

Pakistan Islamia Higher Secondary School Sharjah, UAE



CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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PAKISTAN ISLAMIA HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL, SHARJAH

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY 2022-2023

Introduction

The Ministry of Education (MOE) has launched a Child Protection Unit initiative, targeting the students of government and private schools across the UAE. The initiative is aimed at protecting children from all forms of harm, negligence and abuse that they may experience in the surrounding environment at school or at home and maintaining the safety of students from the physical, psychological or educational perspectives. (MOE launches “Child Protection Unit” initiative, 2019)

Safeguarding and 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 practices are the responsibilities of the person(s) in charge of Safeguarding and Child Protection.

Definitions

Physical Abuse: Actual or likely physical injury to a child or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering.

Sexual Abuse: Actual or likely exploitation of a child by involvement in sexual activities without informed consent or understanding or that violate social taboos or family roles.

Psychological Abuse: Actual or likely severe adverse effects on the emotional and behavioral development of a child by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment, inappropriate treatment, or rejection.

Neglect: The persistent or severe neglect of a child which results in impairment of health or development.

Important contact from PIHSS

1. **Mr. Bisma Qai**
2. **Mr. Mumtaz**
3. **School `s doctor and Nurse**
4. **HOD`s / HRT**
5. **Principal / Deputy principal**

Children`s rights

Federal Law No.3 of 2016 concerning child rights, also known as Wadeema`s, stresses that all children must be provided with appropriate living standards, access to health services, education,

equal opportunities in essential services and facilities without any kind of discrimination. The law protects children against all forms of negligence, exploitation, physical and psychological abuses.

The law allows childcare specialists to remove children from their homes against parents, wishes and without judicial permission in cases of imminent danger, In less severe cases, specialists may intervene by visiting the child regularly, providing social services and mediating a solution between the family and the child.

Those who put children in danger, abandon them, neglect them, leave them without supervision, do not enroll them in school or register them upon their birth will be subject to a prison sentence or a fine or both. The law applies to all children up to the age of 18. (Children – The Official Portal of the UAE Government, 2020). (1)

What is child abuse?

Child abuse is when a child is intentionally harmed by a adult or another child- it can be over a period of time but can also be a one-off action. It can be physical, sexual or emotional and it can happen in person or online. It can also be a lack of love, care and attention – this is neglect.

Report child abuse

You can report child abuse to:

1. Dubai Foundation for Women and Children on 800111
2. Child protection centre in Sharjah on toll-free helpline number 800 700
3. Hemaya Foundation for Children and Women – Ajman on hotline: 800himaya (800446292)

1. Categories of Abuse:

There are four broad categories of abuse which are generally recognized:

Physical Abuse:

This involves physical harm to a child e.g. hitting, shaking, scalding and may be deliberate or a result of failure to take adequate precautions. It can also include the deliberate withholding of physical needs.

Signs of possible physical abuse

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent.
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries.
- Refusal to discuss injuries.
- Untreated injuries, or delay in reporting them
- Excessive physical punishment

- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home
- Aggression towards others
- Running away

2. **Neglect:**

This refers to persistent or deliberate failure to meet a child's physical needs e.g. a failure to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter, failure to protect a child or failure to provide adequate medical care. It may also involve neglect or failure to give adequate response to a child's emotional needs.

Signs of possible physical neglect

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Frequent lateness and / or unexplained non-attendance
- Untreated medical problems
- Low self-esteem
- Poor peer relationships
- Stealing

3. **Psychological Abuse:**

Is failure to provide for the child's basic emotional needs such as to have a severe effect on the behavior and development of the child. This includes conveying to children the feeling that they are worthless or unloved.

Signs of possible emotional abuse

Physical/mental/emotional developmental lags

- Admission of punishment which seems excessive
- Over reaction to mistakes
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional response to painful situations
- Neurotic behavior (e.g. rocking, thumb sucking etc)
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Self-mutilation
- Extremes of passivity or aggression

4. **Sexual Abuse:**

Is where a child may be deemed to have been sexually abused when any person(s), by design or neglect, exploits the child, directly or indirectly, in any activity intended to lead to the sexual arousal or other forms of gratification of that person or any other person(s) – including

organized networks. This definition holds whether or not there has been genital contact and whether or not the child is said to have initiated the behavior.

Signs of possible sexual abuse

- Age-inappropriate sexual knowledge, language, behaviors discarded cuddly toys
- Loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Regressive behaviours such as thumb sucking, needing previously
- Becoming withdrawn, isolated
- Inability to focus
- Reluctance to go home
- Bed-wetting
- Drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Over-reacting to criticism
- Have outbursts of anger/irritability

PREVENTION

School Environment

All staff will be expected to contribute towards an environment that offers children maximum protection e.g. contributing to creation of a positive atmosphere in which students are respected and know that they can find assistance if necessary. Children should know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they have a worry or a problem.

Roles and Responsibilities.

It is moral, ethical and legal responsibility of any teaching professional or other staff member to report suspected cases of child abuse, neglect or safety concerns.

The Role of Teachers and Support Staff

Child protection is everybody's responsibility. When not a 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.

All Teachers and Support Staff Members Must:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Inform if any form of child abuse is suspected.
- Integrate child protection issues into relevant teaching and learning to help children protect themselves.
- Communicate all concerns and keep written records of concerns, even where there is lack of evidence (records should state facts not opinions).

- Respect the confidentiality of all concerned regarding the welfare of children respect children as individuals and engage them in conversations.

Talking and Listening to Children

If a child wants to confide in you, you SHOULD:

- Be accessible and receptive
- Listen carefully and uncritically, at the child's pace.
- Take what is said seriously
- Reassure children that they are right to tell
- Tell the child that you must pass this information on
- Make sure that the child is ok
- Make a careful record of what was said
- Investigate or seek to prove or disprove possible abuse
- Make promises about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets' to children
- Assume that someone else will take the necessary action
- Jump to conclusions, be dismissive or react with shock, anger, horror etc.
- Speculate or accuse anybody
- Investigate, suggest or probe for information
- Confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved
- Offer opinions about what is being said or the persons allegedly involved
- Forget to record what you have been told
- Fail to pass this information on to the correct person

Recordings should

- State who was present, time, date and place
- Be written in ink and be signed by the recorder
- Be passed to the head of department
- Use the child's words wherever possible
- Be factual/state exactly what was said

Differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation

What information do you need to obtain

- Schools have **no investigative** role in child protection)
- Never prompt or probe for information, your job is to listen, record and pass on
- Ideally, you should be clear about what is being said in terms of **who, what, where and when**

If you do need to ask questions, what is and isn't OK?

- **Never** asked closed questions i.e. ones which children can answer yes or no to e.g. Did he touch you?
- **Never** make suggestions about who, how or where someone is alleged to have touched, hit etc. e.g. top or bottom, front or back?
- If we must, use only '**minimal prompts**' such as 'go on – tell me more about that – tell me everything that you remember about that.'
- Timescales are very important '**When was the last time this happened?** Is an important question

What to do on suspicion or disclosure:

Becoming aware of abuse can cause a multitude of emotional reactions, which are personal to the individual. Whatever the reaction, it must be responded to in the correct manner, outlined below.

Stay calm

(Don't over-react. It is extremely unlikely that the child is in immediate danger)

Listen, hear and believe

(Don't probe for more information. Questioning the disclosure may affect how it is received at a later date)

Give time for the person to say what they want

(Don't make assumptions, don't paraphrase and don't offer alternative explanations)

Reassure & explain that they have done the right thing in telling. Explain that only Those professionals who need to know will be informed

(Don't promise confidentiality to keep secrets or that everything will be OK – it might not be)

Act immediately in accordance with the procedure in this document

(Don't try to deal with it yourself)

Record in writing as near verbatim as possible and as soon as possible



Pakistan Islamia Higher Secondary School Sharjah
Child Protection Recording Sheet

Name of student:	
Class:	
Date of Birth:	
Gender:	
Name & designation of reporting person:	
Date & time of recording:	
Details of Discussion/Observation/ concern: Please keep factual – if you can include direct quotes from student, please show this as a direct quote. Continue on an additional sheet if needed	
Any action taken:	
Action to be taken:	
Signature of Principal:	
Signature of school Doctor:	
Signature of reporting person:	

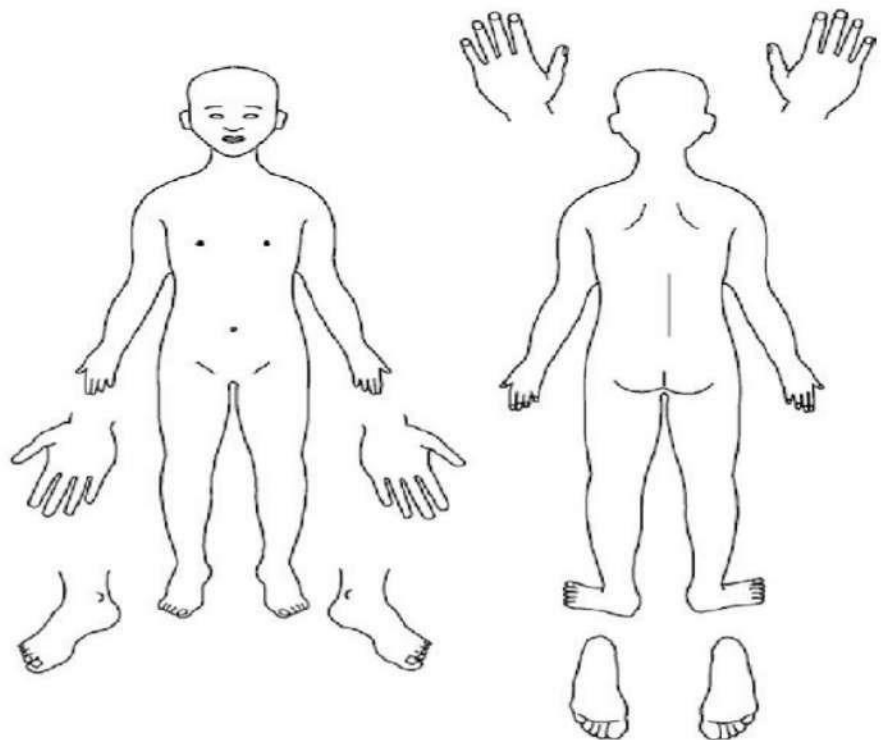


Pakistan Islamia Higher Secondary School Sharjah
Body map for reporting

Name of student:	
Class:	
Date of Birth:	
Gender:	
Name & designation of reporting person:	
Date & time of recording:	

Indicate site of injury or concerning marks using a cross on the relevant area of the body map. Provide additional detail/description in the space provided in the table underneath. Once completed, please pass on to the Section head.

<u>Additional detail/description</u>



Signature of the Principal:	
Signature of school Doctor:	
Signature of reporting person:	

Child protection Flow Chart

Yes = Case to follow

No = Case closed

