

## Child Protection Policy

RAKAA is concerned about the welfare and safety of all its students and works to create an ethos in which students feel secure and listened to.

If our Child Protection Policy is successful, Child Protection concerns that arise will be dealt with as sensitively and effectively as possible. Records will be accurate and securely stored and passage of information will always occur when it is in the best interest of the child for this to take place. **Our Policy is created in accordance with the Wadeema's Law (Federal Law No.3 of 2016) which aims to protect children against all forms of negligence, physical and psychological abuse.**

[https://www.khda.gov.ae/CMS/WebParts/TextEditor/Documents/Children\\_Law\\_English.pdf](https://www.khda.gov.ae/CMS/WebParts/TextEditor/Documents/Children_Law_English.pdf)

### AIMS

- To provide clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behavior in dealing with Child Protection issues and Duty of Care.
- To make explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures so that child protection concerns, and referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that supports the needs of the child.
- To integrate Child Protection issues into the curriculum.
- To take account of policies in related areas such as behavior and anti - bullying.

### **DEFINITIONS: (taken from 'Working Together to Safeguard Children DfES 2006')**

- a) Neglect - The persistent or severe neglect of a child which results in impairment of health or development
- b) Physical Abuse - Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering
- c) Sexual – 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
- d) Emotional – actual or likely severe adverse effects on the emotional and behavioral development of a child by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment, inappropriacy, or rejection
- e) Potential abuse – situations where children may not have been abused but where social and medical assessments indicate a high degree of risk that they might be abused in the future, including situations where another child in the household has been abused, or where there is a known abuser
- f) Bullying - any persistent and uninvited behavior which insults, hurts, or intimidates someone (includes cyber bullying). Signs of possible abuse include: (These are not exhaustive or necessarily indicative of abuse).

**Taken from 'Working Together to Safeguard Children DfES 2006.'**

a) Neglect – constant hunger or tiredness; frequent lateness or absence, poor personal hygiene, untreated medical problems; running away, stealing, low self-esteem

b) Physical - unexplained injuries/bruises; improbable or evasive excuses, untreated injuries; fear of treatment or medical help, fear of physical contact, fear of going home, over aggressive or defensive tendencies, fear of removing clothes, bites, lashes, facial injuries.

c) Sexual - Tendency to cling, tendency to cry, genital itching, acting 'like a baby', distrust of familiar adults, wetting and/or soiling, fear of undressing, throat infections, depression, fearful/panic attacks.

d) Emotional – Physical, emotional, developmental delay; over-reaction to mistakes; tearful, fear of losing, fear of parents being contacted, stealing, thumb-sucking, rocking, anxiety, Munchausen Syndrome by proxy (If a parent of child deliberately fabricates or induces illness in that child). Signs may include; perceived illness, doctor shopping, enforced illness, fabricated illness, poisoning e.g. with salt, induced seizures, suffocation, bleeding, rashes, tampering with vomit/urine. Child may exhibit unusual or unnaturally prolonged illness; symptoms/signs have a temporal association with mother's presence, mother unusually at ease in hospital environment, multiple illnesses/similar symptoms in family, unexplained death of siblings.

FRAMEWORK 'Working Together Under The Children Act, 1989' requires all schools to follow procedures for protecting children from abuse. *UAE schools are also expected to ensure that they have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which they believe that a child has been abused or are at risk of abuse – these procedures should also cover circumstances in which a member of staff is accused or suspected of abuse. DfES Circular 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2006) places the following responsibilities on all schools.*

- Staff should be alert to signs of abuse and know to whom they should report any concerns or suspicions.
- Designated Staff should have responsibility for coordinating action within the school
- All staff should receive Child Protection/Duty of Care and Health & Safety Training appropriate to their role.
- Schools should have procedures, of which all staff are aware, for handling suspected cases of abuse of students, including procedures to be followed if a member of staff is accused of abuse.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Designated Staff for Child Protection & Duty of Care is the Principal.

### **Designated Staff supporting the Protection & Care of Students**

The Head of Student Support/School Counselor, HOSs and school clinic staff-nurse and doctor are the designated staff wherein colleagues can report to them any concerns they may have regarding students' welfare.

### **Complaints Committee**

The school also has a Complaints Committee -members include the Principal, Vice Principal, HR Manager who are involved in the investigation of certain cases where it is alleged that staff have been inappropriate in their treatment of students. All investigations have minutes to meetings.

The respective role is:

- To ensure all staff are familiar with school guidelines for identifying and reporting abuse, including allegations of abuse against staff;
- To ensure that the school operates an effective Child Protection/Duty of Care Policy;
- To ensure that all staff receive foundation training in child protection and duty of care;
- To be responsible for co-coordinating action and liaising with other agencies and support services over child protection issues if deemed appropriate

***In consultation with the designated staff member, employees will assist in enquiring into allegations of child abuse;***

To follow, as appropriate, recommendations made by the Child Protection Officer

- To be aware of the 'Every Child Matters Document' and the 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' documents (See further reading at end of policy)
- To support and advise staff on child protection/duty of care issues generally;
- To ensure all employees have had up to date training;
- To monitor the attendance and development of children who have given cause for concern;
- To disseminate relevant information to the appropriate staff e.g. to Class/Subject Teachers or SSAs-School Support Assistants Teaching Assistants (TA);
- To complete CP records and send onto new schools (where relevant);
- To maintain accurate and secure child protection records in chronological order.

Class teachers will, in most cases, be the first person that a concern is raised by. They will collate detailed, secure, accurate written records of concerns and liaise with the designated child protection staff member.

### **The School Nurse & Doctor**

Their role is to ensure that relevant information obtained during their duties is communicated to the Principal.

Types of injuries, attendance and frequency are recorded by the school nurse and retained in a secure file in the clinic.

### **The Responsibilities of the whole School Staff**

a) All school staff have a responsibility to identify and report suspected abuse and to ensure the safety and well-being of the students in their school. In doing so they should seek advice and support as necessary from the Principal/Designated Teacher-Head of Student Support/HOS.

b) Staff are expected to provide a safe and caring environment in which children can develop the confidence to voice ideas, feelings and opinions. Children should be treated with respect within a framework of agreed and understood behavior.

c) All school staff are expected to:

- Be aware of signs and symptoms of abuse
- Report concerns to the Designated Staff Member as appropriate
- Keep clear, dated, factual and confidential records of child protection concerns.

#### **APPOINTMENT OF STAFF**

The school will, when appointing staff, take account of the guidance in the school policy and observe the following safeguards:

- Ensure that documentation sent out to potential candidates will make it clear that child protection and duty of care is a high priority of the school and that rigorous checks will be made of any candidate before appointments are confirmed;
- Ensure that a reference as to the suitability of a candidate to work with children will always be obtained from the last employer;
- Request at interview an account of any gaps in their interviewee's career/employment history;
- Ensure that staff already living in RAK or the UAE when applying for posts, will be asked to supply a certificate of good conduct or similar from the police.

All Staff and helpers who have recently moved to UAE, will be asked to produce a certificate of good conduct (or national equivalent)-Police Clearance Certificates from the authorities representing the countries from which they have recently moved.

#### **ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF**

If a child, or parent, makes a complaint of abuse against a member of staff, the person receiving the complaint must take it seriously and immediately inform the Principal.

Any member of staff who has reason to suspect that a student may have been abused by another member of staff, either at school or elsewhere, must immediately inform the Principal. A record of the concerns must be made, including a note of anyone else who witnessed the incident or allegation. HR & The Vice Principal are immediately informed.

The Principal may investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but will assess whether it is necessary to refer to the School Board in accordance with the child protection procedures. If the Principal decides that the allegation warrants further action through child protection procedures, then a full investigation will take place. The Staff Complaints Committee will take the necessary measures to ensure that a full investigation has taken place.

If the allegation constitutes a serious criminal offence, it will be necessary to contact HR including the School Board before informing the member of staff. If it is decided that it is not necessary to refer to the School Board, the Principal will consider whether there needs to be an internal investigation. If the concerns are about the Principal, the School Board must be contacted directly.

## **STAFF CONTACT WITH STUDENTS**

To minimize the risk of accusations being made against staff as a result of their daily contact with students, staff should ensure that they consider the following points of guidance {taken from 'Principles for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Setting's.}

Staff are responsible for their own actions and behavior and should avoid any conduct which would lead to any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.

- Staff should work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way (especially when working with individual students)
  - Staff should not allow students to visit their place of residence, share their personal contact numbers or email address.
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff over any incident, which may give rise for concern.
- Records should be made of any such incident and of decisions made or further actions agreed, and the Principal should be informed.

*Staff are aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them. This is stipulated in the Staff Handbook.*

## **SCHOOL PROCEDURES**

- Any member of staff concerned about a child must inform any of the following designated staff: Head Student Support, the HOS, The School Doctor and or Nurse immediately.
- The member of staff must record information regarding the concerns on the same day. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations.
- The designated teacher will consult the Principal who will decide whether the concerns should be referred to the School Board. If it is decided to make a referral to the School Board, this will be done, if necessary, without prior discussion with the parents.
- If a referral is made to School Board level/SBL, the Designated Employee will ensure that a written report of the concerns is sent to them within 48 hours.
- Attention will be paid to the attendance and development of any child who has been identified as at risk.
- If a student who has been identified as at-risk changes school, the Principal will inform the SBL and consider the transfer of appropriate records to the receiving school.

### **When to be concerned**

Staff should be concerned if a student:

- has any injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with children's activities;
- regularly has unexplained injuries;
- frequently has injuries, even when apparently reasonable explanations are given;

- offers confused or conflicting explanations about how injuries were sustained;
  - exhibits significant changes in behavior, performance or attitude;
  - indulges in sexual behavior which is unusually explicit and/or inappropriate to his or her age;
  - discloses an experience in which he or she may have been significantly harmed.

*If a student discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff should:*

- listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief;
- accept what is being said;
- allow the child to talk freely;
- reassure the child, but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep;
- not promise confidentiality, as it might be necessary to refer the case to the Child Protection Officer;
- reassure the pupil that what has happened is not their fault;
- stress that it was the right thing to tell;
- listen, rather than ask direct questions;
- ask open questions rather than leading questions;
- not criticize the perpetrator;
- explain what must be done next and who must be told.

## **RECORDING DISCLOSURE**

When a student has made a disclosure, the member of staff should:

- make some brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation;
- not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court;
- record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behavior and the words used by the child;
- draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury;
- record statements and observations, rather than interpretations or assumptions.

## **Support for students and staff**

The Principal will make all reasonable attempts to protect and otherwise support students who have disclosed information about possible child abuse incidents. Dealing with a disclosure from a child is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff concerned should consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the Principal.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Members of staff have access to confidential information about students in order to undertake their everyday responsibilities.

Staff are expected to:

- Treat information they receive about students in a discreet and confidential manner.
- Seek advice from the Principal, if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold, or which has been requested of them.
- Be cautious when passing information to others about a student.

## **RECORDS and MONITORING**

Well -kept records are essential to good Child Protection practice.

Concerns and disclosures should be recorded in writing by the member of staff who receives them and passed to the Designated staff member-Nurse/Doctor/Head Student Support/HOSs, Teacher without delay. The Designated staff member in consultation with the Principal will then decide on further action and any appropriate monitoring program for the student. Records are stored in a dedicated filing system maintained by school clinic. When students with records in this filing system pass on to their next school, the Principal is responsible for transferring information judged to be relevant to the child's next school.

## **STAFF TRAINING**

All staff receive Health and Safety Training as part of the CPD program. Staff are informed of any changes subsequently made to the policy and updated of any circulars from MOH and or the MOE.

## **CHILD PROTECTION AND THE CURRICULUM**

The school curriculum is important in the protection of children. We aim to ensure that curriculum development meets the following objectives (these are often met through Moral Education, Homeroom contact and leadership programs. Assemblies also focus on anti-bullying. The Head of student Support has also focused on child protection in developing awareness on anti-bullying in Leadership lessons. The Moral Education class affords additional opportunities to focus on respect for self and others and the importance of having positive relationships. The Year of Tolerance and the messages from the World Government Summit 2019 are shared with all students and parents including staff. **To ensure the continuous advocacy of protecting our students in an online learning/blended platform for this academic year, 2020-2021, Digital Citizenship Skills lessons and Cyber Safety education are conducted by the Homeroom teachers and ICT teachers, respectively.**

### **Developing Student Self Esteem**

- Developing communication skills;
- Informing about all aspects of risk-RAK Police lectures;
- Developing strategies for self-protection;
- Developing a sense of the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behavior in adults;
- Developing non-abusive behavior between students.

### **FURTHER READING-for Staff Guidance**

- 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the child
- 1989 The Children's Act
- 1999 Working together to safeguard children
- 2000 Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families
- 2000 National Care Standards
- 2002 Education Act
- 2003 Every Child Matters
- 2003 What to do if you're worried a child is being abused
- 2004 Safeguarding Children in Education
- 2005 Guidance for safe Working practice for the protection of Children and Staff in Educational Settings.
- 2006 Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- 2007 Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education. SYNOPSIS
- 2019 World Government Summit 2019

### **What to do if you are told of abuse:**

- Stop and listen.
- Take notes and keep (verbatim)
- Do not interrupt
- Do not be judgmental
- Do not promise confidentiality - staff must not work in isolation, but offer discretion
- Avoid leading questions/coaxing or pressurizing.
- Note concerns about going home, now he/she has spoken up
- Inform the designated person promptly who will ask for a verbatim written record with time and persons present
- Discretion should be maintained in the staff room.
  - Never think it cannot happen
  - Do not work in isolation

### **What Happens Next**

- Member of staff with suspicion/concern/ disclosure informs designated staff member/s
- The Designated staff member gathers information.

**Where:**

When in need of serious health or immediate welfare attention, the parents will be contacted immediately, and child should be taken to the nearest A&E department.

**When allegations are made against a member of staff:**

A full report is made to Complaints Committee.

A written record will be asked for. It should be signed and dated and given to the Principal and forwarded to HR as a record for the Complaints Committee.

The member of staff may be suspended pending further investigations.

Reference to the School Board is made on all such matters.

**Overview RAKAA Inclusion Policy 2018-19**

It is the aim of the policy to support, the 5 outcomes of Every Child Matters. It promotes strategies for:

**1. Being Healthy**

Children being supported through a variety of measures to ensure that they are mentally and emotionally healthy.

**2. Staying Safe**

Providing safe and secure environment, to enable all learners to achieve their full potential.

**3. Enjoy & Achieve**

Children of all abilities to be supported to achieve personal and social development;

Ensuring that children are aware of what constitutes bullying;

Providing opportunities for all students to achieve their full potential regardless of educational need;

Providing an environment where all students regardless of any physical disability can access the social and educational aspects of school;

Encouraging and supporting inclusive learning regardless of gender, culture, academic, social and emotional needs;

Ensuring students with EAL have equal opportunities to achieve and reach their potential.

**4. Making a Positive Contribution**

Where possible involving children in decisions about their future roles in school;

Encouraging positive behavior in the community which shows respect for others;

Providing confidence raising opportunities which enable children to deal positively with life changes and challenge

**5. Achieve Economic Well Being**

Providing children with the preparatory life skills to enable independent living and economic well-being.

Along with the 5 outcomes of Every Child Matters, RAKAA believes strongly in the OUR Four Core Values and continuously links these into the teaching and learning in our school.

**RAKAA School Board has a nominated School Board member for Inclusion-Dr. Stefane-CUD.**

## CORE VALUES

1. **Learning extends beyond the classroom-** to instill in students a sense of mission and purpose as citizens of the larger community and the world
2. **Academic excellence-** is demonstrated by the depth of conceptual understanding achieved through rigorous engagement, comprehensive assessment and thoughtful self-evaluation
3. **Students best grow in personal responsibility and self-worth** in a school characterized by trust, honesty and mutual respect among students and teachers
4. **Responsible citizens who respect diversity** – we celebrate the uniqueness of each individual and embrace diverse backgrounds in an inclusive community

### Related Links:

#### Wadeema's Law:

[https://www.khda.gov.ae/CMS/WebParts/TextEditor/Documents/Children\\_Law\\_English.pdf](https://www.khda.gov.ae/CMS/WebParts/TextEditor/Documents/Children_Law_English.pdf)

#### MOE Discipline Policy

<https://rakaa.sch.ae/files/MOE%20discipline%20policy.pdf>

#### RAKAA Discipline Policy

<https://rakaa.sch.ae/files/DISCIPLINE%20POLICY.pdf>

#### RAKAA Student Behavior Policy

[https://rakaa.sch.ae/files/Student%20Behavior%20Policy\\_24-06\\_2018.pdf](https://rakaa.sch.ae/files/Student%20Behavior%20Policy_24-06_2018.pdf)

#### RAKAA Anti-bullying Policy

[https://rakaa.sch.ae/files/RAK%20AA\\_Anti-Bullying%20Policy.pdf](https://rakaa.sch.ae/files/RAK%20AA_Anti-Bullying%20Policy.pdf)

#### RAKAA Cyber Safety Policy

[https://rakaa.sch.ae/files/RAKAAG\\_Cyber%20safety%20Policy\\_2020.pdf](https://rakaa.sch.ae/files/RAKAAG_Cyber%20safety%20Policy_2020.pdf)

#### RAKAA ICT Blog for cyber safety:

<https://RAKAAict.wordpress.com/blog/cyber-safety/>

#### Safeguarding Rights of Children

<https://www.tamimi.com/law-update-articles/new-uae-law-safeguarding-rights-of-children/>

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