



# CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY

## 2024-25

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that our school has student protection measures in place to:

1. Protect them while in the school's care from all acts and omissions constituting physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect, and bullying.
2. Identify and support those students who may have suffered such abuse or neglect, as strongly enforced by the UAE Federal Law No.3 of 2016 on Child Rights, Federal Law No. 3 of 1987 on Penal Code, and other relevant UAE laws.
3. Emphasize that all RAIS employees are mandated reporters of cases of abuse and/or suspected abuse inside and outside the school.
4. Define duties and responsibilities of School Principals and school staff for responding to suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

AI RESALAH AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL (RAIS) will always create a safe and secure environment for all students, who have not reached 18 years old. The welfare and safety of its students will always be a priority of our staff. Students must feel that they are safe to report any concerns and those concerns will be dealt with efficiently and in confidence.

This policy is written in compliance with the local requirements of SPEA and Ministry of Health & Prevention along with the Community Police. The designated first contact person will be the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead).

## **PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE**

- ❖ Child protection, for the purpose of this policy, is defined as all measures, steps and actions that must be taken to protect students from risks that may cause harm or injury while they are in the school's care, travelling to and from the school using school transport, and moving between, waiting for, and taking part in, all activities organized by the school inside or outside the school campus.

- All staff should make themselves aware of the signs of abuse and neglect both at home and at school. They should then follow the procedure of reporting those concerns or suspicions to the designated contact in school.
- The designated person in school will have a knowledge and understanding in both recognizing and acting upon child protection matters reported to them by staff or parents.
- Appropriate training (or prior training) must be given or have been given to the designated contact in school.
- All staff must be aware of the school policy regarding bullying.
- AL RESALAH AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL will only recruit safe members of staff including teachers, admin, volunteer and ancillary staff if they have the required local security checks. Outsourced bus drivers and catering staff will have to be checked by their company and evidence provided to the school.
- Similar checks will be expected to be made on all visitors who may from time-to-time visit school e.g. authors, theatre groups, university representatives and sporting celebrities. These will have to provide SPEA authorization prior to visiting school.

## **HOW TO DEAL WITH THE CONCERN OR REPORTED INCIDENT**

**The 5 R's of safeguarding** provide an easy-to-remember process for keeping vulnerable people safe. The 5 R's of safeguarding are: (Recognize, Respond, Report, Record, and Refer) definitions

### **Recognize**

Staff must have a clear understanding of what the different signs and symptoms of potential abuse, harm and neglect can be.

### **Respond**

If any staff member has a safeguarding concern, it is essential that they respond appropriately and do not ignore the situation.

### **Report**

Safeguarding concerns need to be reported without delay. Confidentiality is important, so only sharing information with those who are a part of the safeguarding process. Ensure that everyone in the workplace knows who these people are, like the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

## **Record**

This is the who, what, why, when and where of the safeguarding concern. The staff member should take precise, comprehensive notes that detail everything about the safeguarding concern. For example, who it involves, what happened, and include times and dates.

## **Refer**

It is usually the responsibility of the DSL or management to pass on safeguarding concerns to the appropriate authorities. However, if the safeguarding risk is more urgent and the staff member suspects somebody is under immediate or severe threat, they should contact the relevant local authority or police services.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

### **THE PRINCIPAL WILL:**

- Comply with the provisions of this policy.
- Ensure that the School publishes a Child Protection Policy to protect students from any abuse and neglect provided it meets the minimum requirements of what is included in this policy and does not contradict any of its provisions.
- Ensure that procedures to prevent situations that could lead to the abuse or neglect of students are in place and understood by all school staff and leaders
- Ensure supervision of students while in school's care.
- 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 abuse or neglect.
- Ensure that students can safely report their concerns about abuse and/or neglect without fear of retribution or punishment.
- Ensure that staff and others can safely report their concerns about the potential exposure of any student abuse and/or neglect without fear of retribution or punishment.
- Gain views from students and parents regarding security and protection within the school.
- Immediately report any case of potential abuse and/or neglect of students as stated by this policy.

- Ensure that all staff and administrators targeted for student protection training fully attend and participate in all training sessions.
- Conduct orientation sessions for parents/guardians 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 Student Records policy, and ensure confidentiality of open and closed cases.
- Immediately suspend any staff member who is suspected of an offence involving student abuse and/or neglect on a temporary basis until the suspicion is adjudicated

**DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL) WILL:**

- Ensure that the Principal is kept up to date.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of all procedures.
- Decides whether to take further action about your concerns.
- Ensure that accurate records are kept and maintained on individual cases and these are kept in a secure place marked "strictly confidential" and your evidence and notes will be kept with them.
- Provide guidance for parents and staff about obtaining support.

**PARENTS/ LEGAL GUARDIANS WILL**

- Cooperate with the school administration and staff, answer all inquiries related to the student's behavior, academic performance and respond to their feedback and guidance.
  - Attend all scheduled school parent meetings.
  - Communicate any concerns, observations, or changes in their child's behavior to the school administration or to the concerned school staff.

**ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING SCHOOL STAFF**

- Allegations against any member of the school staff should be reported to DSL and school Principal.
- Any member of staff who has reasons to suspect that a child may have been abused by another member of staff at school or elsewhere must report it immediately to the DSL.

- A record of the concern must be made along with any other witnesses. This must then be reported to SPEA and the member of staff may be suspended.
- After an internal investigation, the member of staff may be deemed unsuitable for the position that they hold, and this may result in the dismissal of the member of staff. In the case of a teacher, it may result in the SPEA approval terminating the teacher's ability to teach within the UAE.

## **GUIDELINES FOR STAFF**

This is issued with the protection of both staff and pupils based upon mutual trust.

- DO NOT let a suspicion, disclosure or an allegation of abuse go unreported.
- Do provide access for students to talk to you about concerns that they have.
- If it is necessary to talk or listen to a student with concerns, then inform another member of staff and have them nearby - do not close the door of the room.
- Recognized caution is needed on matters of abuse, bullying and bereavement.
- On residential trips, students and staff MUST have separate sleeping arrangements.
- Avoid situations that may compromise your relationship with students.
- During sport or other contact teaching, recognize and be aware of the need for physical contact should **only** be used to develop skills or for safety.
- Staff are advised to avoid transporting a single student in a vehicle unless accompanied by a member of staff or in case of an emergency.
- Remember that someone else may misinterpret your intentions no matter how well intentioned.
- Do not jump to conclusions without checking the facts.
- Do not have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with students. Avoid suggestive remarks or gestures, even in fun.

## **TRAINING**

Given the critical importance of understanding and complying with all aspects of this policy to ensure the protection of students, the Ministry of Interior – Child Protection Center in coordination and collaboration with SPEA shall conduct child protection training for school leaders and other specified staff for which attendance is mandatory.

## **FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THIS POLICY**

Failure to comply with this policy is subject to legal accountability and administrative penalties stipulated in accordance with SPEA's regulations, policies and requirements, in addition to the UAE Federal Law No.3 of 2016 on Child Rights, Federal Law No. 3 of 1987 on Penal Code, and any other local or Federal relevant laws effective at the time of the incident.

## **FORMS OF ABUSE**

**PHYSICAL ABUSE** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, and suffocating or otherwise causing physical abuse to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or care feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child in their care.

**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, and is considered as Physical abuse.

**EMOTIONAL ABUSE** is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development. It may mean conveying to a child that they are unloved, worthless, and inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature expectations which are age or developmentally inappropriate being imposed on a child. It may involve a child feeling frightened or in danger, or exploitation or corruption of a child or children. Special attention should be given towards excessive use of the internet as this is a source of emotional abuse.

**SEXUAL ABUSE** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether the child is aware of what is happening or not. This may include penetrative acts. This may include non-contact activities such as looking at or watching pornographic material. It may also involve the encouragement of children to behave in sexual inappropriate ways.

**NEGLECT** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or physiological needs. The likely result is the serious impairment of the child's health and development. This may include the failure to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect the child from physical harm or danger, or failure to ensure access to proper medical care or treatment.

## **Child Protection Policy Procedures**

**NOTE:** Procedures are subject to change dependent on the severity and urgency of the alleged abuse or harm. The goal is to eliminate further instances of abuse or harm that would otherwise place the child in jeopardy.

- RAIS staff notices possible signs of abuse or harm. Child reports allegations of abuse or harm to self or others. Outside agencies investigate alleged abuse or harm and notifies RAIS.
- The DSL will begin the process of documentation and investigation.
- The DSL initiates possible discussions with victim, documents conversation and reports to be submitted to the principal.
- Outside Agency informed if necessary. Parents are notified if appropriate/necessary.
- Continued follow up may include observation, counseling sessions, intervention, education for child and parent, implementation of behavioral plans, removal from school, outside agency investigation.

### **AL RESALAH AMERICAN PRIVATE SCHOOL LOST CHILD PROCEDURE**

One of the most worrying aspects of a day in school is a 'lost child' both for the child and staff and this can be terrifying for parents. To minimize the possibility of losing a child ALL staff need to be vigilant in maintaining a check of children in their care. This means in addition to the statutory keeping of attendance registers, headcounts after break times and at the beginning lessons should automatically take place. The practice will ensure that if a child goes missing then the loss will be quickly discovered, and action can be taken.

In the event of a missing child, the loss should be immediately reported to the Principal or to a senior member of staff who will then direct the course of action, which include all or some of the following:

- Alert other staff and deploy for a search keeping cover of remaining children.
- Question children and then conduct a search of buildings and outdoor areas.
- Parents should be informed if the child is not found within 15 minutes
- Keep searching with as many adults as possible and update using mobile phones.
- As a last resort and with the consent of parents, call the police.



## **LATE COLLECTION PROCEDURE**

If a child is not collected at the end of the normal working day, they remain OUR responsibility until alternative arrangements have been made.

Each situation will be different, and staff need to act with initiative, but the following procedure is likely to be best practice. SAFETY COMES FIRST!

- Allow 20 min. leeway for traffic delays or other lateness.
- After 20 min. take the child to the designated waiting area where an adult will be on duty.
- Call the parents/ collecting person. Keep trying until contact is made.
- The child should not be left alone and should be reassured that a solution will be found.
- Under no circumstances must a child be allowed to go with another person/parent without the consent from the child's own parent or from DSL

## **LATE COLLECTION FROM AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

Those in charge of after school classes or team sport at different venues are responsible for the care and safety of each child until they are dropped at home or collected from school. Under no circumstances may a child be left on their own.

In the event of a child not being collected then the teacher/activity leader must stay with the child for 15 minutes to allow for normal traffic delays or lateness.

After this time, the child should be taken to designated waiting area or if offsite the teacher should wait with the child and then follow the late collection procedure from point 3 above.

## **CHILDREN BEING DROPPED BEFORE SCHOOL OPENING TIME**

Although we will discourage parents from dropping their children early, some will do this because of work commitments and other factors. We will place a teacher on duty for the safety of our students from 7.00 am (may be amended when student numbers increase) and they will be supervised.

Students who arrive before this time will be kept in a designated safe area where they can be monitored by an adult, this may be a teacher or an admin person. They will be told who is on duty and where to go in case of emergency.

## **INTIMATE CARE FOR CHILDREN**

Children do occasionally have accidents or injuries which necessitate some intimate care. It is important to consider two factors when dealing with these situations.

- Respect the privacy of the child.
- Be aware of the vulnerability of the members of staff assisting the child.

## **RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS**

### **WHAT IS PHYSICAL RESTRAINT?**

Restraint occurs whenever a member of staff, using intentional force, physically restricts a child's movement against his or her will.

Physical restraint does not include gentle prompting or guidance where the child is happy to comply with enjoying an activity. Physical restraint may be appropriate in certain situations e.g., a Gymnastic lesson, first aid, or offering comfort. Staff should still be aware of the child's perception of this action.

### **THE USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT**

Restraint should only be used in circumstances where there are good reasons for believing that the pupil is placing him/herself or other people in danger or where there may be significant damage to property.

If we are aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a way that he/she may need restraining, then it will be sensible to plan how we respond to that situation. This action should be shared with parents and all members of staff. A plan of action should be made so everyone is aware of how to behave during the process, who to contact and how to resolve the situation in the best possible way without causing injury or humiliation.

Physical restraint is a procedure for dealing with an unsafe situation or crisis. It must not be used as a punishment nor when a lesser response would have been an effective response to the situation. Deliberate use of physical contact to punish a student, cause pain, injury, or humiliation is unlawful, regardless of the severity of the behavior or provocation leading up to this action.

## **TYPES OF RESTRAINT**

Restraint can be:

**Partial, restricting and preventing a particular movement.** This may be applied in different degrees, it may mean moving a student from imminent risk in order to prevent injury and after a reasonable verbal request has been made. It may mean holding a pupil to restrict movement e.g., arms. It could also mean restricting their movement in a confined space e.g., an office.

**Total, as in the case of complete immobilization.** This is where a pupil is held in such a way which prevents movement. This could mean a pupil being held on the floor. This is an extreme form of restraint and must only be used in exceptional circumstances where they or others were at risk.

If staff use physical force to restrain a pupil, then the incident must be recorded in writing and the DSL and Principal informed so they can inform the parents before the end of the school day.

**APPENDICES APPENDIX 1**  
**Possible signs of abuse**

**Possible signs of physical abuse can include:**

1. Unexplained bruises or injuries
2. Injuries which 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 behavior
11. Repeated running away from home
12. Cigarette burns
13. Human bite marks
14. Broken bones
15. Multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge

**Possible signs of emotional abuse can include:**

1. Regular tiredness
2. Fear of a new situation
3. Low self esteem
4. High levels of anxiety
5. Unusually passive or aggressive

6. Delayed speech
7. Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
8. Running away
9. Lying
10. Neurotic behavior e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
11. Fear of making mistakes
12. Self-harm
13. Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress

**Possible signs of sexual abuse can include:**

1. Unusual behavior which could be general or sexual
2. Age-inappropriate sexual behavior
3. Sexually transmitted diseases
4. Physical indicators in the genital and anal areas
5. Pain or itching in the genital area
6. Bruising or bleeding near genital area
7. Vaginal discharge or infection
8. Discomfort when walking or sitting down
9. Pregnancy

**Possible signs of neglect can include:**

1. Stealing
2. Poor social relationships
3. Failure to thrive
4. Poor personal hygiene
5. Frequent hunger

6. Untreated medical complaints
7. Frequent lateness or absence from school
8. Inappropriate clothing
9. Substance or alcohol misuse

## Appendix 2

### Guidance on how to respond to a student wanting to disclose

#### GENERAL POINTS

- Reassure the child that they were right to tell you
- Show acceptance of what the child says (However unlikely the story may sound).
- Keep calm.
- Look at the student directly.
- Be honest.
- Tell the child you will need to let someone else know – don't promise confidentiality (A useful distinction to make when explaining the difference between privacy and confidentiality to a student is: you cannot promise to keep a conversation private but you can keep it confidential by only informing the people who need to know in order to help the student).
- Even when a student has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse.
- Never push for information. If the student decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Never ask leading questions and try to record what the child says verbatim
- Be aware that the student may have been threatened or bribed not to tell.
- Contact the appropriate senior member of staff or agency
- Seek DSL support if needed.

#### DON'T SAY

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Statements such as 'I am shocked, don't tell anyone else.'

#### Helpful things you may say or show

- I understand what you are saying.
- Thank you for telling me.
- It's not your fault.
- I will help you.

## **Concluding**

- Again, reassure the child that they were right to tell you
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.



## Appendix 3

### Body Mapping of Injury Form (By Clinic Team)

# Body Map

Label injury location on body diagrams using below chart

Code	Injury
A	Swelling or inflammation
B	Bruising
C	Cuts and grazes
D	Burns and scalding
E	Redness/soreness
F	Scabs and blisters
G	Area of reported pain with no visible signs
H	Other

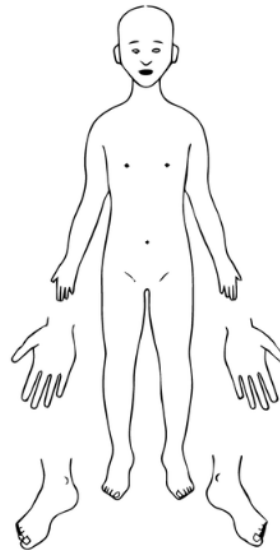
Right



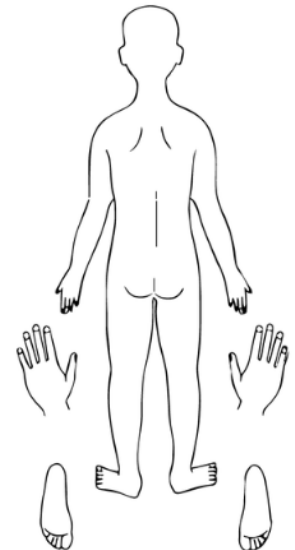
Left



Front



Back



This body map is a representation of (Full name):			
Date of birth:			
Date recording made:		Size/measurement of injury:	
Description of injury:			
The person recording these details is (full name):			
Designation:		Signature:	

**Appendix 4  
Initial Mandatory Report**

**REPORTING ALLEGATIONS/CONCERNS OF ABUSE OR HARM OF CHILDREN**

**Is the child in immediate harm?** **Yes/No**

**If yes, have outside agencies been contacted?** **Yes/No**

**What was the outcome of notifying the outside agency? Explain below:**

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**The DSL has been informed of allegations.** **Yes/No**

**Mandatory Reporter Details:**

<b>Person's Name:</b>	
<b>Profession:</b>	
<b>Organization Name:</b>	
<b>Contact Number:</b>	
<b>Email address:</b>	
<b>Date of Report:</b>	
<b>Date of Alleged Incident:</b>	

**Child's Details:**

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Family Number:</b>	
<b>Gender:</b>			
<b>Date of Birth:</b>		<b>Age:</b>	<b>Grade:</b>
<b>Address:</b>			
<b>Telephone Number:</b>			
<b>Other Contact Number:</b>			

**PERSON BELIEVED RESPONSIBLE FOR ALLEGED ABUSE OR HARM (if known)**

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>
<b>Address</b>	<b>Country of Origin:</b>
<b>Phone</b>	<b>Mobile</b>
<b>Relationship to child/young person (if known)</b>	
<b>Do you know if this person is known to Police?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	

**Child's Parent or Legal Guardian Information:**

<b>Person's Name:</b>			
<b>Gender: M/F</b>			
<b>Date of Birth:</b>		<b>Age:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>			
<b>Telephone Number:</b>			
<b>Other Contact Number:</b>			

<b>Additional Information</b>	
<b>Person aware of Report: Yes/No</b>	

**Appendix 5**  
**DECLARATION OF STAFF**

**School Name .....**      **Academic Year .....**

**Please sign and return it to the Principal's PA.**

**I, ..... have access to, have read and I have understood the contents of the following documents and understand my role and responsibilities as set out in these document(s):**

- (1) The School's Child Protection Policy
- (2) Positive Behavior Policy
- (3) Anti-Bullying Policy
- (4) Cyberbullying Policy
- (5) Health and Safety Policy
- (6) Wadeema's Law

I am fully aware that the DSL of RAIS is ..... and I am able to discuss any concerns that I may have with them. I know that further guidance, together with copies of the policies mentioned above, are available in the Principal's/Vice Principal Office.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 6

### SCHOOL CONTACTS

Principal, Mohannad Al Jayousi: 050 490 9109

Social Worker & Head of Wellbeing, Mohamed Abdelkarim : 052 351 8690

School Landline: 06 574 4400

### OUTSIDE CONTACT DETAILS

It is mandated to report using the telephone hotline (116111)SPEA Phone

number: +971 6 804 1444

Ministry of Interior Child Protection Centre: 02 3333999

Ministry of Social Affairs: 02 6429333

Sharjah Police Tel. 997

<b>Approval and Review</b>	
<b>Review date</b>	<b>May 25<sup>th</sup> 2024</b>
<b>To be reviewed on:</b>	<b>May 25<sup>th</sup> 2025</b>
<b>Approved as Policy by:</b>	<b>Principal:</b> <b>Mohannad Al Jayousi</b> 