

# American Academy for Girls



## Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

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### AAM Child Protection Policy:

#### Purpose:

Al Mizhar American Academy (AAM) takes child welfare seriously and has implemented an effective whole- school child protection policy that provides clear direction to staff and others about expected behavior when dealing with child protection issues.

An effective policy clearly defines the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures to ensure that child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child.

This policy applies to all students, AAM staff, AAM and Taaleem employees, volunteers and visitors to the school. AAM recognizes it is an agent of referral and not of investigation, and all incidents need to be submitted in a timely manner to KHDA/ Dubai Governing Authorities.

#### Context:

We recognize that children have a right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively unless they do so. Parents, caregivers and other people can harm children either by direct acts or failure to provide proper care or both. Children may suffer neglect, emotional, physical or sexual abuse or a combination of such types of abuse. All children have a right to be protected from abuse. While the school will work openly with parents as far as possible, the school reserves the right to contact the Police, without notifying parents if this is in the child's best interest.

#### Aims:

The aims of the policy are:

1. Prevention through the creation of a positive school atmosphere and positive teacher student relationships, and pastoral support offered to all students.
2. Protection by following policy procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.
3. Support to students who may have been abused.

#### School Policy:

At AAM we recognize that when our students have a high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult, it helps to prevent abuse.

Our school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where students feel safe and secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.

- Ensure that students know that there are adults within the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty. (AAM Child Protection Team)
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for awareness on child protection issues such as abuse and anti-bullying, which provides students with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse.
- Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships between staff, students, parents and the community.

**Key contacts within the school:**

**AAM CHILD PROTECTION OFFICERS**

Casey Cosgray - Principal [ccosgray@americanacademy.ae](mailto:ccosgray@americanacademy.ae)

Christina Riedy- Head of Support Services [criedy@americanacademy.ae](mailto:criedy@americanacademy.ae)

Risti Meyer- Pastoral Counselor [rmeyer@americanacademy.ae](mailto:rmeyer@americanacademy.ae)

**NOMINATED PERSON FROM TAALEM CENTRAL OFFICER**

Mala Talwar [mtalwar@taaleem.ae](mailto:mtalwar@taaleem.ae)

**Key contacts within the local area:**

Ministry of Interior Confidential Child Protection Hotline and Website:

Contact by	With in State	Outside State
Phone Number :	+971 2 333 3999	+971 2 333 3999
Fax :	+971 2 333 3998	+971 2 333 3998
SMS :	4444	within the country only 4444
Email :	<a href="mailto:jmcauley@Moi-CPC.gov.ae">jmcauley@Moi-CPC.gov.ae</a>	<a href="mailto:Childprotection@Moi-CPC.gov.ae">Childprotection@Moi-CPC.gov.ae</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.Moi-CPC.gov.ae">www.Moi-CPC.gov.ae</a>	<a href="http://www.safechild.ae">www.safechild.ae</a>

Dubai Police Al Ameen Confidential Child Protection Hotline and Website:

Contact by	With in State	Outside State
Toll Free :	800 4888	+ 971 800 4888
Fax :	800 4888	+971 800 4888
SMS :	4444	with in the country only 4444
Email :	<a href="mailto:alameen@alameen.ae">alameen@alameen.ae</a>	<a href="mailto:alameen@alameen.ae">alameen@alameen.ae</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.alameen.ae">www.alameen.ae</a>	<a href="http://www.alameen.ae">www.alameen.ae</a>

### Child protection framework as per UAE Law (KHDA AND ADEC)

Child protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate school procedures and the monitoring of good practices are the responsibilities of the Person for Child Protection and Safeguarding.

- In Dubai and the United Arab Emirates the infrastructure of Educational Safeguarding and/or Social Care Services is under development and growth. Following cases which caused concern in the Emirati community, Sheikh Mohammed, the Ruler of Dubai, supported the drafting of a Federal law on child protection “to ensure a secure and stable future for children in the U.A.E.”
- In April 2012, it was reported that Dubai had “embraced a new policy to protect children against all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect and offer support and care for those in need.” The policy “aims to provide protection to Emirati and expatriate children under the age 18 who live permanently or temporarily in Dubai.” The Dubai Strategic Plan 2015 calls for the provision of “proper social services to meet the requirements of the local community.”
- In November 2012, the UAE Cabinet approved a draft of “Wadeema’s Law” (Federal Law #3) to “protect children in the UAE. The law includes creating special units that intervene when children are at risk and stresses that all children have rights regardless of religion and nationality.”
- December 2015 - The Childs Rights Law (previously Wadeema’s Law) was passed by the Federal National Council. It’s anticipated that this will be signed and in effect March 2016.

### Roles and Responsibilities:

All teachers and staff members at AAM who are working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them. AAM’s Child Protection Team will meet throughout the school year to review the policy, provide professional development to staff, and create and implement curriculum to promote awareness within the student body. They are also the key contact for any child protection issues that arise.

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them. There are, however, key people within the school who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. The names of those carrying out these responsibilities for the current year are listed on the cover sheet of this document.

It is the role of the Child Protection Officers (CPO’s) to ensure that all of the child protection procedures are followed within the school, and to make appropriate, timely referrals if practicable. If for any reason the Child Protection Officers (see cover sheet) are unavailable, the Deputy Child Protection Officer will act in their absence (see cover sheet). Additionally, it is the role of the Child Protection Officers to ensure all staff employed, including temporary staff and volunteers within the school, are aware of the school’s internal procedures, to advise staff and to offer support to those requiring assistance.

Taaleem Central Office and the school leadership team are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes. As part of the school’s recruitment and vetting processes, enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS), where relevant, and other statutory

lists and local intelligence checks will be sought on all staff that have substantial and unsupervised access to children. The role of the Taaleem Central Office for Child Protection is to ensure that the school has an effective policy, that the Guidelines are complied with and to support the school in this aspect.

The Child Protection Officers and the Principal provide an annual report for Taaleem Central Office detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by all staff and governors and other relevant issues.

Whole Staff Responsibilities - AAM recognizes that because of their day to day contact with children, the school staff is well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are heard.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried about any problems.
- Include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognize and stay safe from abuse.
- Follow the procedures set out by the Ministry of Education and take account of guidance issued by the Ministry of Interior.
- Treat all disclosures with the strictest confidence.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and its staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in an annual school report and that parents are offered a copy of this policy on request.
- Notify the Ministry of Interior Child Protection Centre of any cases of alleged or suspected 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.
- Notify the school counselor if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days.

#### Procedures:

All staff members are kept informed about child protection responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings and awareness training. To be included and not limited to:

- Teaching Staff/ Supply Teachers
- Cleaners/ Nannies
- Security Guards
- Drivers
- Administration
- Volunteers and guests

Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse, an allegation or suspects that abuse may have occurred must report it immediately to the Child Protection Officers (Head of Elementary and Head of Secondary) or in their absence, the Deputy Child Protection Officer (School Principal). In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Counselor.

The Child Protection Officers or the Deputy will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations, in accordance with the procedures outlined within this policy, to the proper authorities.

The School Principal will inform the parents of the students concerned, KHDA, and Taaleem Board within 24 hours of receiving complaint.

Any staff member accused of abuse will be immediately suspended pending outcome of an investigation.

The School Principal and Child Protection Team will carry out an internal investigation obtaining written statements from the adults involved and submit written report to KHDA/governing entity within 24 hours of incident.

Any staff member found guilty of negligence or abuse will immediately be dismissed.

In the case of external child abuse, incidents must be reported immediately to the Child Protection Team and the School Principal. The school will always undertake to refer the incident concerning the child to the parents unless to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On these occasions advice will be taken.

#### **Training and Support:**

The School Principal and all other staff who work with children will undertake appropriate child protection awareness training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, that is kept up to date by refresher training at the beginning of each school year. All new staff hired in the middle of the school year will be required to take mandatory training before any contact with students can begin by reviewing the teacher licensing module.

The school will ensure that the Child Protection Officers also undertake training and refresher training at yearly intervals to keep knowledge and skills up to date. Temporary staff and volunteers who work with children in the school will be made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities through HR.

Support will be available for staff from members of the school's leadership team where there are concerns about queries about child protection. All staff should have access to advice and guidance on the boundaries of appropriate behavior and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are referred to in the Staff Handbook.

#### **Safe working practices and professionalism:**

Staff Concerns - It is essential that all staff working in school are aware of how to pass on any concerns about other members of staff or volunteers and be conscious of how they should

conduct themselves to minimize the risk of finding themselves as the subject of any child protection processes:

In dealing with allegations or concerns against an adult in the school all staff, governors and volunteers should:

- Report any concerns about the conduct of any member of staff or volunteers to the Child Protection Officers as soon as possible or within 24 hours of incident.
- If an allegation is made against the School Principal, the concerns need to be raised with Taaleem as soon as possible or within 24 hours.

Professionalism – All Staff members should:

- Work in an open and transparent way, avoiding any actions that would lead a reasonable person to question their motivation and/or intentions.
- Dress appropriately for your role.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with children. If physical contact is made:
- ensure you are aware of and understand the rules concerning physical restraint
- where it is essential for educational or safety reasons, gain student's permission for that contact whenever possible to remove a pupil from a dangerous situation or an object from a pupil to prevent either harm to themselves or others, then this should be recorded on the correct form and reported to the Heads of School it should not be secretive, even if accidental contact was made, it should be reported.
- understand their position of power and influence over children and not misuse it in any way

This includes but is not limited to:

- accepting regular gifts from children
- Giving personal gifts to children
- Recognize their influence and not engage in activities out of school that might compromise their position within school.
- Do not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils outside of school. This includes;
- Communication with pupils in inappropriate ways, including personal e-mails and mobile telephones.
- Passing your home address, phone number, e-mail address or other personal details to pupils/children.
- the transportation of pupils in your own vehicle without prior management approval and written permission from her/his parent
- Contact through social networking sites.
- Avoid volunteering to house children overnight.
- Only use e-mail contact with pupils via the school email.
- Be careful about recording images of children and do this only when it is an approved educational activity. This can only be done when parents have given their expressed written permission.
- Ensure that areas of the curriculum that may involve sexually explicit information are taught in accordance with school policies.



- Allow children to change clothes with levels of respect and privacy appropriate to their age, gender, culture and circumstances.
- Avoid working in one-to-one situations or conferring special attention on one child unless this is part of an agreed school plan or policy.
- Only arrange to meet with pupils in closed rooms when senior staff have been made aware of this in advance and given their approval.
- Not access inappropriate material via the internet.
- Not allow boundaries to become blurred and unsafe in more informal settings such as trips out, out of school activities etc.
- Never use a physical punishment of any kind.
- Not attribute touch to their teaching style.

### **Confidentiality:**

This is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a student nor should they agree with a student to keep a secret, where there is a child protection concern this must be reported to the School Principal and Child Protection Officers, the respective Head of School and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.

Staff will be informed of relevant information with respect to individual cases regarding child protection on a “need to know basis” only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be kept confidential to themselves.

### **Records and monitoring:**

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. AAM is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies. Please see attached forms.

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event in context, and giving the date, time and location. All records will be handwritten, dated and signed and will include the action taken.

These file notes are kept in a confidential file, located in the Principal’s office, which is separate to other files, and stored in a secure place by the Child Protection Officers. In the same way notes must be kept of any student who is being monitored for child protection reasons. This file will be known as the Child Protection Register and will be kept up to date and monitored by the Child Protection Officers.

### **Child protection team conferences:**

When a child is placed on the Child Protection Register and is, therefore, a child with a plan, it is the Child Protection Officers’ responsibility to ensure that the child is monitored regarding their school attendance, welfare and presentation.

The Child Protection team will meet regularly to update the status of students on the register, discuss policy updates, and plan professional development and curriculum reviews.

#### Supporting students at risk:

AAM recognizes that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth or view the world as a positive place. This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, while at school their behavior may still be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

AAM will endeavor to support students through:

- The curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- The school mission statement which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all students and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- The implementation of the school's Behavior Management Policy
- A consistent approach agreed by all staff which will endeavor to ensure the student knows that some behavior is unacceptable but s/he is valued.
- Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the students and their families.
- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's best interest to do so.
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.
- Recognition that statistically children with behavioral difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse so staff who work in any capacity with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and / or emotional and behavioral problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.
- Recognition that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.
- Only authorized agencies may investigate child abuse allegations (Currently, in Dubai this would mean the Police only). While it is permissible to ask the child(ren) simple, non-leading questions to ascertain the facts of the allegation, formal interviews and the taking of statements is not.

#### Staff responsibility:

- It is essential that the high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted with regard to alleged child abuse by parents are similarly displayed when members of staff are accused of abuse.
- All staff are expected to fully comply, at all times, with the School's Professional Code of Conduct.
- All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they should speak to a member of the School's Leadership Team.
- If a member of staff has concerns about the conduct of a member of the School's Leadership Team (other than the School Principal) they should contact the School Principal.

- If a member of staff has concerns about the conduct of the School Principal they should contact the school governing body (TAALEEM) directly.

#### Use of the school premises by other organizations:

Where another body provides services or activities separately for using the school premises, Taaleem will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection.

#### Whistleblowing:

We recognize that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fails to do so.

- All staff are expected to fully comply, at all times, with the School's Professional Code of Conduct.
- All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary they should speak to the CPO or a member of the School's Leadership Team.
- If a member of staff has concerns about the conduct of a member of the School's Leadership Team (other than the Principal) they should contact the Principal. If a member of staff has concerns about the conduct of the Principal they should contact Taaleem Central Office.

#### Safe and Supportive Environment Statement:

We recognize that some conversations with parents and carers regarding student progress and attainment may be challenging. Attached to every invitation and reviewed during meetings, will be the following statement:

At AAM, we want to offer a supportive, yet challenging environment for our students to reach their potential. Student well-being is always our first priority. Because of our desire to help your child reach her potential, at times, this may result in having difficult conversations with families about student progress and achievement.

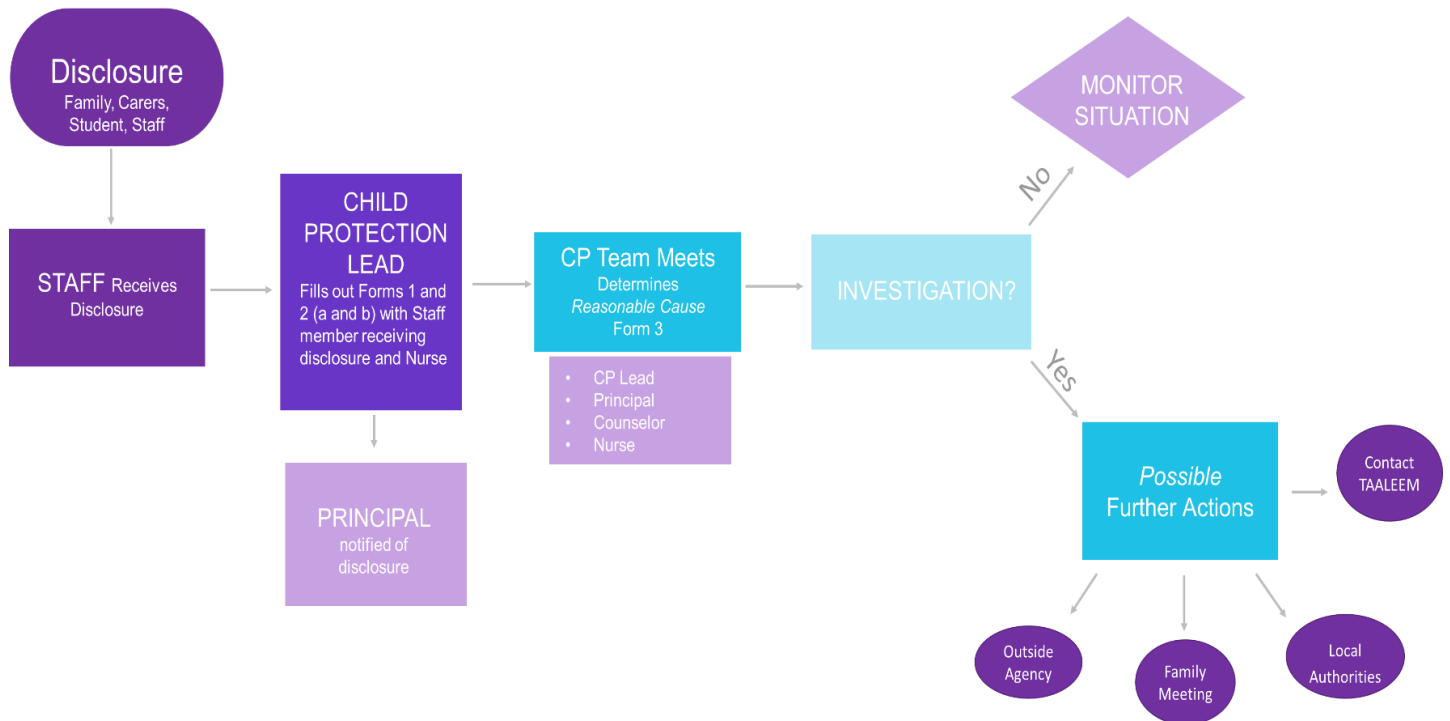
Developing a plan and a supportive partnership is imperative for the success of the student and to alleviate any frustrations, disappointment, or concerns on how the student and family can move forward in a positive way.

Finally, as a gentle reminder, UAE Federal Law #3 (Wadeema's Law) protects all children from emotional, verbal, or physical abuse in all settings. If you or your family needs additional support, please feel free to reach out to the Pastoral Counselor Risti Meyer at [rmeyer@americanacademy.ae](mailto:rmeyer@americanacademy.ae) or the Head of Support Services Christina Riedy at [criedy@americanacademy.ae](mailto:criedy@americanacademy.ae).

**REPORTING FLOW CHART:**

# Child Protection Flowchart

Actions to be taken after receiving a report of (suspected) child abuse or neglect.



**FORM 1****Child protection / duty of care report****Must be handwritten****General information:**

Name of School:
Name of person completing the form:
Position:

**Details of reported issue:**

Date of reported issue:
Time of reported issue:

<b>Who is the child – full name</b>
<b>Where were you in school when they disclosed to you</b>
<b>Was anyone else with you</b>
<b>What did they say – their words and descriptions</b>
<b>What did you do or say</b>
<b>Did they show you an injury</b>
<b>Where is it, colour, size what does it look like</b>
<b>What else do you know about the child</b>

***Any other relevant notes:***

**To be completed by CP lead:**

**Follow up and next steps:**

### Notification to authorities

Please advise which authorities have been notified:

- Child Protection Officer \_\_\_\_\_
- Taaleem Central Office \_\_\_\_\_
- KHDA
- Immigration
- Dubai Women's and Children's Center
- Police
- Other *(please specify)*

Signed:

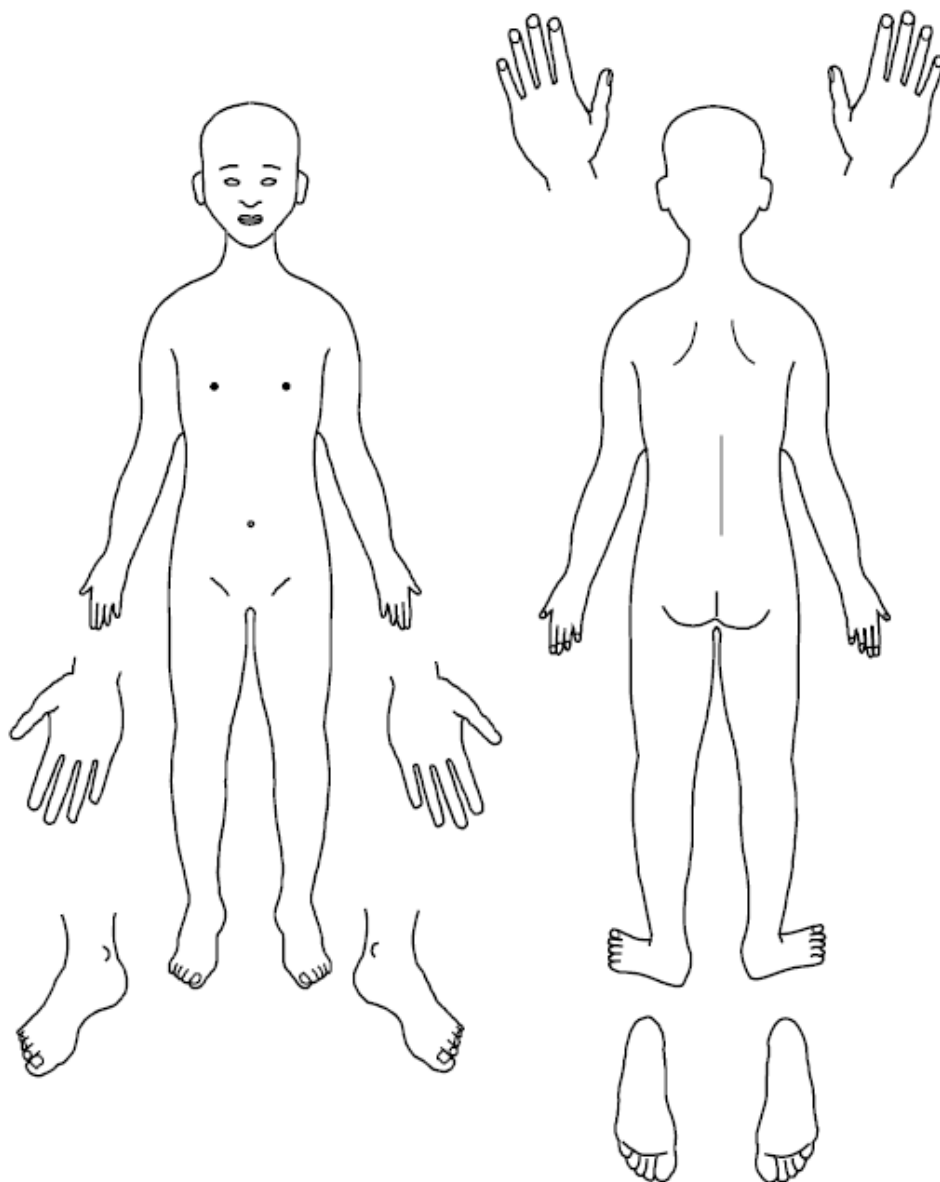
Date:

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*Note: please provide all supporting documentation including minutes of meetings with parent's students and staff.*

**FORM 2a**

**Skin Map Form**



Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of recording: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of completer: \_\_\_\_\_

**FORM 2b**

**Skin Map Form Cont.**



Additional information:



**FORM 3****Case Tracking Form**

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Reporting: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Time	Details of Concern	Action Taken	Outcome of Action	Further Action Required	Date of Review	Outcome of Review

## **FORM 4**

### **What is Child Abuse?**

#### **What is abuse and neglect?**

Abuse and neglect are forms 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 a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

#### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse 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 or caregiver fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

#### **Indicators of physical Abuse / Factors that should increase concern**

- Multiple bruising or bruises and scratches (especially on the head and face).
- Clusters of bruises – e.g., fingertip bruising (caused by being grasped).
- Bruises around the neck and behind the ears – the most common abusive injuries are to the head.
- Bruises on the back, chest, buttocks, or on the inside of the thighs.
- Marks indicating injury by an instrument – e.g., linear bruising (stick), parallel bruising (belt), marks of a buckle
- Bite marks
- Deliberate burning may also be indicated by the pattern of an instrument or object – e.g., electric fire, cooker, and cigarette.
- Scalds with upward splash marks or *tide marks*
- Untreated injuries
- Recurrent injuries or burns
- Bald patches
- the explanation given does not match the injury
- the explanation uses words or phrases that do not match the vocabulary of the child (adults words)
- no explanation is forthcoming
- the child (or the parent/caregiver) is secretive or evasive
- the injury is accompanied by allegations of abuse or assault

#### **You should be concerned if the child or young person:**

- is reluctant to have parents/caregivers contacted
- runs away or shows fear of going home
- is aggressive towards themselves or others
- flinches when approached or touched

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse 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 feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. 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 participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Developmental issues**

- Delays in physical, mental and emotional development
- Poor school performance
- Speech disorders, particularly sudden disorders or changes.

### **Behavior**

- Acceptance of punishment which appears excessive
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Continual self-deprecation (I'm stupid, ugly, worthless etc.)
- Neurotic behavior (such as rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking)
- Self-mutilation
- Suicide attempts
- Drug/solvent abuse
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing, scavenging
- Acting out
- Poor trust in significant adults
- Regressive behavior – e.g., wetting
- Eating disorders
- Destructive tendencies
- Neurotic behavior
- Arriving early at school, leaving late

### **Social issues**

- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Withdrawal from social interaction
- Over-compliant behavior
- Insecure, clinging behavior
- Poor social relationships

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g., rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **Behavioral observations**

- Sexual knowledge inappropriate for age
- Sexualized behavior or affection inappropriate for age
- Sexually provocative behavior/promiscuity
- Hinting at sexual activity
- Inexplicable decline in school performance
- Depression or other sudden apparent changes in personality as becoming insecure or clinging
- Lack of concentration, restlessness, aimlessness
- Socially isolated or withdrawn
- Overly-compliant behavior
- Acting out, aggressive behavior
- Poor trust or fear concerning significant adults
- Regressive behavior, Onset of wetting, by day or night; nightmares
- Onset of insecure, clinging behavior
- Arriving early at school, leaving late, running away from home
- Suicide attempts, self-mutilation, self-disgust
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Eating disorders or sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Regressing to younger behavior patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Become worried about clothing being removed
- Trying to be “ultra-good” or perfect; overreacting to criticism

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or caregiver failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Indicators of neglect**

The following is a summary of some of the indicators that may suggest a child is being abused or is at risk of harm. It is important to recognize that indicators alone cannot confirm whether a child is being abused. Each child should be seen in the context of their family and wider community and a proper assessment carried out by appropriate persons. What is important to keep in mind is that if you feel unsure or concerned, do something about it. Don't keep it to yourself.

#### **Physical indicators of neglect**

- Constant hunger and stealing food
- Poor personal hygiene - unkempt, dirty or smelly
- Underweight
- Dress unsuitable for weather
- Poor state of clothing
- Illness or injury untreated
- Looking sad, false smiles

#### **Behavioral indicators of neglect**

- Frequent absence from school or lateness
- Constant tiredness
- Missing medical appointments
- Isolated among peers
- Frequently unsupervised
- Stealing or scavenging, especially food
- Destructive tendencies