Dunes International School
Plot no 19; Shabiya 9; Mussafah; Abu Dhabi; P.O Box 5121
Tel.: 0097125527527
School code: 90201 | Affiliation number: 6630051

مدرسة ديونز الدولية
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: ٠٠٩٧١٢٥٥٢٧٥٢٧
كود المدرسة : ٩٠٢٠١ | رقم الانتساب: ٦٦٣٠٠٥١

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Introduced:	September 2024
Next Review:	September 2026

INTRODUCTION

Dunes International School is committed to the highest standards of **safeguarding and child protection**. We recognize every child's right to grow, learn, and thrive in a **safe and supportive environment**, free from harm and maltreatment.

This policy is guided by:

- **Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 (Wadeema's Law)**
- **ADEK School Safeguarding Policy (2025, v1.2)**
- International best practices in safeguarding and student welfare

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Safeguarding Policy is to provide clear direction to children, staff and any visitors to School about expectations, procedures and practice in relation to all safeguarding matters. All adults working at the school are aware of their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of every pupil and there is a positive commitment to ensure the satisfactory development and growth of every child. This policy makes explicit the commitment to the development of good practice in order that all safeguarding issues may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child.

AIM:

This policy aims to:

- Setting **ADEK's safeguarding requirements** for schools.
- Defined **accountability** at all levels.
- Establishing clear **security and supervision procedures** (guards, CCTV, visitors, departure).
- Outlined **processes for managing breaches**.
- Ensured **safe recruitment, training, and supervision** of staff and volunteers.
- Promoting a culture where **all staff, students, and visitors understand safeguarding responsibilities**.

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Safeguarding Supervision

Duty of Care and In Loco Parentis

- All staff had a **legal and moral duty of care** toward students. Which includes supervision, protection, and promotion of student wellbeing.
- The Principal acts **in loco parentis**, meaning he assume parental responsibility for students during school hours and school activities.
- **Alignment with ADEK:** This follows ADEK's guideline that schools must ensure students' safety and welfare during all school-supervised activities.

Key Consideration: Staff is aware of their responsibilities; any negligence could be a breach of ADEK regulations.

2. School-Based Safeguarding Policy

2.1 Dunes International School (DIS) developed and implemented a **comprehensive Safeguarding Policy**, actively communicated to all members of the school community. The policy include the following minimum elements:

1. **Statement of Overall Safeguarding Processes**
   - DIS shall clearly outline its **safeguarding processes, procedures, and aspirations**, emphasizing student safety, wellbeing, and protection.
   - This will include procedures for reporting, investigating, and managing safeguarding concerns in line with ADEK requirements.
2. **School Safeguarding Practices**
   - All safeguarding practices are **aligned with ADEK Wellbeing Policies**, ensuring that all matters are handled **sensitively, professionally, and in the best interests of students**.
   - Staff received guidance on **appropriate student engagement, observation, and support** mechanisms.
3. **Security Policy**
   - DIS implemented a **security policy** that protected students from physical and digital threats.
   - This includes:
     - Access control and visitor management
     - Surveillance and CCTV monitoring
     - Cybersecurity measures aligned with the ADEK Digital Policy
4. **Monitoring and Measurement**
   - Mechanisms had established to **measure and monitor the delivery and effectiveness of safeguarding practices**, ensured students are protected from harm and supported in their **physical, emotional, and mental development**.

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5. Resources for Safeguarding

DIS identified and allocated **adequate resources**, including trained personnel, counseling services, and physical infrastructure, to **support all safeguarding provisions**

2.2 Appointment of a Safeguarding Committee / Lead

Dunes International School appointed a **Safeguarding Committee who are** responsible for overseeing the **school's overall safeguarding strategy**.

The responsibilities include:

1. **Annual Policy Review**
   o Monitored and reviewed the **effectiveness of the Safeguarding Policy** to ensure that it is **understood and practiced by the entire school community**.
2. **Implementation of Governing Board Policies**
   o Ensured that all safeguarding policies and procedures **approved by the school's Governing Board** are fully implemented and observed.
3. **Staff, Volunteer, and Visitor Awareness**
   o Collaborate with the Principal and ensured that all staff, volunteers, and invited visitors **are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities**.
4. **Parent Access and Communication**
   o Provided **parents with access to the school's Safeguarding Policy** and supported the documents available in **school website.**.
5. **Induction and Training Program**
   o Developed and implemented **induction and ongoing training programs** to ensure that staff and volunteers are informed about **safeguarding procedures and expectations**.
6. **Compliance with ADEK Student Protection Policy**
   o Ensured that all **processes comply with ADEK's School Student Protection Policy**.

3. Safeguarding Awareness – Dunes International School
3.1 Safeguarding Awareness Strategies

Dunes International School adopted proactive strategies to ensure the **safety, wellbeing, and protection of all students**, including the following key elements:

1. **Safe and Caring Environment**
   o DIS provided an environment where students **learned, and freely expressed their ideas, feelings, and opinions**.
   o The school had prioritized **student best interests** in line with the **DAA Child Protection Committee (2024) guided principles** and handled students which concerns maltreatment.

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2. **Zero-Tolerance Approach to Maltreatment**
   o The school **adhered to a zero-tolerance policy** regarding any form of student maltreatment.
   o All staff, visitors, and members of the school community are aware of and **able to follow ADEK School Student Protection Policy procedures** in case of concerns.

3. **Monitoring Vulnerable Students**
   o DIS will actively monitored students **known or suspected to be at risk**, including those with **additional learning needs or heightened vulnerability**, and ensured their protection.

4. **Staff Response to Safeguarding Incidents**
   o Staff are trained to **respond appropriately to safeguard incidents**, including:
     ▪ Listening to disclosures carefully and professionally
     ▪ Reassuring victims and witnesses that their concerns are taken seriously
     ▪ Reporting and documenting incidents according to school procedures

5. **Positive and Transparent Environment**
   o Students and staff feel part of a **supportive and transparent school culture**.
   o They **liaise freely with the Safeguarding Committee** whenever concern arised regarding a student, staff member, or visitor.

6. **Digital Safety Vigilance**
   o DIS ensured **student safety in online spaces**, in compliance with the **ADEK School Digital Policy**.
   o Staff monitored online engagement and provided guidance for safe technology use.

7. **Health and Wellbeing Considerations**
   o No school policy is **negatively impacted on student health or wellbeing**, such as limiting essential breaks (e.g., washroom access), in line with the **ADEK School Wellbeing Policy**.

8. **Accessible Support and Counseling**
   o Counseling and support services are:
     ▪ Accessible to all students
     ▪ Free from judgment
     ▪ Clearly communicated so students **know whom to approach for help**

9. **Parental Awareness and Legal Obligations**
   o DIS shall ensure **parents understand their legal obligation** to enroll their child in school (Federal Law No. 39 of 2022 – Compulsory Education).
   o Any suspicious incidents, such as **excessive absences or unexplained withdrawals**, shall be reported as potential maltreatment concerns to relevant authorities in line with the **ADEK School Student Protection Policy**.

4. Safeguarding and the Curriculum

4.1 Curriculum Safeguarding Measures

Dunes International School ensured that its applied curriculum actively incorporated **safeguarding measures** through the following strategies:

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1. **Self-Esteem and Self-Regulation**
   o The curriculum emphasized the development of **students' confidence, self-esteem, and ability to self-regulate**.
2. **Respect and Civility**
   o DIS fosters a culture of **respect, empathy, and civility** towards all people and living things.
3. **Communication and Consent**
   o Students are taught to **communicate effectively** and understand the importance of **giving and respecting consent**.
4. **Risk Awareness**
   o The curriculum develops students' understanding of **risks**, including **online behavior, social media use, and other potential hazards**.
5. **Self-Protection and Peer Pressure**
   o Students are guided in developing **strategies for self-protection** and appropriate responses to peer pressure.
6. **Responsibility for Safety**
   o Students learned to **take responsibility for their own safety** and contribute to the safety of others.

5. Safeguarding the School's Security

5.1 School Security System

DIS implements a comprehensive security system to safeguard **students, staff, assets, and data**:

1. **Policy Requirement**
   o The school is equipped with **integrated access controls and CCTV systems**, installed and maintained by **MCC-licensed vendors**.
2. **CCTV Systems**
   o Coverage includes entrances, exits, corridors, public areas, learning spaces, student pickup/drop-off zones, and other high-risk or blind-spot areas.
   o CCTV **does not monitor bathrooms or changing areas** to protect privacy.
   o Clear signage informs the school community of CCTV monitoring.
   o **Daily monitoring and regular maintenance** ensure operational functionality.
3. **Access to Footage**
   o Only authorized personnel (Principal, vendor-appointed CCTV specialists, ADEK inspectors) may access CCTV footage.
   o **Copying or distribution** of recordings is prohibited by law.
   o Footage is **retained for a minimum of 90 days** or per MCC requirements.

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5.2 Security Guards

Security guards at DIS:

- Are present at all gates and **cannot leave posts unsupervised**.
- Hold **valid licenses** per ADEK regulations.
- Maintained a **visitor log** with ID verification.
- Issued temporary and permanent **access passes**, verified identities and revoked passes.
- Maintained communication with school reception for **authorization of unknown visitors**.
- Followed **handover procedures** when changing security providers.

5.3 School Visiting Procedures

- All visitors signed **in, provide ID, and obtained a visitor pass**.
- Passes must be worn visibly at all times; classroom access is **by invitation only**.
- **Authorized personnel** (e.g., inspectors) will access records and school areas per federal law.
- Principals maintained a **record of personnel access** to reports and areas.

5.4 School Departure Procedures

- Only **parent-authorized persons** will pick up students.
- In emergencies, parents are notified by the school; staff record the conversation and verify the identity of the person collecting the child.
- Cycle 3 students of arrive/depart **unaccompanied are followed by written parental consent**.
- Parents on request **arrival/departure notifications are followed** for younger students.

5.5 Drop-Off and Pick-Up Timings

- Supervision is provided **45 minutes before school** and **90 minutes after dismissal**.
- Parents are responsible for student safety **outside these periods**.

5.6 School Arrival and Departure Notification for Unaccompanied Cycle 3 Students

Upon receipt of **written parental consent**, students in **Cycle 3** are permitted to arrive at and depart from school **unaccompanied**.

Procedure

1. **Parental Consent**
   o Parents/guardians had submitted with signed **Consent Form** authorizing their child in Cycle 3 to travel to and from school unaccompanied.
   o The form had been securely stored in the student's file and updated annually.

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2. **Recording Arrival and Departure**
   o The school had implemented a **digital attendance system** (school app) to automatically record the arrival and departure of unaccompanied students.
   o A **daily attendance register** are maintained and monitored by the class teacher and school administration.

3. **Notification to Parents**
   o Parents will receive **real-time notifications** (via SMS, email, or school app) confirming their child's arrival and departure times.
   o Notifications are included:
     ▪ Student's name
     ▪ Time of arrival/departure
     ▪ Confirmation of entry/exit through designated gates

4. **For Accompanied Students (Below Cycle 3)**
   o Parents of students in grades below Cycle 3 are submitting a request to receive **arrival and departure notifications** for their accompanied child.
   o The school had provided this service in the same manner as for Cycle 3 students.

5. **Safety and Accountability**
   o Security staff will ensure that all unaccompanied students use only the **designated entry and exit points**.
   o Any irregularity (late arrival, missed departure record, or early departure without prior approval) are trigger an **immediate alert** to the safeguarding officer and the parents.
   o If a student fails to arrive within a reasonable timeframe, the school shall promptly **contact parents** and follow emergency procedures.

6. **Review and Compliance**
   o The safeguarding team had conducted **quarterly reviews** of the arrival/departure system to ensure its effectiveness.
   o Procedures will be updated in line with the **ADEK Safeguarding Policy** and school safeguarding committee recommendations.

5.7 Special Events

Dunes International School ensured and **enhanced safeguarding measures** during all special events:

Special Events

- Events are limited to **immediate family**; guests must **pre-register and provide ID**.
- **Increased security** is implemented for larger events.
- All outside service providers are **pre-approved with verified licenses and work permits** by OSH officer

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1. **Guest Access**
   o Events are primarily open to immediate family (parents and siblings).
   o Parents are invited with additional guests must **pre-register them with the school**, providing a valid ID.
   o Guests if not pre-registered must register on arrival at the school gate with valid identification.
2. **Signage and Guidance**
   o Clear signage indicated **accessible areas for visitors** within the school premises.
3. **Increased Security**
   o Additional security personnel are deployed for events with **large numbers of attendees**.
4. **Service Providers**
   o All external service providers and their staff must be **pre-approved**, having undergone security checks.
   o Service providers must submit a **valid trade license and work permit** for each employee.

5.8 Safeguarding the Privacy of the School Community

Dunes International School ensured privacy protection in **both physical and digital spaces**:

1. **Reception and Public Areas**
   o Reception and common areas are kept free of **individually identifiable information**, including timetables, class lists, or student/teacher photographs.
2. **Digital Communication**
   o Personal information such as **emails and phone numbers of students, parents, or staff** is only shared with consent, or as authorized by law and ADEK policies.

5.9 Managing Security Breaches

DIS established robust systems to **prevent and respond to security breaches**, including unauthorized access to school grounds or sensitive information:

1. **Lockdown Procedures**
   o Schools had **lockdown procedures**, led by the Safeguarding Committee, with clearly defined reporting mechanisms.
2. **Staff Training**
   o All staff received **training on security breach protocols** to respond effectively.
3. **Safeguarding Committee Responsibilities**
   o The Committee included deputies, ensured **physical readiness and adhered to policy requirements**.
4. **Alert Systems**
   o Regularly maintained of **alarms, and public announcement systems** is conducted as per local regulations.

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5. **Digital Security**
   - o Critical data is **backed up and protected**, with a business continuity plan activated during incidents.
   - o All digital incidents are **recorded, documented, signed by the Principal, and stored for audit purposes**.
6. **Emergency Planning and Drills**
   - o Conducted **emergency planning and drills** aligned with the ADEK Health and Safety Policy.
7. **Regulatory Compliance**
   - o All security breaches are **reported to ADEK and relevant authorities** per local laws.

6. Training and Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

6.1 Staff Training Requirements

All DIS staff, governing board members, and volunteers receive safeguarding training at induction, including:

a. Identified Signs of Maltreatment

- Recognizing potential safeguarding issues and reporting concerns.

b. Vigilance for At-Risk Students

- Awareness of students with additional learning needs or heightened vulnerability.

c. Culture of Safety

- Understanding that seemingly minor behaviors (banter, practical jokes) must not compromise safety.

d. Record-Keeping

- Documenting incidents securely, maintaining confidentiality per ADEK Digital Policy.

e. Emergency Response

- Acting promptly in emergencies to prevent harm.

f. Information Sharing

- Sharing information only on a **need-to-know basis**; safeguarding concerns are not discussed with colleagues or parents outside authorized channels.

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g. **Staff Wellbeing**

- Support is available for staff facing wellbeing concerns, aligned with the ADEK Staff Wellbeing Policy.

h. **Security Awareness**

- Understanding school security systems and breach protocols.

Visitors are not required to undergo training but must **read and sign the school Safeguarding Policy**.

7. Whistleblowing

7.1 Mechanism and Protection

DIS implements a **confidential whistleblowing system**:

1. **Protection for Reporters**
   o Individuals raising concerns are **protected from harassment, reprisal, or stigmatization**.
2. **Protection for Accused**
   o Individuals against whom concerns are raised are protected from negative consequences **until investigations are complete**.

8. Inclusion

8.1 Inclusive Safeguarding Practices

The Safeguarding Committee at DIS works with the Wellbeing Committee, Head of Inclusion, counselors, social workers, and other stakeholders to:

- Promote **safeguarding and security** for all students.
- Adapt policies and practices for **students with additional learning needs**, respecting their **individual communication, behavior styles, and engagement levels**.

9. Compliance

9.1 Policy Implemented

- Effective from **Academic Year 2024/25**
- Full compliance expected by 1 July 2025.

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9.2 Accountability

- Non-compliance is subject to **legal accountability** under ADEK regulations and relevant UAE laws, including Federal Decree Law No. 31 of 2021 and other applicable legislation.
- ADEK reserves the right to **intervene** in cases of policy violations.

Amendments:

Principal Mr. Paramjit Ahluwalia	