

## **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**

### **Key Contacts**

#### *Within School*

Designated Safeguarding Lead (Whole School)

Mrs Laura Stokes – Head of Student Support & DSL - 052510329

Designated Safeguarding Lead (Primary School)

Mrs Naomi Williams – Deputy Head Pastoral - 0526739986

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Primary School)

Mr James Didcott – Class Teacher - 050376633

Designated Safeguarding Lead (Secondary School)

Mr Stuart Macpherson – Assistant Head Pastoral – 0585836327

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Secondary School)

Mr Jonathon Pennock – Head of Secondary - 0555917223

Nominated Governor for Safeguarding

Ms Sasha Crabb – VHPS Principal

SVS Principal

Mr David Flint - 0527122267

#### *External Contacts*

Al Ameen Service

800 – 4 – 888

Dubai Police Child Protection Hotline (*for confidential advice*)

800 – 243

MOI Child Protection Centre

800 – 9 – 888

## Introduction

South View School fully recognises its responsibility to safeguard, promote and protect the safety of all children. The guiding principle is the belief that it is always unacceptable for a child to experience abuse of any kind. This policy has been formulated to ensure that South View School takes every possible measure to prevent abuse. It aims to ensure that none of its staff or volunteers engage in behaviour that could allow abuse to occur or actions that could be misinterpreted by children, their families or other adults as constituting or leading to abuse.

Safeguarding is defined as –

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children’s health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

Child Protection is defined as –

The activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

A child protection policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children from harm and makes clear to all what is required in relation to the protection of children. It helps to create a safe and positive environment for children and to show that all staff of South View School take our responsibility of care seriously.

This includes but is not limited to safeguarding children in specific circumstances.

Neglect	Physical abuse	Emotional abuse
Sexual abuse	Bullying, including online and prejudice-based bullying	Racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
Gender based violence/ violence against women and girls	Radicalisation and or extremist behaviour	Child Sexual Exploitation and trafficking
Impact of new technology on sexual behaviour e.g. Youth Produced Sexual Imagery	Teenage relationship abuse	Substance Abuse
Female Genital Mutilation	Forced Marriage	Fabricated/ induced illness
Online including grooming via social networking, online gaming, video messaging	Peer on peer abuse	Self-harm behaviours



Children with mental health difficulties or illness	Up skirting	Children missing education (CME)
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South View School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its children. We believe that:

- All children/young people have an equal right to be protected from harm.
- Children/young people need support which matches their individual needs, including those who may have experienced abuse.
- All children/young people have the right to speak freely and voice their values and beliefs.
- All children/young people must be encouraged to respect each other's values and support each other.
- All children/young people have a right to be supported to meet their emotional, and social needs as well as their educational needs.
- Schools can and do contribute to the prevention of abuse, victimisation, bullying, exploitation, extreme behaviours, discriminatory views and risk taking behaviours.
- All staff, volunteers and visitors have an important role to play in safeguarding children and protecting them from abuse.

### **Purpose**

An effective whole-school child safety and protection policy is one which provides clear direction to staff and others about prevention of illness, prevention and treatment of sickness, the physical safety of children and finally the expected behaviour when dealing with child protection issues. An effective policy also makes explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practices and sound procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child.

### **Context**

South View School recognizes that children have a right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively and succeed in school if they are suffering emotionally or physically. School staff are uniquely placed to recognize signs of abuse and build strong bonds with children in their care.

### **Aims**

In alignment with our commitment to safeguarding and child protection, South View Schools' policy is firmly rooted in the principles and guidelines established by the UK



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government. We adhere to the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023 and the Working Together to Safeguard Children (WT) 2018 policies, which provide a comprehensive framework for promoting the welfare and protection of children.

Our approach to safeguarding and child protection is also influenced by international standards, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), which recognizes the rights of all children up to the age of 18. Additionally, we comply with the UAE Child Protection Law 2016, known as 'Wudeema's Law' (Federal Law No.3 2016), ensuring that our practices align with local legislation.

As outlined by the UNICEF definition, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children involves protecting them from all forms of maltreatment and providing them with an environment that fosters safe and effective care. At South View School, we prioritise the best interests of the child, ensuring that they are safeguarded from any form of discrimination and have the right to life, survival, and development.

### **It is our aim to**

- Raise awareness of child protection, safeguarding roles and responsibilities with school staff and volunteers.
- Develop, implement and review procedures in our school that enable all staff and volunteers to identify and report cases, or suspected cases of abuse.
- Support children with additional needs.
- Ensure the practise of safe recruitment in checking and recording of the suitability of staff and volunteers who work with children.
- Establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Ensure that allegations or concerns against staff are dealt with in accordance with the Dubai Ministry of the Interior and Department of Education policies and procedures.

### **The whole school will aim to:**

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are heard.
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or to have concerns.
- Include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- Follow the procedures set out by the Department of Education and the Ministry of the Interior.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and its staff, by setting out its obligations on child protection, on the school website and the parent's handbook, and that parents are offered a copy of the policy on request.



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- Ensure that children have an understanding of the Child Protection Policy by delivering lessons on child-protection and safeguarding issues through the course of PSHE lessons, MSC and other appropriate means, where applicable.
- Notify the Ministry of Interior Child Protection Centre of any suspected cases of child abuse.
- Inform parents of any concerns, and provide them with opportunities to change the situation, where this does not place the child at greater risk.
- Develop effective links with the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) Child Protection South View School Child Protection Policy Centre and local police.
- Liaise with other agencies that support children.
- Ensure there is a designated person/Child Protection Liaison Officer (CPLO) appointed.

### **The Child Protection Liaison Officer in South View School is Laura Stokes.**

*In the event of this person being unavailable please report to Naomi Williams or Stuart Macpherson.*

The CPLO responsibilities are to:

- To take lead responsibility for coordinating child protection activity within the school. Together, the team will provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and will liaise closely with other services.
- Ensure the Principal is kept fully informed of any concerns.
- Ensure that the school SLT and staff are fully aware of and understand their responsibilities and obligations under this policy.
- Ensure that staff have appropriate training and attend training every year.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers know the name of the designated CP team, their role and contact details.
- Keep digital records of child protection concerns, ensuring that they are stored securely and separately from the main pupil files.
- Ensure that copies of child protection records and/or records of concerns are transferred accordingly (separate from student files) when a child leaves the school.
- Ensure that when a student leaves the school their information is transferred to the new school immediately.
- Inform parents of any concerns and work with them to try to facilitate change, unless this would place the student at greater risk.
- Decide whether to take further action about specific concerns.
- Provide guidance to parents and staff about obtaining support.

### **Responsibilities of adults within the School Community:**

- All adults are required to be aware of and alert to the signs of abuse.



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- If an adult identifies that a child may be in an abusive situation they should record their concerns and report them to the CPLO as soon as is practical.
- If a child discloses allegations of abuse to an adult, they will follow the procedures attached to this policy.
- If the disclosure is an allegation against a member of staff they will follow the allegation procedures attached to this policy.

### **Duty of Care**

School staff have a crucial role in shaping the lives of young people. They have a unique opportunity to interact with children in ways that are both affirming and inspiring. This policy has been produced to help staff develop the safest possible learning and working environments which safeguard children and reduce the risk of staff being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

One of the key additions to legislation contained in the UAE Child Protection Policy, prepared by the Community Development Authority (CDA), is the mandatory reporting of child abuse by child care providers, making school staff legally compelled to report concerns.

### **This means that adults should:**

- Understand what child protection and safeguarding means and understand different types of abuse.
- Always act and be seen to be acting in the child's best interests.
- Pay particular attention to incidents of bullying and take immediate action.
- Have thorough knowledge of South View School Bullying Policy and Child Protection Policy.
- Avoid any conduct that would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intent.

### **Our Role in the Prevention of Abuse**

In accordance with Working Together 2018, the school recognises the need to safeguard children from:

- neglect
- emotional abuse
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse



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In addition, the school are alert to the need to safeguard children in specific circumstances as defined within Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023. Our safeguarding policy cannot be separated from the general ethos of the school, which should ensure that children are treated with respect and dignity, taught to treat each other with respect, feel safe, have a voice, and are listened to.

Furthermore, in line with our commitment to the Prevent duty, we recognise the important of equipping our staff with the necessary skills to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation. We understand that protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is an integral part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities and we are dedicated to creating a school environment where children are safe from exposure to terrorist and extremist material, particularly when accessing the internet within our premises. In line with this commitment, we ensure that suitable filtering systems are in place to safeguard children's online experiences.

### **Types of Abuse**

Abuse can take a variety of forms. The ill treatment or neglect of a child which causes injury, suffering or distress is abuse. A child may suffer or be at risk of suffering from one or more types of abuse. Abuse may take place on a single occasion or it may occur repeatedly over time. Abuse of children has been internationally defined in the following categories:

#### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse is the deliberate physical injury to a child or the willful, neglectful failure to cause physical injury or suffering. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing or treatment that can cause actual bodily harm. Fictitious illness by proxy may also be considered as abuse.

#### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on the child. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Domestic abuse, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose children to emotional abuse.

#### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such



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as involving children in looking at or in the production of pornographic material, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet the child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failing to protect the child from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision. It may also include a failure to respond to a child's basic emotional need.

*Neglect is the failure to act in response to need.*

### **Bullying**

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. It may take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling), and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group).

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children to the extent that it affects their health and development or at the extreme end, cause them significant harm (including self-harm). All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have in place rigorously enforced anti bullying strategies.

### **Peer-on-Peer Abuse**

This form of abuse is when there is any kind of physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse or coercive control exercised between children/young people both on and offline. Allegations of peer-on-peer abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with promptly.

Our commitment extends to providing support for both victims and perpetrators involved in peer-on-peer abuse incidents. We firmly assert that abuse is abuse, and it should never be tolerated or dismissed as "banter", "just having a laugh", or "part of growing up". We recognise that peer-on-peer abuse can have a gendered nature, but we are unwavering in our stance that all forms of peer-on-peer abuse are unacceptable and will be treated seriously.

### **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) is a form of abuse where individuals or groups exploit power imbalances to coerce children into engaging in criminal activities. CCE involves forcing or manipulating children into drug transportation, working in illegal factories, theft, or violence. Perpetrators may trap victims through threats, coercion, or debt. It is important





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to recognise that children involved in CCE may not be seen as victims despite the harm they endure. Both girls and boys are at risk, with girls experiencing different indicators.

### **Signs of abuse**

Recognising child abuse is not easy. It is not the responsibility of school staff to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk. It is the responsibility and duty of those working with and caring for children to act in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any necessary action to protect a child.

- Many forms of abuse do not leave physical signs.
- Many signs of sexual abuse do not leave physical evidence.
- Forensic evidence can disappear within a short period of time.
- Sexually abused children can suffer physical injury.
- Children of all ages, able bodied, disabled, children with or without a learning disability, boys and girls from all races, cultures and classes are abused.
- Young people's unhappiness and distress can often be witnessed in their behaviour.
- Mental health problems can be a sign or indicator of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

*Refer to: Appendix 1 - Identifying signs of child abuse.*

### **Children Volunteering Informatio**

If a child volunteers information to a member of staff it may be done obliquely, rather than directly e.g. through play, drawings etc. Children will talk about their concerns and problems to people they can trust

The role of the member of staff or volunteer hearing this is to listen but not undertake any investigation of the existing or potential abuse. This is the role of the child protection agencies and/or child protection team.

*Refer to: Appendix 2 - What to do if a child confides in you.*

Legal action against a perpetrator can be seriously damaged by any suggestion that the child's words have been influenced in any way by the person they told.

### **Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedures**

The prime concern at all stages must be the safety and interests of the child. Legal and regulatory requirements are necessary for guidance on best practice in safeguarding of children. UNICEF explains safeguarding as "taking all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children's welfare is minimised; and where there are concerns about

children and young people's welfare, taking appropriate action to address those concerns". The following procedures should be read in conjunction with the flow chart (Appendix 8). If a member of staff suspects abuse e.g. through physical injury etc. they must:

- Make a full and accurate record of their concerns on 'My Concern'.
- Upload and include skin maps if necessary.
- Consider if there is a requirement for immediate medical intervention and if so assistance must be called for.

For non permanent members of staff who do not have access to My Concern, a handwritten Cause for Concern form must be completed (see Appendix 6).

*Once received, the concern files will only be viewed by the DSLs and, where appropriate, Heads of School and the Principal. The 'My Concern' files are separate, online files that are confidential documents kept separately to the persons school file.*

**Following a report of concerns from a member of staff, the CPLO must:**

- Decide whether or not there are sufficient grounds for suspecting child abuse, in which case a referral must be made to the Ministry of the Interior Child Protection Centre in Dubai. It is operated by the United Arab Emirates Ministry of the Interior and its mandate is to protect children across the UAE.
- If there is no risk of harm the CPLO will either actively monitor the situation or seek advice from the MOI Child Protection Centre.
- The CPLO must confirm any referrals in writing to the MOI Child Protection Centre, within 24 hours, including the actions that have been taken. The written referral should be made using the Referral Form attached to this document.
- If a child is in immediate danger and urgent protective action is required, the police should be called using the 999 service. The CPLO should also notify the MOI Child Protection Centre of the occurrence and what action has been taken. The CPLO should seek advice from the police/MOI Child Protection Centre about informing the parents.
- Normally the school should try to discuss any concerns about a child's welfare with the family and where possible seek their agreement before making a referral to the MOI Child Protection Centre. However, this should only be done when it will not place the child at increased risk. The child's views should also be taken into account.
- Where there is doubt or reservations about involving the child's family, the CPLO should clarify with the MOI Child Protection Centre whether the parents should be told about the referral and, if so, when and by whom. This is important in cases where police may need to conduct a criminal investigation.

The Child Protection Centre, located in Al Barsha is open between 8 am and 3 pm for drop in services. A member of staff can be contacted 24 hours a day:

Hotline phone number 800988

Mobile phone number 056682011

Email [child@CDA.gov.ae](mailto:child@CDA.gov.ae)

When making a statement it is important to relay the clear facts, any suspicions or allegations and whether or not there has been any contact with the child's family. If the CPLO feels unsure about whether a referral is necessary they can phone MOI Child Protection Centre to discuss concerns and obtain advice. To do so will not constitute a child abuse referral and may well help to clarify a situation.

### **Transport/Bus policy**

On the date assigned by Facilities for the bus rider to start, the child will first be taken home after school. The following day the bus will collect the child at home for pick-up and then bring that child home for drop-off.

Buses are equipped with seat belts and children are instructed to use the seat belts at all times when the bus is moving. For smaller children, parents provide a car seat to be used in the bus. The car seat remains in the bus for the child to use every day.

If there is an emergency or crash on the bus, the bus assistants ring the school manager to report the incident. If the school manager is not available, they ring the emergency school mobile number (residing in the Admin area). The incident is immediately reported to the Principal and then appropriate action is taken.

The Facilities team periodically reviews with the Bus Transport company actual bus timings to determine if a more efficient schedule is possible. Any updates to the bus schedule are communicated to parents with a start date for applied changes.

The buses are also used to provide transport when there is an off-site school activity. A member of staff and a bus assistant accompany children when buses are used for an off-site school activity. Prior to an off-site school activity, parents are provided with a School Transport Permission Letter. Only children who return this letter to the school with their details and signed permission signature will be allowed on the bus for the off-site school activity. Letters are held in the school department responsible for the off-site school activity. School staff and bus nannies manage bus trips to off-site school activities in the same way as morning collection and afternoon drop-off activities.

*Refer to Appendix 5 Transporting Children for School Activities*

## **Emergency Intervention**

When a pupil is in need of urgent medical attention and there is suspicion that abuse may have taken place, the CPO or Principal should take the child to the Accident and Emergency Unit at Rashid Hospital, having first notified the MOI Child Protection Centre.

The CPO should seek advice about what action the MOI Child Protection Centre will take and on informing the parents, remembering that parents should normally be informed that a child requires urgent hospital attention. If the suspected abuse is sexual then the medical examination should be delayed until the MOI Child Protection Centre and/or the police can liaise with the hospital, unless the needs of the child are such that medical attention is the priority. If a decision is made not to inform the parents there must be a responsible adult with the child at all times, whether from the school, MOI Child Protection Centre or police.

When dealing with allegations against staff, directors or volunteers:

- Report any concerns about the conduct of any member of staff or volunteer to the Principal as soon as possible and within 24 hours.
- If an allegation is made against the Principal, the concerns need to be raised with the local Education Authority as soon as possible and within 24 hours.
- In either event the MOI Child Protection Centre should be contacted on 800988.

## **Safe Working Practice**

All staff and volunteers should aim to be positive role models to students by behaving in a respectful, mature, safe, fair and considered manner thereby protecting themselves and their pupils.

It is important to ensure that you:

- Work in an open and transparent way, avoiding actions that would lead a reasonable person to question your motivation and intentions.
- Dress appropriately for your role.
- Are aware of personal space, any physical contact should be professional.
- Understand your position of power and influence over children and not misuse it in any way.

This includes and is not limited to:

- accepting regular gifts from children.
- giving personal gifts to children.
- Recognise your influence and do not engage in activities out of school that might compromise your position within school.

- Do not seek to establish social contact with pupils outside of school. This includes the use of emails, texts and other messaging systems including social networking sites.
- Leave glass panels on doors uncovered, it is important that actions are seen.
- Talk to the Principal if you feel there is a difficult issue with a particular student or class. Ensure that you have parental permission to take photographs and ensure there is a clear educational aim for any photography or filming.

### **Safeguarding Disabled Children and Children of Determination**

There is a wealth of research based evidence to support the view that children with disabilities and/or SEND are more vulnerable to maltreatment or abuse and neglect. Therefore knowing and understanding the link between disability and child abuse and neglect is an important step towards planning targeted and appropriate prevention intervention strategies. Safeguarding children with disabilities is the same as safeguarding their non-disabled peers, however it requires high standards of practice, increased awareness and support for children and their families.

*Refer to Appendix 3 Guidance on toileting needs.*

### **Child Protection Vetting**

South View School strongly recognises the need for vigilant awareness of child protection issues. It is important that all staff have appropriate induction and training to fully understand their roles and responsibilities and are confident about carrying them out. Staff, pupils and parents should feel secure that they can raise any issues or concerns about the safety or welfare of children and know that they will be listened to and taken seriously.

This will be achieved by maintaining an ethos of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and protecting staff. This is supported by having clear child protection policies, appropriate induction and training, briefing and discussion of relevant issues and relevant learning.

South View School believes it is vital to create a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, adopt recruitment procedures that deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children reference clearly as for confirmation of any child protection concerns. The Principal and governing bodies will act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of the prospective employee based on checks and evidence including: criminal record checks, references and interview information.

For most appointments, an enhanced criminal record check will be appropriate as the majority of staff will be involved in regulated activity where they will be responsible, on a regular basis for the care and supervision of children.



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There is no requirement to request a criminal record check on a supervised volunteer who regularly teaches or looks after children. Volunteers who regularly teach or look after children in an unsupervised basis must obtain a criminal record check.

A Dubai Police Clearance application form also known as Dubai Police Good Conduct Certificate may be obtained from the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) located at Dubai Police Headquarters.

Year Leaders and the Principal will use their professional judgement with regard to the need to escort and supervise visitors.

*Refer to Appendix 4 Briefing sheet for Temporary Staff and Volunteers*

### **Related Policies**

- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Online Safety
- Positive Behaviour
- Child Missing in Education
- Safer Recruitment
- Inclusion
- Intimate Care
- Health & Safety

### **Reviews**

This policy is reviewed yearly by the DSL and SLT.