



TBAC/POLICY/005/2022-2023

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CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY (2022-2023)

Introduction:

The Health, Safety and Well-being of all our students are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our school. Our children have all the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, or disability. They have the right to be safe in our school.

Protecting children is everyone's responsibility at our school and this includes reporting any act committed by a parent, guardian or any other person, which includes neglect, physical or emotional injury or sexual harm, to a child enrolled in the school.

All staff members have the duty and will report any suspected or disclosed issues of child protection to the Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) / Child Protection Team.

If the threat is immediate or on-going it will be reported to the appropriate local safeguarding authority as set in place by the UAE.

Policy Statement:

The safeguarding of children and young people from harm, is the highest priority here at THE BLOOMINGTON ACADEMY. Our students have a right to feel safe and protected from significant physical and emotional harm both inside and outside of school. An effective whole-school Child Protection Policy is implemented in our school, to promote the welfare of our students; this policy plays a crucial part in promoting child safety and is designed to inform our staff regarding the signs of child abuse and to equip them with the knowledge on what to do in the event of suspected abuse.

This policy defines abuse, outlined signs of abuse, and explains the procedures for investigating and reporting suspected cases. It also shows our school's commitment to the development of good practices and sound procedures. The policy ensures that child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child.

Aims and Objectives:

This policy ensures that all staff in our school will follow the necessary procedures with regard to child protection:

- To raise awareness and identify responsibilities in reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To ensure effective communication between all staff when dealing with child protection issues.
- To inform all parties, of the correct procedures to use in the case of child protection issues.

Types of Child Abuse

Physical Abuse

This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing any physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or caretaker fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child. It is necessary for the teacher to identify this.

Emotional Abuse

Includes persistent emotional maltreatment and / or verbal abuse towards a child, causing adverse effects on the emotional development of a child. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved, and inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may cause the child to feel frightened, in danger, or to be exploited or corrupted.

Sexual Abuse

Involving forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. It may involve physical contact, penetrating or non-penetrating acts and also includes children in looking at, or encouraging children to behave in sexual inappropriate ways.

Neglect

This is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and / or psychological needs which is likely to result in serious impairment to their health and development. It may involve a parent or caretaker failing to provide adequate safety, causing harm or danger or failing to allow access to medical care or treatment. It may also include the neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

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 the child activities.
- Regularly has unexplained injuries.
- Frequently has injuries even 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 harmed.

If a student discloses that he or she has been harmed in some way, the member of the 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 do not make promises that it might be impossible to keep.
- Reassure the pupil that what has happened is not his / her 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 has to be done next and who has to be told.

General Principles:

All staff should be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and know to whom they should report concern or suspicions.

The SDC team members are the first point of contact for staff and parents where a concern is identified.

The school ensures that any full-time, part-time or volunteer staffs and parents are security checked prior to employment / engagement. This is a whole school requirement and includes all ancillary staff, as well as academic teaching staff to be responsible.

Operational Procedure:

When a child reports abuse, the teacher / staff will inform the SDC team members immediately. If there are reasonable causes to believe that some abuse has occurred and the child is unable to reveal it, it must soon be brought into notification. The Student Development Officer and SDC team members will take initial steps to gather information regarding the reported incident.

At this he / she / they will:

- Interview staff members as necessary and document information relative to the case.
- Consult with school personnel to review the child's history in the school.
- The Student Development Officer and SDC team members will then form a school-based response team to address the report.
- The response team may include the school doctors, nurse, teacher and other individuals as the Student Development Center (SDC) ascertains.
- In all cases, follow up activities will be conducted in a manner that ensures that information is documented factually, and that strict confidentiality is maintained.

Based on the acquired information, a plan of action will be developed to assist the child and family. Action that may take place are:

- Discussion between the child and the SDC in order to gain more information.
- In-class observations of the child by SDC.
- Meeting with the child's family, to present the school's concerns.
- Referral of the student and family to external professional counseling if necessary.
- Consultation with local authorities.

Subsequent to a substantiated case of child abuse or neglect, the following actions may take place:

- The SDC will maintain contact with the child and family to provide support and guidance as appropriate.
- The SDC will provide the child's teacher with ongoing support and provide strategies for the teacher to use.
- The SDC will maintain contact with outside therapists, in order to update the therapist about the progress of the child in school, and to keep the school informed about the progress of the therapy.
- The School Principal will refer the case to local authorities (if necessary), for further action.

Specific Responsibilities of:

School Doctor / Nurse

The Doctor or Nurse may require conducting an examination, if there are physical injuries and will write an initial report about child's physical and emotional condition.

Child abuse can lead to deep emotional scars and School Doctor or Nurse should recognize these and help develop a rehabilitation plan in liaison with the SDC team members and other appropriate staff members.

In some cases, the child may have to take medication as a result of the abuse. The School Doctor or Nurse should ensure that all standards and procedures for administering medications in the school setting are met.

Security Staff

The security staff will undertake to be vigilant and adhere to the procedures governing the access and detailed record-keeping.

Provision of a Visitor's Pass, to be worn for ease of identification and monitoring of visitor's to the school.