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Student Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Al Najah Private School (ANPS) is committed to creating a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment for all students. Every student has the right to protection from abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying, or any action that threatens their safety or dignity. This policy establishes clear guidelines to prevent, identify, report, and respond to student maltreatment, in alignment with:

- ADEK School Student Protection Policy (2024)
- UAE Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 – Wadeema’s Child Rights Law
- Federal Decree Law No. (18) of 2020 – Private Education
- Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 – Crimes and Penalties
- Ministry of Education National Anti-Bullying Policy

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Protect all students at ANPS from any form of maltreatment (abuse, neglect, violence, bullying, exploitation).
- Ensure all staff and volunteers act as mandated reporters when they suspect or are informed of student abuse.
- Define roles and responsibilities of school leadership, Child Protection Coordinator (CPC), teachers, parents, and students.
- Establish clear reporting procedures, internal documentation systems, and follow-up actions.
- Promote student awareness, mental well-being, safe practices, and child rights education.

Scope

Applies to all students enrolled at ANPS.

Applies to all adults working or volunteering at ANPS:

- Teachers, administrators, support staff
- Bus supervisors, cleaners, security guards
- Parent volunteers, interns, external providers
- Covers all school-supervised environments:
- Classrooms, hallways, playgrounds, cafeterias
- School buses, online learning platforms, school trips, camps, after-school clubs

Types of Student Maltreatment (as defined by ADEK)

ANPS fully adopts the definitions and classifications of maltreatment outlined by ADEK, which include:

Physical Abuse

- Intentional physical harm to a student (hitting, slapping, shaking, burning, excessive force).
- Signs may include bruises, injuries, fearfulness, refusal to go home, or inconsistent explanations.

Emotional/Psychological Abuse

- Behavior that harms a student's emotional well-being or self-esteem.
- Includes constant criticism, humiliation, threats, rejection, discrimination, or isolation.

Sexual Abuse

- Any sexual act, exposure, or exploitation involving a child.
- May involve inappropriate touching, showing explicit content, forcing a child into sexual activity, or coercion through technology.
- This includes abuse by adults or older students in positions of power or trust.

Neglect

- When a caregiver or responsible adult fails to provide adequate care, safety, supervision, food, hygiene, medical care, or emotional support.
- Includes educational neglect – failing to send the child to school regularly.

Exploitation

- Using a child for someone else's benefit.
- Includes child labor, human trafficking, forced begging, online exploitation, or sexual exploitation (using children for pornography or sexual favors).

Bullying

As per the National Bullying Prevention Policy (MoE):

- Physical bullying (hitting, pushing, destroying belongings)
- Verbal bullying (name-calling, teasing, threats)
- Social bullying (exclusion, spreading rumors)
- Cyberbullying (harassment via social media, messages, or digital platforms)

Guiding Principles at ANPS

ANPS upholds the following safeguarding principles:

- Best Interest of the Child is Priority in all decisions (based on Wadeema Law and ADEK).
- Zero Tolerance for all forms of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- Equality and Inclusion – every student has the same right to protection, regardless of nationality, gender, ability, religion, or background.
- Right to Be Heard – students are encouraged to express concerns safely.
- Confidentiality and Respect – all complaints are handled sensitively.
- Accountability – all staff and volunteers are responsible for protecting students.

Roles and Responsibilities

Child Protection Coordinator (CPC)/ ANPS Social Worker

- First point of contact for any child protection concerns.
- Receives, documents, and investigates internal complaints.
- Submits Safety Concern Forms to ADEK CPU via the online portal.
- Contacts parents, ADEK, Family Care Authority (FCA), or Police when needed.
- Supports affected students emotionally and academically.
- Maintains confidential records securely and updates cases.

Teachers and Staff (Mandated Reporters)

- Must immediately report any suspected harm, abuse, or risk.
- Must not investigate on their own or confront the abuser.
- Must document observations factually and pass to CPC.
- Must maintain confidentiality and care for student wellbeing.

Parents and Guardians

- Must cooperate with the school in ensuring student safety.
- Must report any concerns affecting their child's safety or behavior.
- Must attend required meetings and follow guidance from the school.
- Must ensure safe internet and home environment.

Students

- Should respect others and not engage in bullying or harmful behavior.
- Are encouraged to speak to a trusted adult if they feel unsafe or see a friend in danger.
- Can report anonymously via suggestion boxes or directly to CPC, teachers, or social worker.

Reporting Procedures for Maltreatment

All staff, as mandated reporters, must follow these procedures when they suspect or become aware of abuse, neglect, bullying, or any maltreatment.

Immediate Actions by Staff

- Do not investigate, confront, or promise secrecy to the student.
- Remain calm, listen carefully, and reassure the student: "You did the right thing by telling me."
- Report the concern immediately to the CPC (School Social Worker) or any member of the CPT.
- If the student is in immediate danger, staff must:

Ensure safety of the student
Inform the Principal and CPC

CPC Actions (within 24 hours)

The CPC must:

- Record incident in the Confidential Child Protection Log
- Complete and submit the ADEK Safety Concern Form on the digital portal
- Inform ADEK Child Protection Unit (CPU), and if required, Family Care Authority (FCA)

When Abuse Occurs Inside School

- Staff informs CPC → CPC investigates initial facts
- CPC submits report to ADEK CPU & informs Principal
- ADEK CPU reviews → refers to FCA/Police if needed

When Abuse Occurs Outside School

- Staff still reports to CPC (even if incident happened at home or publicly)
- CPC files Safety Concern Form → ADEK CPU → Family Care Authority handles it

Flow of Reporting

Staff notices or hears concern

1. Staff → CPC immediately
2. CPC logs case + informs Principal
3. CPC submits ADEK Safety Concern Form within 24 hours
4. ADEK CPU reviews → refers to FCA / Police
5. CPC supports student & monitors safety

Confidentiality and Data Protection

- All reports, student statements, and documents are confidential.
- Files stored securely by CPC — digital or locked cabinet.
- Only Principal, CPC, CPT, ADEK CPU, FCA, Police, or court authorities may access records.
- No staff, parents, students, or media may be informed without official clearance.
- Breach of confidentiality is considered a serious offense and may lead to disciplinary, legal, or employment action.

Prevention and Education

ANPS is committed to not only reacting to abuse but preventing it through awareness and education.

For Students

- Age-appropriate lessons on child rights, personal safety, bullying, cyberbullying, and reporting unsafe behavior.
- School assemblies, posters, Child Protection Week, mental health awareness campaigns.
- Encouraging students to speak to a trusted adult or report anonymously if needed.

For Teachers and Staff

- Mandatory annual ADEK-approved Child Protection and Safeguarding Training.
- New staff and volunteers receive child protection induction before working with students.
- Additional workshops on trauma, emotional support, recognizing abuse signs, and online safety.

For Parents

- Orientation sessions at the start of the school year.
- Parent workshops on child protection, cyber safety, respectful parenting, and reporting procedures.
- Parent letters/promotions reinforcing safe practices at home and online.

Professional Conduct – Staff Must:

- Respect all students' dignity, privacy, and rights.
- Maintain appropriate student-teacher boundaries.
- Supervise students responsibly at all times.
- Immediately report any maltreatment concerns to CPC.

Staff Must Not:

- Use physical punishment or humiliating language.
- Be alone in isolated areas with a student behind closed doors.
- Share personal contact or social media accounts with students.
- Ignore or hide signs of abuse.

Important Contacts

Role / Organization	Contact Information
ANPS	02 553 0935
ANPS social worker	reem.mahmoud@anps.co
ADEK Child Protection Unit (CPU)	800 85
Family Care Authority (FCA)	800 444
Abu Dhabi Police (Emergency)	999
Safety Concern Reporting Portal (ADEK)	https://daasafetyconcern.abudhabi
MoE Child Protection Email	cpu@moe.gov.ae

Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually to reflect advancements in AI and changes in educational practice.

Approval

Approved by:
School Director
Ahd Abou Ghazal

