

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

2024 – 2025



POLICY INFORMATION

Last review date:	January 2025
Reviewed by:	SLT
Next review date:	January 2026
Approved By:	Principal Daspo Yiappos

At The Oxford School, Dubai, we are committed to end violence against children, we come together in solidarity to share our deep concern, call for action and pledge our support to protect children from violence. We provide practical support to parents and caregivers, how to manage their own mental health and the mental health of their children, and tools to help support their children's learning. We are in line with UNICEF - "Education (CPMS Standard 23; INEE List of Resources)" which talks about:

- Limit the impact of school interruption by using child-friendly distant education methods such as TV, radio or online learning.
- Advocate with government and private employers for flexible working arrangements for parents and caregivers who may have lost access to childcare to enable them to continue care and education of their children.
- Work with schools to ensure that protection and safety messages are delivered to parents and children in a way that limits panic and distress, reassures, and encourages adherence to health messaging.
- Train teachers and other school staff on signs of distress to enable them to identify and refer children who may have specific child protection needs.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Proactive approach to Child Protection

The Oxford School, Dubai believes in being proactive in creating a safe and nurturing environment for all its children. Hence, Child Protection and Safety procedures are in place and must be followed by all TOS staff at all times.

Staff at TOS are trained to ensure the safety, security and welfare of all the children at all hours during the school term. A clear policy ensures that the child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring may be handled in the best possible manner.

We always strive to work in culturally sensitive ways and respect the diverse nature of the children we serve.

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.





Key Personnel:

The Designated Child Protection & Safeguarding Lead (DCSL)

Ms. Daspo Yiappos – Principal

Contact details: Email: daspo.y@oxford.sch.ae

Telephone – 0508757625

The Designated Child Protection & Safeguarding Lead (DCSL)

Ms. Afna Shanavas – Head of Inclusion and Well-being

Contact details: Email: headofinclusion@oxford.sch.ae

Telephone – 0529390878

Deputy Designated Child Protection & Safeguarding Leads (DDCSLs)

1. Ms. Sabeena Subair – Head of FS
Email: headoffs@oxford.sch.ae
2. Ms. Surji Aboubakker – Head of Primary
Email: headofprimary@oxford.sch.ae
3. Ms. Sumbal Imran – Head of Secondary
Email: headofsecondary@oxford.sch.ae

Child Protection Officer (CPO)

1. Mr. Mustafa Wapiwala- School Counselor
Email: mustafa@oxford.sch.ae
2. Ms. Ashwini Dinkar- School Counselor
Email: Ashwini.d@oxford.sch.ae

Other staff / senior leaders committees include:

1. The Health & Safety Officer – Mr. Muhammed Asim
Email: healthandsafetymanager@oxford.sch.ae
Telephone – 0523125008
2. Dr. Marwa Ali Mahaia – Head of Arabic
Email: headofarabic@oxford.sch.ae
Telephone - 0525877100
3. Dr. Shanthi Iyer – Head of Curriculum and Assessment
Email: headofcurriculumandassessment@oxford.sch.ae

4. Mr. Arun Kumar – Physical Education Coordinator
Email: arun.k@oxford.sch.ae
5. Dr. Draupadie Kaushalya – School Doctor
Email: Doctor@oxford.sch.ae
6. Mr. Menrich Shadrack – School Security
Telephone : 0588494380
7. Ms. Carla Baltazor – Head of Year 1 & 2
Email: headofyear1-2@oxford.sch.ae
8. Mr. Omer Naveed – Head of Year 3 & 4
Email: headofyear3-4@oxford.sch.ae
9. Mr. Burair Mustafa – Head of Year 5 & 6
Email: headofyear5-6@oxford.sch.ae
10. Ms. Ansa Achenkunju – Head of Year 7 to 9
Email: headofyear7-9@oxford.sch.ae
11. Ms. Sreela Ramachandran – Head of Year 10 to 13
Email: headofks4-ks5@oxford.sch.ae

Policy statement and Principles

This policy represents the school's integrated safeguarding portfolio. Safeguarding lead arrangements HSE Committee list, Staff Behaviour Policy (code of conduct), safer recruitment policy, complaints, pupil behavior and internet safety.

The school's safeguarding arrangements are inspected by KHDA under the judgements for: The protection, care, guidance and support of students, and leadership and management

This policy is available on the school website and all staff and volunteers are required to read it and confirm they have done so in writing before commencing work in school.

Child Protection Statement

We recognise our statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We provide a safe environment where every child is valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive adequate support, protection and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff and members of the TOS school community.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in an environment with the provision of safe and effective care.
- To ensure that all children have the best life chances.
- Children include everyone under the age of 18.

Child Protection

- Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- Child protection aims to protect specific children who are suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm.
- Where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action should be taken to protect that child.
- Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of the students of determination, even if they are not suffering harm or at risk.

Laws we follow at TOS

- UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 on children's rights (Wadeema's Law)
- UAE Department for Health, School Health Guidelines for Private Schools 2011
- UAE School Inspection Framework 2016, Section 5, The protection, care, guidance and support of students

Principles:

- A conducive and well-equipped learning environment to be provided to ensure the safety of every child on the TOS school premises.
- The school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance.
- Every child irrespective of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, has equal rights to protection.
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm at home, in the community or in school.
- Staff members should always act in the interests of the child when concerned about the welfare of a child.
- Anybody can make a referral.

- Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some stage.
- Anyone involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support.
- Review the policy at least annually unless new legislation suggests the need for a review.

Aims:

- To assist and ensure that every member of staff meet their safeguarding and child protection responsibilities.
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding and child protection to the TOS school community and external partners.

Designated Child Protection & Safeguarding Lead (DCSL)

- Take responsibility for leading safeguarding and child protection in the school.
- Chairs monthly Health, safety and Child protection team meetings.
- Updates their knowledge and skills to keep up with any developments relevant to their role at least annually.
- Acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community.
- Develops a culture of listening to children and taking account of their feelings.
- Is alert to the specific needs of children in need especially the students of determination.
- Has a working knowledge of relevant UAE law and education inspection process.
- Ensures that all staff signs to indicate that they have read and understood the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Staff Behaviour Policy (Code of Conduct).
- Ensures that the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated annually, working with the whole school community of pupils, parents, staff, volunteers and governors.
- Keeps a record of staff attendance at health, safety and child protection induction training.

Designated Deputy Child Protection & Safeguarding Lead (DDCSL)

In the absence of DCSL, DDCSL carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the DCSL, the deputy will assume all the functions above.

Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct

Good practices to meet and maintain our responsibilities are included in the staff code and conduct with pupils which include:



- Treating all pupils with respect.
- Setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately.
- Involving pupils in decisions that affect them.
- Encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils.
- Being a good listener.
- Being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and to signs of abuse and neglect and exploitation.
- Recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- Reading and understanding the school's child protection policy, staff behaviour policy (code of conduct) for example bullying behaviour, physical contact, sexual exploitation, extremism, e-safety and information-sharing.
- Asking the pupil's permission before initiating physical contact, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid.
- Maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between pupils and avoiding the use of derogatory language.
- Being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse.
- Referring to all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DCSL or, if necessary, directly to the Police or Children's Social Care.
- Following the school's rules regarding communication and relationships with pupils, including via social media.

Children who may be particularly vulnerable

To ensure that all our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- Students of Determination.
- Young careers.
- Affected by parental substance misuse, domestic abuse, and violence or parental mental health needs.
- Vulnerable to being bullied or engaging in bullying behaviours.
- Living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations.
- Vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality.
- At risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE).
- At risk of being drawn into extremism.

Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats for children with communication needs.

Early Help

At TOS we are particularly alert to the potential need for early help for any child who:

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs.
- Are Students of Determination
- Is showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour.
- Is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect/or is in a family whose circumstances present challenges for the child, such as adult substance abuse, adult mental ill health, domestic abuse.

Early Help process should involve the child and family as well as all the professionals who are working with them.

Attendance

We recognise that full attendance at school is important to the well-being of all our pupils and enables them to access the opportunities made available to them at school. Attendance is monitored closely.

Assisting children to keep themselves safe

The DSIB Framework instructs governing bodies and administrators to ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

Children are guided right from the Early Years to understand and manage risk through our personal, social and health education (PSHE) and relationships lessons, and through all aspects of school life. Our curriculum approach is designed to help children to think about risks they may encounter and, with the support of staff, work out how those risks might be reduced or managed. Children are taught how to conduct themselves and how to behave in a responsible manner. Children are also reminded regularly about internet safety, the risks of sharing content and images online and tackling bullying. We promote an ethos of respect for children and pupils are encouraged to speak to a member of staff of their choosing about any worries they may have.

Children are alerted about the risks and issues associated with young people sending, receiving and/or disseminating indecent images of themselves and other young people.

Support for pupils, families and staff involved in child protection issue

We at TOS will support pupils, their families, and staff by:

- Taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously.
- Responding sympathetically to any request from pupils or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety.
- Maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with external agencies.
- Storing records securely.
- Offering details of help lines, counseling or support, if any.
- Co-operating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

Complaints procedure

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures. Complaints which escalate into a child protection concern will be managed under the school's child protection procedures.

Staff concerns

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague - including visitors and volunteers towards a pupil are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount.

Allegations against staff

- Any staff members who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, rapidly and consistently.
- In the event of suspension, the school will provide support and a named contact for the member of staff.
- Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the school or historical allegations will be reported to the police.
- The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.
- All visitors and school staff members will be given the school's **Visitor's card with different colour-coded lanyards.**

Safer recruitment

Our Safer Recruitment procedures include:

- Complete an application form which includes their employment history.
- Provide referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children.



- Provide evidence of identity and qualifications.
- If offered employment will be subject to vetting and barring checks relevant to their country of origin.
- If offered employment, provide evidence of their right to work in the UAE.
- Be interviewed by a panel of at least two school leaders, if shortlisted.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality. However, confidentiality and information-sharing is available to parents and pupils on request.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child/parent to keep secrets. Child protection information shall be:

- Adequate, relevant and not excessive.
- Accurate.
- Kept no longer than necessary.
- Processed in accordance with the data subject's rights.
- Secure.

Internet Safety

The school has an Internet Safety Policy reviewed periodically in place which is well read and understood by students and parents.

Children and young people commonly use electronic equipment, including mobile phones, tablets and computers daily to access the internet and share content and images via social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, MSN, Snapchat and Instagram.

Those technologies and the internet are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. Unfortunately, however, some adults and young people will use those technologies to harm children. That harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails to grooming and enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. Pupils may also be distressed or harmed by accessing inappropriate websites that promote unhealthy lifestyles, extremist behaviour and criminal activity.

Chatrooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and pupils are not allowed to access those sites in school. Many pupils own or have access to handheld devices and parents are encouraged to consider measures to keep their children safe when using the internet and social media at home and in the community.





The school's **Internet Safety Policy**, which is accessed through parent portal, Mograsys, explains how we try to keep pupils safe in school and protect and educate pupils in the safe use of technology. Cyberbullying and sexting by pupils will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. Serious incidents may be managed in line with our sexual exploitation policy or child protection procedures.

What is abuse?

- A form of maltreatment of a child.
- Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.
- Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet).
- They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

The four major categories of Child Abuse

Neglect

- Persistent or significant overlooking of a child's needs, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including starvation, or persistent failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of a child's health or development.
- Medical – the withholding of medical care including health and dental.
- Emotional – lack of emotional warmth, touch and nurture.
- Nutritional – through lack of access to a proper diet which can affect in their development.
- Educational – failing to ensure regular school attendance that prevents the child reaching their full potential academically.
- Physical – failure to meet the child's physical needs.
- Lack of supervision and guidance – meaning the child is in dangerous situations without the ability to risk assess the danger.

Physical

- Physical injury to a child whether deliberately inflicted or knowingly.
- A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
- Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces illness in a child.



Sexual

- The sexual exploitation of a child or a young person for an adult's or another young person's own sexual gratification, the involvement of children or young people in sexual activities of any kind or exposure to pornography, to which they are unable to give informed consent or violate normal family roles.
- The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.
- They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or in the production of sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).
- Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Emotional

- Persistent or significant emotional ill treatment or rejection, resulting in severe adverse effects of the emotional, physical and/or behavioral development of a child.
- Is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.
- It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on the child. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction.

Indicators of abuse

- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation.
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends.
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections.

- Mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing.
- Drug and alcohol misuse.
- Displaying inappropriate sexualized behavior.
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late.
- Regularly missing school or not taking part in education.
- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions (often new mobile phones).

Note:

- *It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused. It is very important that staff report all their concerns, however minor or insignificant they may think they are – they do not need ‘absolute proof’ that the child is at risk.*
- *Any child in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of “It could happen here”.*

How To Deal with Child Protection & Safeguarding Procedures

- Class teachers have the primary pastoral care responsibility for all the students in their class.
 - Referrals are then made to DCSL/DDCSL or to the next person(s) in charge according to the Key Personnel sheet of CP Policy in case of absence or inaccessibility of DCSL/DDCSL.
 - An initial meeting is conducted by the HOI/Nurse/Counselor of The Oxford School, Dubai to obtain details of the child in distress and to understand the severity of the situation.
 - Regular Counseling sessions may be conducted if deemed required by the Counselor to ensure the safety and welfare of the child.
 - In cases where a physical injury is involved, visual records are maintained, and the details of injury are discussed with the parent(s) to cross check the facts shared by the child.
- Physical injuries include unexplained bruise or marks
 - Complaints of pain with no visual evidence of injury
 - Comments of a child that are cause for concern
 - Deterioration in a child’s general well-being
 - Sudden behavior change-either withdrawn/aggressive



- Child Protection records are kept securely and separately from Child's school file.
- The Child Protection Officer will work together with the student, teacher(s), parent(s) and counselors required, facilitating support for the child.
- School may be the only positive environment for some of the children struggling with abuse. Hence, while their behavior may be defiant and challenging, the school will try its best to provide for healthy personal and social development of such children if other children can also be kept safe.
- Students are not showing improvement and where parent support is minimal or absent, the child will be reported to external support agencies that can facilitate the child and family.

Bullying

All incidents of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. All pupils and parents receive a copy of the procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in PSHE education.

If bullying is particularly serious, or the anti-bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the Principal/ DCSL/DDCSL will consider implementing 'early help' or child protection procedures.

Notifying parents

Notifying parents must be handled sensitively and the DCSL will contact the parent in the event of concern, suspicion or disclosure.

If at all the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will be sought first from relevant UAE agencies.

Making a referral to Children's Social Care

The DCSL/ DDCSL will make a referral to UAE agencies, and the police, if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering harm.

The child and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child or create undue delay.

Staff reporting directly to child protection agencies

Any staff member can refer their concerns directly to UAE agencies, or the police if:

- The situation is an emergency, and the DCSL, DDCSL, and/or the chair of governors are all unavailable.
- They are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the child's safety.

Staff should inform the DCSL and/or Head teacher at the earliest Opportunity that they have done so unless in their judgement doing so would increase the risk of harm to the child.

External involvement

AL FASHT- Center for Child Behaviour & Adult Psychiatry

Our school recognises the importance of partnering with external professionals to provide comprehensive support for our students, especially those facing behavioral, emotional or developmental challenges. In collaboration with **Dr. C.B. Binu**, a renowned specialist Child and Adult Psychiatrist at **Al Fasht Medical Centre**, our school benefits from expert guidance on neurodevelopmental and psychological issues affecting students. His approach includes the development of therapeutic interventions, as well as family and school-based outreach programs. Dr.Binu's involvement ensures that students with complex needs receive the most appropriate and compassionate care. Additionally, Dr.Binu's multidisciplinary team collaborates with our school staff to design and implement strategies to support Students of Determination and those dealing with mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, stress, and memory disorders. Parental counseling is also available through his clinic to ensure a holistic approach to the child's well-being.

AL FASHT provides:

- Psychiatric Evaluation and Therapeutic Intervention
- Parental Counseling
- School-Based Outreach Programs
- Mental Health Support for Students and Staff
- Counselling
- Comprehensive Care for Families
- Helpline **+971 65255585**
- Website : info@alfasht.com

Police contacts:

Al Ameen Reporting (Dubai & Federal Police)

The Al Ameen Service officially launched in September 2003. Using this service, the people of Dubai can communicate confidentially with the authorities to keep abreast of developments in Dubai, and on issues that concern them.

www.alameen.ae/en/



Key Contacts (Within Local Area)

Dubai Police Child Protection Hotline

Contact Number: 800-243

www.dubaipolice.gov.ae

Community Development Authority

Contact Number: 800-988

Al-Ameen Service

Contact Number: 800-4-888

Dubai Police Human Rights Department

24/7 Duty Officer 056 6862121

Latifa Hospital Child Welfare Unit

Tel: 04 2193000

Fax: 04 3241717

PO Box 4115 Dubai, UAE

Working Hours: 24 Hours

Community Development Authority Centre

Any child in Dubai who needs help, protection from abuse, or advice can pick up the phone and dial 800-988 any time. Four social workers and psychologists at the Child Protection Centre in Al Barsha are on standby to assist residents under 18 years of age to ensure their rights are protected and upheld. The recently opened center under the Community Development Authority (CDA) is part of CDA's comprehensive strategy to make Dubai the most secure and ideal environment for children to live in. It is tasked with rehabilitating, providing counselling, visiting and assisting children in need.

Related safeguarding portfolio policies at TOS

- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Safer recruitment

All concerns/referrals for Child's safety and welfare during the school hours should be immediately reported to DCSL/DDCSL or any accessible Child Protection Team as mentioned above at The Oxford School, Dubai.

