest.
- We constantly train proper staff to create and support a responsive and knowledgeable staff group that responds appropriately in child protection situations.
- Recognizing that statistically, children with behavioral difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse, staff who work in any capacity with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment, and emotional and behavioral problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.
- Recognition that in a home environment with domestic violence and drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and need support or protection.

10.3 This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in the school.

11. SAFE SCHOOL, SAFE STAFF

11.1 It is essential that the high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted regarding alleged child abuse by parents are similarly displayed when staff members are accused of abuse.

12. USE OF THE SCHOOL PREMISES BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS

12.1 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body using the school premises, the Director will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures regarding safeguarding children and child protection.

13. WHISTLEBLOWING

13.1 All staff are expected to comply fully, at all times, with the School's Code of Conduct.

13.2 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they should speak to a School's Leadership Team member.

13.3 If a staff member has concerns about the conduct of a member of the School's Leadership Team (other than the Director), they should contact the Director.

13.4 If a staff member has concerns about the conduct of the Director, they should contact the Nominated Governor for Child Protection or the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

14. POLICY REVIEW

14.1 The School's Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy.

14.2 The Leadership Team is also responsible for updating the list of key contacts on the cover sheet.

15. Guidance

15.1 If one suspects bullying at school. One must inform the Social Worker (or Head of Schools), who will contact the parents. If this bullying should be more serious, then the staff member is sanctioned to seek police involvement.

15.2 If one suspects that any child has been the victim of sexual, physical, or mental abuse by an adult or another child, then the police must be informed immediately by the Social Worker or SLT.

Appendix 1

Definitions of Abuse:

Abuse refers to physical abuse, corporal punishment, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse and also includes bullying, exploitation, and neglect.

- **Physical Abuse** is the deliberate physical injury to a student or the intentional neglectful failure to prevent bodily harm or suffering. The abuse involves actions including, but not limited to, hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement, or giving the students drugs not prescribed by a physician to control behavior or to cause harm. Refer to **Appendix 1** for familiar signs that indicate physical abuse.
- **Corporal punishment**, a physical punishment inflicted on a child by a teacher or any adult in authority, such as the guardian, as a form of discipline, is considered **Physical abuse**.
- **Emotional Abuse** is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a student that causes severe and persistent adverse effects on the student's emotional growth and development. It involves actions such as, but not limited to, conveying to students that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued insofar as they meet another person's needs. It involves causing students to feel bullied, frightened, or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of students. Some levels of emotional abuse are involved in all types of ill-treatment of a student, though it may occur in isolation. Refer to **Appendix 2** for familiar signs that indicate emotional abuse.
- **Sexual Abuse and Exploitation** involves but is not limited to forcing or enticing a student to participate in sexual activities. The activities include but are not limited to, physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They have non-contact activities such as involving students looking at or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual

activities, sexual hinting, or encouraging students to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Refer to **Appendix 3** for familiar signs that indicate sexual abuse.

- **Bullying** is unwanted aggressive behavior (s) from a student or more to another student. It involves an observed or perceived power imbalance and is repeated (or is highly likely to be) multiple times. Bullying, as a form of violence, includes physical (hitting, tripping), verbal (name calling, teasing), relational/social (spreading rumors, leaving out of the group), and cyber-bullying aggression (occurring through email, a chat room, instant messaging, a website, text messaging, or pictures or videos sent through cell phones or posted on websites). A student can be a perpetrator, a victim, or both.

Definitions of Neglect:

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a student's basic physical, emotional, and psychological needs, which is likely to impair the child's health or development seriously. It involves the failure of a parent or a guardian to take actions that are considered necessary to care for children, including, but not limited to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter.
- Protect the child from physical harm or danger
- Provide adequate care (including the use of sufficient caregivers)
- Provide healthcare and appropriate medical treatment
- Provide education and regular school attendance
- Maintain personal hygiene
- Ensure adequate stimulation.

Refer to **Appendix 5** for common signs of neglect.

Appendix 2

Possible signs of physical abuse can include:

1. Unexplained bruises or injuries
2. Injuries that have not received medical attention.
3. Repeated abdominal pain
4. Withdrawal from physical contact
5. Arms and legs covered in scalds
6. Fear of returning home
7. Fear of contacting caregivers/parents
8. Self-destructive tendencies
9. Displaying aggression towards others

10. Unusual passive behaviour
11. Repeated running away from home
12. Cigarette burns
13. Human bite marks
14. Broken bones
15. Multiple burns with a demarcated edge

Appendix 3

Possible signs of emotional abuse can include:

- Regular tiredness
- Fear of a new situation
- Low self-esteem
- High levels of anxiety
- Unusually passive or aggressive
- Delayed speech
- Inappropriate emotional response to painful situations
- Running away
- Lying
- Neurotic behavior, e.g., sulking, hair twisting, rocking
- Fear of making mistakes
- Self-harm
- Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress

Appendix 4

Possible signs of physical abuse can include:

1. Unusual behaviour
2. Age-inappropriate mature behavior
3. Transmitted diseases
4. Physical indicators in private areas
5. Pain or itching in private areas
6. Bruising or bleeding
7. discharge or infection in private areas
8. Discomfort when walking or sitting down

Appendix 5

Possible signs of neglect can include:

- Stealing
- Poor social relationships
- Failure to thrive
- Poor personal hygiene
- Frequent hunger
- Untreated medical complaints
- Frequent lateness or absence from school
- Inappropriate clothing
- Substance or alcohol misuse

Appendix 6

The process to report a suspected case of abuse and neglect is as follows:

Step 1: Recognize the signs of child abuse and neglect.

(Refer to possible signs of child abuse in appendices 2-5 of the Child Protection Policy.)

Step 2: Report the case to the Director when suspecting student abuse and neglect.

Step 3: Complete the Child Protection document, including any evidence collected.

Step 4: Ensure confidentiality and privacy of reported cases

Step 5: Cooperate with the Ministry of Interior – Child Protection Centre by implementing the required measures recommended by the Ministry.

Security Arrangements

ANPS is set to be fully digital. Parents do not need to take time out of their busy schedules to attend school. All ANPS processes are automated and get the same care.

In the rare cases of having parent guests at the school, they should register at the security using the UAE ID card. ANPS meetings are preferred on Zoom for efficiency and limited meeting spaces at school. Kindly make sure to email and make an appointment ahead of time.

ANPS has a stringent policy that all its employees will be talked to and treated with respect. Angry shouts, insulting words, or passive-aggressive behavior toward any employee will not be accepted. At ANPS, we do what is best for all students and do not respond to any language of threat. The school reserves all the legal right to share Camera recordings of unacceptable

T. 02-5530935
F. 02-4474798
E. info@anps.co | Mohammed Bin Zayed City-9 | www.anps.co

behavior with authorities without telling the assaulter beforehand. In return, all visitors will be treated with respect.

In case of inappropriate behavior, the guests will be asked to leave the premises politely to protect the school's academic sanctity.