



POLICY ON CHILD ABUSE (For Parents)

Introduced: December 2015	Revised: March 2023
Previous review : September, 2022	Next Review : March 2025
Implemented by: Principal	

PURPOSE:

Schools under the banner of ADEK will provide safe and welcoming environment where students will be looked after carefully and promote the welfare. Dunes School community is alert to the signs of abuse or/neglect and follow ADEK procedures to ensure that students receive effective support, protection and justice.

AIM:

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

- Protect students while in the school's care from all acts and omissions constituting physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect, and bullying.
- Identify and support those students who may have suffered such abuse or neglect.
- Emphasize that entire Dunes School community (students, staff and parents) are mandated reporters of cases of abuse and/or suspected abuse inside and outside the school.
- Define the duties and responsibilities of school principals and school staff for responding to suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect.

CHILD ABUSE:

Child abuse consists of any act of commission or omission that endangers or impairs a child's physical or emotional health and development. Child abuse includes any damage done to a child which cannot be reasonably explained and which is often represented by an injury or series of injuries appearing to be non-accidental in nature.

Categories of possible abuse

There are four main categories of potential abuse of which all members of staff should be aware. These are:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Emotional abuse



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School code: 90201 | Affiliation number: 6630051



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Signs of **physical abuse** are the actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child including deliberate poisoning, suffocation and Munchausen's syndrome by proxy. Signs of **physical abuse** may include:

- unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- refusal to discuss injuries
- untreated injuries
- admission of punishment which appears excessive
- bald patches
- withdrawal from physical contact
- fear of returning home
- fear of medical help
- Self-destructive tendencies
- aggression towards others
- running away

Sexual abuse is the actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. Possible signs of **sexual abuse** may include:

- sudden changes in behaviour or school performance
- displays of affection in a sexual way inappropriate to age
- tendency to cling or need constant reassurance
- tendency to cry easily
- regression to younger behaviour, such as thumb-sucking, playing with discarded toys or acting like a baby
- complaints of genital itching or pain
- distrust of a familiar adult, or anxiety about being left with a relative, baby-sitter or lodger
- unexplained gifts or money
- depression and withdrawal

Neglect is the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger – resulting in significant impairment of the child's health or development including non-organic failure to thrive. Signs of **neglect** may include:

- constant hunger
- poor personal hygiene
- constant tiredness
- poor state of clothing
- emaciation
- frequent lateness or non-attendance



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- untreated medical problems
- destructive tendencies
- low self esteem
- neurotic behaviour
- no social relationships
- running away
- compulsive stealing or scavenging

Emotional abuse can be thought of as the actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment. This category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse. Signs of **emotional abuse** will include:

- physical, mental and emotional development lags
- admission of punishment which appears excessive
- over-reaction to mistakes
- continual self-depreciation
- sudden speech disorders
- fear of new situations
- inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- neurotic behaviour (for example, rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking)
- Self-mutilation
- fear of parents being contacted
- extremes of passivity or aggression
- drug/solvent abuse
- running away
- compulsive stealing or scavenging

It is important to note that these signs are not proof but can give rise to suspicion and these suspicions must be reported and logged.

PROCEDURE:

- If there is a case of child abuse or/neglect, the matter is referred to the Principal/ School counsellor/ Child Protection Officer immediately either by the student, parent, teacher, support staff or an outsider.
- Whoever receives the report will immediately contact the Principal/ School counsellor personally. If it is a holiday the Principal will be informed on phone.
- The Principal constitutes a committee of Senior Managers which includes the Principal, Vice-Principal, and Supervisor of the Section, Administrative Officer and Counsellor.
- The constitution of the Committee depends on the gender of the student/class of the student.
- The Committee meets and first records details of the case from the first report received. Student will be asked



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to give details and then classmates/parent will be interviewed to get the further details of the incidents (If available)

- Depending on the severity of the case report is sent from the Principal to the **Concern Authority**.
- Parents are met by the committee and details noted (it is imperative that the staff/parents are kept calm and assured that action will be taken).
- If the parent threatens to go to the Press/Police/Ministry, another mail is sent to the Director and a copy is marked to the CEO who may have to deal with the press' queries.
- The child is questioned in front of the parents and his/her version of the incident is noted.
- The alleged molester is then questioned. All findings are recorded.
- The Committee then comes to their conclusion and details of the same are mailed to the Director for further action and advice.
- Depending on the severity of the situation the following could be suggested:
 - Written apology sought
 - Suspension as per ministry guidelines
 - Termination as per rules
 - Case referred to police
- All copies of relevant correspondence are placed in the child's file.

The Role of the Parent

Parents have a specific responsibility to:

- Ensure all parents are responsible for safeguarding issues.
- Ensure parents understand the responsibility put on school staff with regard to Safeguarding
- Attend annual Safeguarding training for parents
- Co-ordinate action where child abuse is suspected
- Liaise and discuss issues with school.
- Attend all meetings as required.

Dealing with a Disclosure:

There are a number of things parent should do to support a child who chooses to make a disclosure:

- Stay calm
- Listen carefully to what the child is saying, noting the main points
- Talk normally without applying any pressure on the child and do not put words into the child's mouth
- Reassure the child that what has happened is not their fault and that they have done the right thing by telling you
- Tell the child who you have to tell and explain why (Designated Person in school or at home)
- Allegations of child abuse should be given the highest priority and referred immediately to the Designated Person.



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- The home ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment which gives all children a sense of being valued and respected.
- Keep the case confidential and report to school immediately

Visitors to the school:

- Parents should take prior appointment before visiting the school and ensure to be at reception area only. Under any circumstances parents are not left alone with students.
- All parents/outsider who volunteer in school should attend an induction session.
- Visitors, who have no legitimate reason to be on site when students are present, must be asked to leave.
- A person should not be visiting regularly when students are present (other than to drop off or collect) as this could give them access to other students.


Parent Training:

Training will take place every year at the start of the academic year (Orientation). It will be facilitated by the School Councilor. The purpose behind staff training is to ensure that everyone in the school is aware of procedures to be followed and the signs of possible child abuse. All members of staff will develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse. All members of staff will know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse. Policy on child abuse will be made available to parents through school website.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review:

The Principal together with the Senior Management Team will monitor and evaluate this policy by:

- reviewing practice against the procedures outlined
- reviewing this policy in line with current guidance and research
- listening to children, staff and families and considering their views and comments

Principal's Approval	
Revised Date:	March 2023

