Student Protection Policy

Approved on: October 01, 2024
Approved by: Bertrand Ferret, Principal
Implementation date: August 2021
Revision date: August 27, 2026

Our school is committed to creating a safe and supportive environment for children. We also recognize that children have the right to live in a healthy environment, without violence and without fear. For that reason, child safety is extremely important at our school. Teachers and other school staff are particularly well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse or changes in the students' behaviour.

PURPOSE

- ➔ To raise the awareness of all staff and identify responsibilities in reporting possible cases of abuse
- ➔ To provide a safe and supportive living and learning environment for students and to protect students from all acts and omissions constituting maltreatment.
- ➔ To emphasise that all staff and volunteers are mandated reporters of cases of alleged and/or suspected maltreatment of students inside and outside the educational institution.
- ➔ To define roles and responsibilities of principals, staff, and parents of students in educational institutions for responding to alleged and/or suspected cases of student maltreatment.
- ➔ To ensure that all are responsible for the care and protection of all students in educational institutions and coordinate actions to safeguard them.
- ➔ To identify and support students who are at risk of harm, as enforced by the UAE Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights, Federal Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties Law, Federal Law No. (5) of 1983 Concerning Nurseries, Federal Law No. (18) of 2020 Concerning Private Education, Executive Council Chairman Decision No. (26) of 2013 Regarding the Regulation of Private Schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, and other relevant UAE laws.

This policy applies to all the school employees to ensure every child's safety, protection and wellbeing

Acronyms:

ADEK: Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge
CPC: Child Protection Coordinator
CPS: Child Protection Specialist
CPT: Child Protection Team
CPU: Child Protection Unit
FCA: Family Care Authority
MoE: UAE Ministry of Education
MoE-CPC: UAE Ministry of Interior - Child Protection Center
LFITM: Lycée Français International Théodore Monod

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PRINCIPLES:

Student Safety and Wellbeing

The safety and wellbeing of every student is a top priority. All appropriate measures will be taken to protect students from any form of harm.

Student Rights

All LFITM students have the right to:

- Be heard, express their opinions, and participate in selected decision-making processes.
- Be treated with dignity and respect.
- Experience fairness and justice.
- Be supported by an advocate and provided with necessary assistance when needed.
- Be safe, protected from harm, and informed about what constitutes risk and harm.

Employee Responsibilities

- All LFITM employees are responsible for caring for students and promoting their wellbeing.
- The principal and all LFITM staff must recognize, respond to, and manage student protection risks and impacts to the best of their ability.

Mandated Reporting and Accountability

- All mandated reporters, LFITM staff, and volunteers are accountable for ensuring student protection measures are in place, consistently applied, and upheld.
- These individuals are protected and will not face penalties for fulfilling their responsibilities to report concerns and safeguard students from any form of maltreatment.

Positive and Secure Environment

LFITM is committed to maintaining a positive and secure environment where all students and their parents feel respected and valued.

POLICY

1.Legal Obligations and Rights

1.1 Regulatory Compliance : This policy has been developed in alignment with applicable federal student protection laws, related regulations, and guiding documents (refer to the “References” section).

1.2 Policy Adoption and Publication: LFITM adopts this student protection policy in full and is committed to its implementation. The policy is officially adopted as the institution's own and is made publicly accessible via the LFITM website.

1.3 Management of Abuse-Related Offences: LFITM adheres to the *Guide on Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions* (ECA, 2024) for managing abuse-related incidents that occur within or are reported within the institution.

1.4 Stakeholder Awareness and Agreement: LFITM ensures that this student protection policy is communicated to, understood by, and agreed upon by all relevant stakeholders—including board members, staff, volunteers, parents, and students.

1.5 Guardianship and Responsibility: LFITM staff and the principal serve as guardians of students' rights to be free from all forms of maltreatment. The principal holds ultimate responsibility for the wellbeing of students while under the care and supervision of the institution.

1.6 Equal Rights to Protection: All LFITM students are entitled to equal levels of care, protection, and safety. LFITM assumes full responsibility for ensuring the safety and protection of students while they are within the institution’s care.

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2.Reporting of Concerns of Maltreatment with Educational Institutions

2.1 Mandatory Reporting Responsibilities: All LFITM staff—including those with regular or temporary student contact and those providing services to students—are mandated by Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights to report any alleged or suspected cases of student maltreatment. This applies to incidents involving suspected perpetrators both inside and outside the educational institution.

Reports must be made **directly to the ADEK Child Protection Unit (CPU)** within **24 hours** of suspicion. Staff must follow the procedures outlined in:

- *Figure 1: Safety Concern Referrals in Abu Dhabi Educational Institutions*
- *Guide on Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions* (ECA, 2024)

2.2 Disclosure of Concerns: Any concerns of student maltreatment disclosed within the institution—regardless of whether the incident occurred on or off school premises—must be reported to the Child Protection Coordinator (CPC) or their designated representative.

2.3 Bullying-Specific Cases: Bullying cases are addressed under the National Policy for the Prevention of Bullying in Educational Institutions (MoE). All reported bullying incidents must follow the procedures outlined in that framework. However, severe bullying—which poses or may pose significant physical or emotional harm—is classified as maltreatment and must be handled according to the procedures outlined in this policy.

2.4 Designated Protection Personnel: LFITM appoints:

- A **Child Protection Coordinator (CPC)**
- A **Child Protection Team (CPT)**
  These individuals are responsible for managing and responding to all concerns related to student protection.

2.5 Staff and Volunteer Reporting Duties

If any LFITM staff member or volunteer receives an allegation or becomes concerned that a student **has been, is being,** or may be maltreated, they are obligated to report this immediately to the CPC or a CPT member.
This includes concerns arising from incidents occurring outside of the school premises.

2.6 Escalation When CPC/CPT Is Unavailable: If the reporter:

- Cannot reach the CPC or a CPT member, or
- Believes it is not in the student's best interest to report to them,

They must report directly to the **ADEK CPU** or **FCA** via the **online digital safety concern portal** by completing the **Safety Concern Form**.

2.7 Emergency Situations: In cases where a student is in imminent danger, the CPC must:

- Report the case **without delay** to the **Police (999)** and the **Principal**
- Submit a **copy of the Safety Concern Form** via the digital safety concern portal

2.8 Emergency Case Criteria

Detailed criteria for what constitutes an emergency are available in the *Guide on Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions* (ECA, 2024).

The Child Protection Team constitutes of the following members:

Laurent DONNAT: Principal
Micheline KAHWAJI: Vice Principal
Meriem BELHADJ: Director
Wiam ABBOUCHI: Child Protection Coordinator (CPC)
Mirna NOBLE: Delegate CPC
Hélène HADDAD: School Nurse

How should maltreatment concerns identified in educational institutions be handled?

Below are the procedures for identifying and reporting student maltreatment concerns.

Once a concern of the student maltreatment including severe bullying is raised in the school, this should be reported directly to the CPC or any other person representing him or her.

Emergency concerns, where the student is in imminent danger, should be reported immediately to the Police and the Principal. (see Sections 2.7 and 2.8).

For maltreatment concerns which occurred outside of the supervision of the institution, the CPC, or any other person representing him/her if the CPC is not present, should then fill the Safety Concern Form online on the digital safety concern portal. https://daasafetyconcern.abudhabi/

The Safety Concern Form will automatically be shared with the ADEK CPU, the FCA and the MoI CPC. FCA will review the case and follow the required procedures for case management.

Maltreatment concerns which occurred under supervision of the educational institution, the staff should inform the CPC or any other person representing him/her if the CPC is not present. The CPC should then complete the Safety Concern Form on the digital safety concern portal. Once submitted, a copy of the Safety Concern Form will then be automatically shared with the FCA, the ADEK CPU and the MoI CPC. The ADEK CPU will review the information first before referring to the FCA for case management, who will take the necessary procedures for follow-up on the cases after receiving the report.

It is important to note that the ADEK CPU reserves the right to conduct or to designate qualified institutional personnel to conduct the initial safety and risk assessment before reporting the concern to the FCA.

If the ADEK CPU refers the concern to the FCA, the concern would then be managed by the CPS at the FCA. The ADEK CPU should still provide administrative support (e.g: sharing relevant information) to enable the FCA to conduct the needed assessments and other activities related to case management.

If the ADEK CPU does not report the case to the FCA, the concern is returned to the educational institution with the justification, and the educational institution is asked to collect additional information before submitting another Safety Concern Form.

In all situations, the ADEK CPU would ensure that the concern gets logged and responded to.

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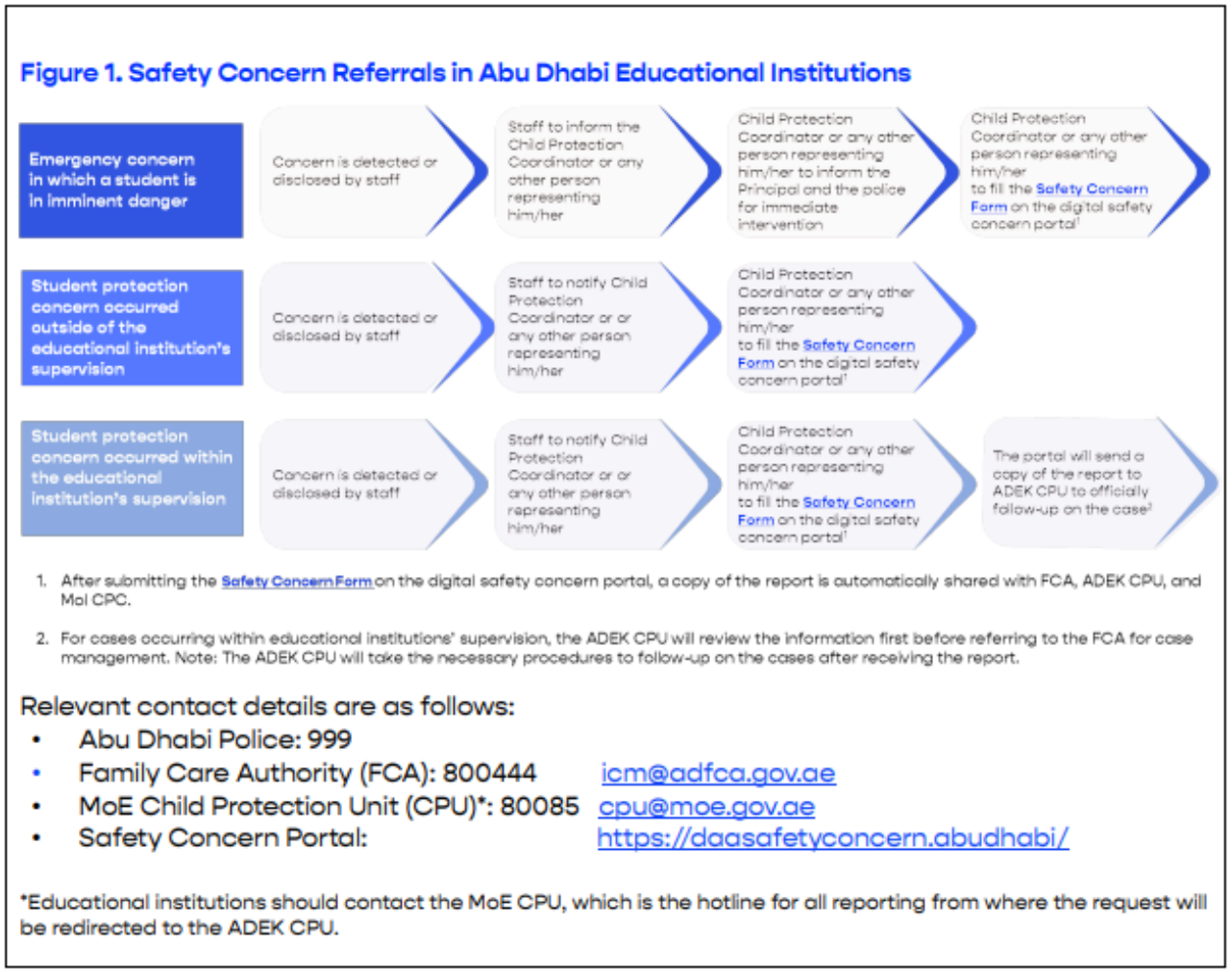
Figure1. Safety Concern Referrals in Abu Dhabi Educational institutions summarises how maltreatment concerns should be handled in cases where the alleged maltreatment occurred both inside and outside of the supervision of the educational institution.



3.Data Confidentiality

3.1 Case reports and student data are strictly confidential. Suspected cases must be kept confidential by all parties involved in the case.

3.2 The data should be shared only with authorised individuals from the ADEK CPU and the FCA, within investigate teams, and the Abu Dhabi Judicial Department

3.3 Authorised individuals are strictly prohibited from discussing active or closed cases with the media, any third parties or other staff, and / or unauthorised ADEK staff, with the exception of investigative and judicial authorities and within the legal responsibilities.

4.Training

4.1 The CPC and CPT complete all student protection policy and safeguarding training as mandated by ADEK, including an affidavit attesting to upholding the highest ethical standards and code of conduct in the management of cases.

4.2 All staff complete ADEK - mandated student protection policy and safeguard training sessions and sign off that they have received training and understand their responsibilities.

4.3 Volunteers receive proper induction and training on student protection policy and safeguarding measures. All invited visitors are also required to attest to having read and understood the school's student protection policy.

4.4 Any staff providing counselling, support, advocacy, or being in close personal contact with students receive continuous training in student protection and safeguarding and be properly supervised by the principal.

5. Vetting, Hiring and Monitoring of Educational Institution Staff, Volunteers, and Invited Visitors

The Principal holds full responsibility and accountability for ensuring that all individuals working within the school environment are suitable to work with students and are in full compliance with all student protection and safeguarding requirements.

This includes:

- Preventing any person from working with students if they are deemed to pose a risk to student safety or wellbeing.
- Ensuring ongoing monitoring and evaluation of all staff members.
- Immediately reporting any allegations of inappropriate conduct or suspected actions that may result in harm or potential harm to a student, in accordance with mandated procedures.

6. Acceptable Adult Behaviours

6.1 Staff and volunteers respect and protect the rights of all students and take no actions that may put the student at risk of maltreatment.

6.2 Staff and volunteers do not undertake any inappropriate behaviours towards the student and /or in the presence of the student.

6.3 Staff and volunteers are required to report any incidents of inappropriate behaviour against students.

6.4 Serious allegations of sexual misconduct by staff, volunteers, and /or invited visitors will be directly reported to the Police and FCA and the concerned staff / volunteer / invited visitor will be immediately removed from the educational institution's premises.

7. Student Protection Learning Resources

7.1 Age appropriate student protection learning resources are developed / procured and distributed to students to support their knowledge and ability to understand personal safety and wellbeing and what actions they can take to report any violations and seek help.

7.2 Student protection learning resources are taught in the classroom and in counselling sessions and include any media (story books, activity books, illustrations, posters, reading content, etc.) that can be discussed either individually or within a group setting.

7.3 Student protection is taught by trained staff who are skilled in understanding student protection and student development.

8. Policy Dissemination and Review

8.1 The student protection policy is available publicly on the school website and disseminated annually to parents, board members, staff, and volunteers, along with a student - friendly version.

8.2 All student protection policies, guidines, safeguarding measures, and procedures should be regularly reviewed and updated at least every 5 years or as required.

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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Principal:

- Comply with the provisions of this policy.
- The school publishes and posts this policy to protect students from maltreatment.
- Ensure that procedures to prevent situations that could lead to the maltreatment of students are in place and understood by all LFITM Staff.
- Ensure the oversight of students at all times while under the supervision of the school.
- Ensure that there is priority emphasis within the school on the protection of the students and for taking immediate actions when there is suspicion of cases of student maltreatment.
- Ensure that students know how, where, and to whom to safely report their concerns about alleged and/or suspected maltreatment without fear of retribution or punishment.
- Ensure that staff, volunteers, and students are aware of how, where, and to whom they can safely report their concerns about the potential exposure of any student to alleged and/or suspected maltreatment without fear of retribution or punishment.
- Include the views and recommendations from students and parents regarding safety and protection reporting within the school.
- Immediately report any case of alleged and/or suspected maltreatment of students as stated by this policy.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers targeted for student protection training fully attend and participate in all training sessions and sign off on safeguarding training and student protection training.
- Conduct orientation sessions for parents upon student registration or enrollment and at the start of every school year to promote this policy and to inform them of their roles and responsibilities, and their rights and duties.
- Maintain students' records in compliance with policy 35 (Records) and ensure confidentiality of open and closed cases in accordance with the guidelines.
- Immediately suspend any staff who is suspected of an offence involving student maltreatment on a temporary basis until the suspicion is adjudicated.
- Ensure all students have a safe and confidential opportunity to report any concerns they may have regarding their rights to safety and wellbeing.
- Ensure the vetting, hiring and monitoring of all staff, volunteers, and invited visitors according to this policy and relevant safeguarding measures.

All staff and Volunteers

- Report immediately an alleged and/or suspected case of maltreatment upon discovery.
- Care for students at all times while under the institution's supervision.
- Understand this policy to address alleged and/or suspected student maltreatment cases.
- Attend and participate in mandated student protection and safeguarding training.

Parents

- Corporate with the school's principal and staff, answer all inquiries to the student's behavior, academic performance, and respond to their feedback and guidance.
- Attend all scheduled parent meetings.
- Communicate any concerns, observations or changes in the student's behavior to the school's principal and/or to the concerned institutional staff.
- Support the school in ensuring safe online practices during distance learning and homework.

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REFERENCE

- Abu Dhabi Early ChildhoodAuthority (ECA).(2024).Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions.
- Abu Dhabi Early Childhood Authority (ECA).(2024).Student Protection Policy for Educational Institutions.-
- Executive Council Chairman Decision No.(26) of 2013 Regarding the Regulation of Private Schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.
- Federal Decree Law No.(11) of 1972 Concerning Compulsory Education.
- Federal Decree Law No.(9) of 1976 Concerning Juvenile Delinquents and Vagrants
- Federal Decree Law No.(35) of 1992 Concerning the CriminalProceduralLaw.
- Federal Decree Law No.(3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights (Wadeema'sLaw)
- Federal Decree Law No.(18)of 2020 Concerning Private Education.
- Federal Decree Law No.(31)of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes And Penalties Law.
- Federal Decree LawNo.(51)of 2022 Concerning the Regulation Of Nurseries.
- Ministry of Education.National Policy for the Prevention of Bullying Educational Institutions (MoE, n.d.).
- 2024 (September) ADEK_School_Student Protection Policy_v.1.1 Department of Education and Knowledge, Abu Dhabi (ADEK)

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