

# مدرسة الوحدة العربية

## ARAB UNITY SCHOOL



### Child Protection Policy



P.O. BOX 10563, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Email: [auschool@emirates.net.ae](mailto:auschool@emirates.net.ae) Tel:

00971 4 2886226/7, Fax: 00971 4 2886321

Website: [www.arabunityschool.com](http://www.arabunityschool.com)

Policy No.	AUS School Policy_Academics_04
Date reviewed	September 2022
Next update	September 2023
Reviewed by	Mr. Leonard Murphy

## VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is that Arab Unity School aims to provide a stimulating, inclusive learning environment that challenges our students into discover their potential and develop into respectful, reliable, resilient and purposeful leaders of the global community.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to provide an affordable education with a solid foundation of knowledge, technology and life skills enabling our students to be socially conscious and responsible individuals.

## CORE VALUES

<p><b>Character Building</b></p> <p>Morally accountable Diligent Trustworthy Self-regulator Caring</p>	<p><b>Progressive Thinking</b></p> <p>Technologically competent Collaborative Adaptable Enquiring Creative</p>
<p><b>Global Commitment</b></p> <p>Environmentally conscious Persevering Tolerant Effective Participant</p>	<p><b>Leadership Skills</b></p> <p>Inspiring Motivating Decisive Consistent Team player Reflective Learner</p>

## Safeguarding at AUS

AUS, Dubai believes in being proactive in creating a safe and nurturing environment for all its children. Hence, safeguarding procedures are in place and must be always followed by all AUS staff.

Staff at AUS 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 child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring may be handled in the best possible manner.

We seek always to work in ways that are culturally sensitive and that respect the diverse nature of the children we work with.

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

### Key personnel

**Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO): DHANYA AUGUSTUS**

Email: [dhanya.augustus@arabunityschool.ae](mailto:dhanya.augustus@arabunityschool.ae)

Telephone: 055-5691096

**The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer (DDSO): POOJA HARIKUMAR**

Email: [pooja.harikumar@auschool.ae](mailto:pooja.harikumar@auschool.ae)

Telephone:

**The Health & Safety officer to lead: MR. YAMEN SHAABAN**

Email: [yamen.s@arabunityschool.ae](mailto:yamen.s@arabunityschool.ae)

Telephone:

**Other staff/ senior leaders committee includes:**

MR. LEONARD MURPHY

MS. SUSAN VARGHESE

MS. ELIZABETH DE BRUYN

MS. SADIA ARIF

MR. ROCCO DE BRUYN

MRS. TASNEEM HUSSAIN

MR. ROBERT TURNER

MRS. LUANNE CASH

## Policy statement and principles

This policy represents the school's integrated safeguarding portfolio. *Safeguarding lead arrangements, Health & Safety **Committee list, Staff Code of Conduct, Behavior management policy, 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 AUS 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; and
- To assure 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 AUS

- 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

## Federal Law no. 3 (2016) - Wadeema's Law

- A new law to protect children from abuse and neglect, and support their right to safety, health care and education was introduced.
- For the first time, anyone in contact with a child – can be held accountable for causing harm, and is legally obliged to report cases of suspected abuse.
- If a child's life is in danger The GOVERNMENT now has the authority to go and remove the child to "safety".
- Anyone who breaks the law faces a fine of up to Dh50,000, and up to 10 years in prison for physical/sexual abuse or criminal negligence of children.

## Principles:

- A conducive and well-equipped learning environment to be provided to ensure the safety of every child on the 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 staff meet their safeguarding and child protection responsibilities
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding and child protection to the AUS school community and external partners

## The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO):

- Takes responsibility for leading safeguarding and child protection in the school
- 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 sign to indicate that they have read and understood the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Staff 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.
- Conducts monthly Safeguarding committee meetings.

- Keeps a record of staff attendance at health, safety and child protection induction training

### **The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer (DDSO)**

In the absence of the DSO, DDSO carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSO, the deputy will assume all of 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 towards pupils which includes:

- 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 code of conduct for example bullying, behaviour, physical contact, sexual exploitation, extremism, 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 all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DSO 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 of our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- Students of Determination
- 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

Support for students of determination will 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 Early Years to understand and manage risk through our Moral Social Cultural lessons and other integrated 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 a child protection issue**

We at AUS 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 helplines, counselling, 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 a suspension, the school will provide support and a named contact for the member of staff.

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

All visitors are given a Visitor's ID card, and school staff members are given ID cards with QR links to their profiles.

### **Safer recruitment**

Our Safer Recruitment procedures include:

- Complete an application form that 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 a Police clearance certificate is mandatory.
- If offered employment, provide evidence of their right to work in the UAE.
- All health record data including vaccination proof and other illness details.
- 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



## Whistle Blowing

Staff should be aware that children may feel unable to express concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so; all staff should therefore feel free to voice concerns about the attitude and actions of their colleagues directly to the Safeguarding committee.

## 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 on a daily basis to access the internet and share content and images via secured social networking sites.

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** 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 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 that 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 behavioural 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 sexualised behaviour
- 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 of 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 The Child Protection & Safeguarding Procedures**

### **Procedures**

Students are always welcome to speak directly to their class teachers or any of the Safeguarding team members if they suspect harm to themselves or their peers.

Class teachers have the primary pastoral care responsibility for all the students in their class. All incidents are formally referred to through a General Incident Form that is specific to each section of the school and available to students, staff and parents in the ‘Forms’ section of Edunation.

An initial meeting is conducted by the class teachers and year leaders/deputies to collect the details of the incident. Depending on the nature of the incident the deputies/year leaders fill in the Safeguarding form notifying the DSO/DDS0 and other Safeguarding committee members.

Both students and parents are given access to the General Incident form through the Edunation portal.

Regular Counselling sessions may be conducted if deemed required by the Counsellor 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 the injury are discussed with the parent(s) to cross-check the facts shared by the child.

- a. Physical injuries include unexplained bruising or marks
- b. Complaints of pain with no visual evidence of injury
- c. Comments of a child that are cause for concern
- d. Deterioration in a child’s general well-being
- e. Sudden behaviour change – either withdrawn/aggressive

Child Protection records are kept securely and separately from the Child’s school file. All cases pertaining to child protection are reported directly to the DSO/DDS0 through a link with the

General Incident Form.

DSO /DDS0 will work together with the student, teacher(s), parent(s) and counsellors required,

facilitating support for the child.

School may be the only positive environment for some of the children struggling with abuse. Hence, while their behaviour may be defiant and challenging, the school will try its best to provide for the healthy personal and social development of such children as long as other children can also be kept safe.

Students 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 incidences of bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based bullying, should be reported and will be managed through the sanctions stated in our school's Behaviour Management Policy. The subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in Value Education and Moral Social and Cultural lessons.

## **Notifying parents**

Notifying parents must be handled sensitively and the DSO will make contact with the parent in the event of a 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 DSO/ DDSO 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 DSO, the deputy DDSO, School Principal 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 DSO and/or Headteacher 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 Dubai Foundation for Women and Children (DFWAC)

UAE's first licensed non-profit shelter for women and children who are victims of domestic violence, child abuse and human trafficking. It was established in July 2007 by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to offer victims immediate protection and support services in accordance with international human rights obligations. DFWAC aims to protect physically, sexually and emotionally abused women and children, prevent ongoing abuse and the escalation of violence and promote social awareness through education and outreach.

### **DFWAC provides:**

- A safe shelter
- Case management
- Medical care
- Psychological support
- Counselling
- Legal, consular and immigration assistance
- Helpline 800 111 or email [help@dfwac.ae](mailto:help@dfwac.ae)
- Website – [www.dfwac.ae](http://www.dfwac.ae)

**Our Governor for Inclusion, Child protection and safeguarding at AUS in our Board of Advisory is Ms. Amna Al Mutawa is from DFWAC.**

**Dubai Police contact number: 999**

### **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/](http://www.alameen.ae/en/)

Key Contacts (Within Local Area)

Dubai Police Child Protection Hotline

Contact Number: 800-243 [www.dubaipolice.gov.ae](http://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 800988 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 centre 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. It is tasked with rehabilitating, providing counselling, visiting and assisting children in need.

### **Related safeguarding portfolio policies at AUS**

- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Contract
- Inclusion Policy
- Policy of Internet Safety

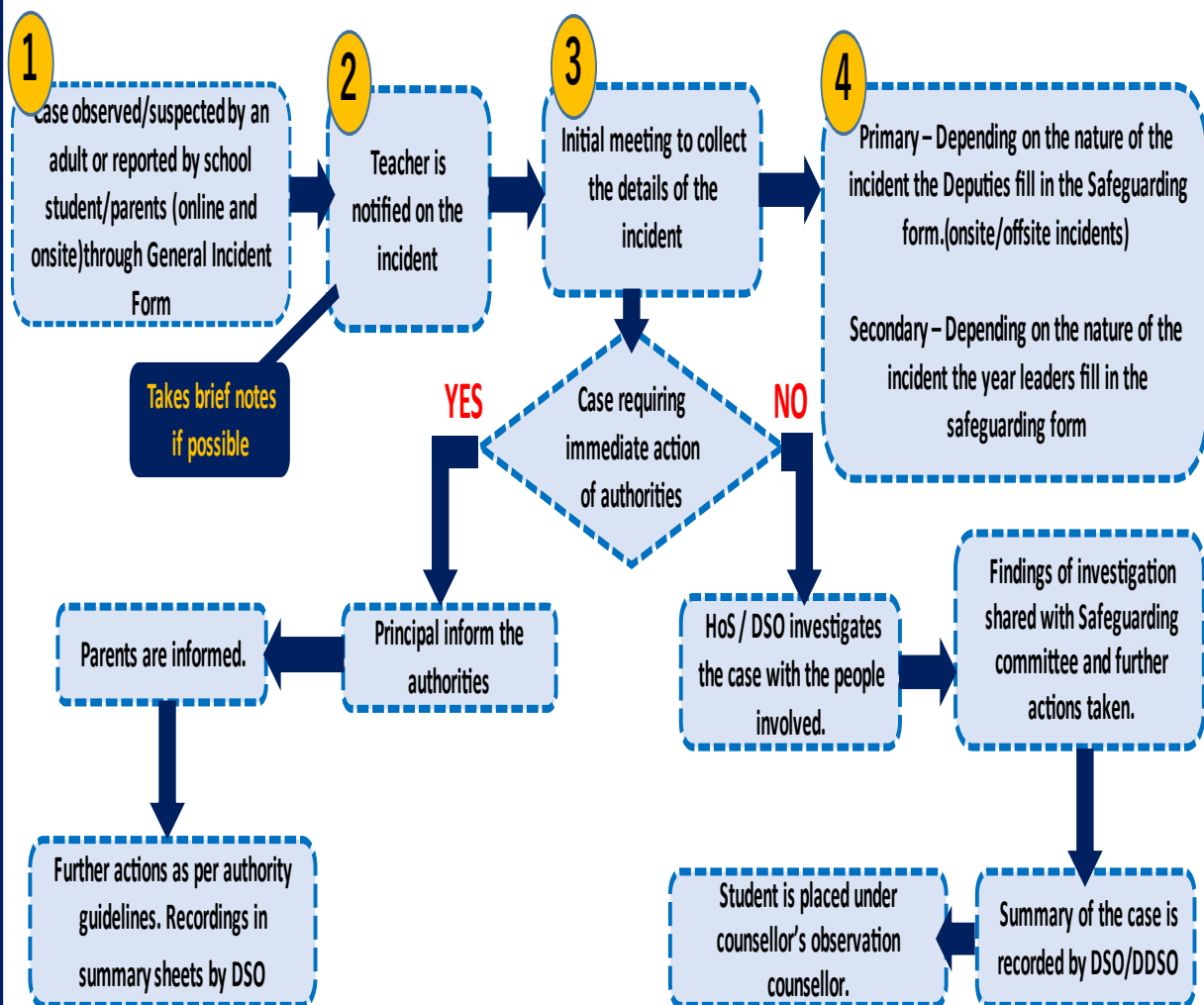
**All concerns/referrals for Child's safety and welfare during school hours should be immediately reported to DSO/DDS0 or any accessible Safeguarding Team (as mentioned above) at AUS, Dubai.**

## Appendix A



## Appendix B

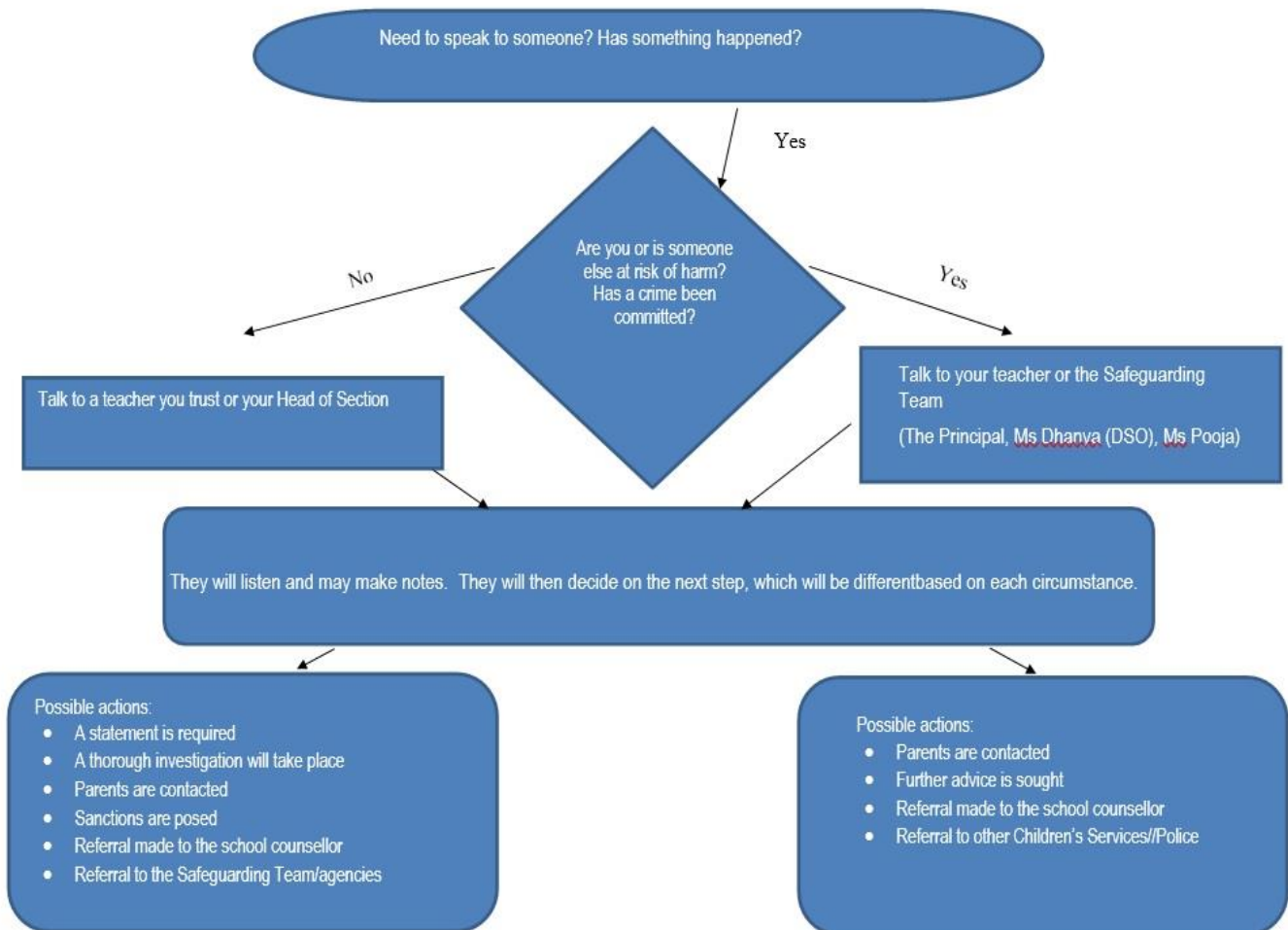
### Safeguarding & Child protection Protocol





## Appendix C

### Student friendly guide to making a safeguarding disclosure



## Appendix D

### **GUIDELINES IF A CHILD GOES MISSING**

While children are in school, we have a responsibility for duty of care to the children and act in loco-parentis by taking steps that are reasonable to ensure safety and well-being.

#### **If a child goes missing out of school, the following steps should be taken:**

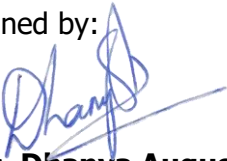
- Gather other children together
- Allocate staff to search the immediate area and alert local security. If a child is missing for more than 20 minutes,
- Contact school to say which measures have been taken
- Ensure that there is good two-way communication established with a range of phone lines
- Notify the police / security.  
If a child continues to go missing,
- Send other children accompanied by staff back to school (if possible), in bus, cabs asking school to send transport, and additional staff to help search.
- School alert parents after 30-45 minutes and keep them posted

#### **If a child goes missing in school, the following steps should be taken:**

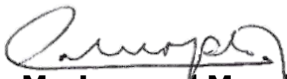
- Let the security personnel/teachers/ HOS know immediately.
- One member of staff must go to the roadside to search
- One member of staff must circumnavigate the grounds
- One member of staff must ensure all rooms are searched
- Let all these people know when the child has been found
- If the child remains missing, the school should alert parents after 30 – 45 minutes and keep them posted

Signed by:

Date: 20-09-2022



**Ms. Dhanya Augustus**  
**Head of Inclusion**



**Mr. Leonard Murphy**  
**Principal**