# AGS Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

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Al Furjan
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

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## 1: Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students, staff, and visitors at Arcadia Global School understand the expectations, procedures, and responsibilities in safeguarding children. As an international school in the UAE, Arcadia adheres to both **local child protection laws (Wadeema's Law, 2016)** and **international best practices (Keeping Children Safe in Education, UK 2024).** The policy ensures that all safeguarding concerns are handled sensitively and professionally.

Arcadia Global School is committed to maintaining a **safe learning environment** for all students. This policy is updated regularly to ensure compliance with **UAE safeguarding laws**, **UK safeguarding guidance**, and **global child protection standards**.

## 2: Aims and Objectives

We are committed to:

- Supporting the children and adults of Arcadia Global School to feel safe at all times
- Ensuring all adults who have contact with pupils have received appropriate checks and have been adequately trained and recruited using safe recruitment methods
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe
- Safeguarding procedures are understood and adhered to at all times by everybody in school
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
- Supporting pupils in school who may be a victim of abuse
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop

Arcadia School believes in keeping children safe at all times which is achieved by high-quality leadership and management where safeguarding is a priority across all aspects of the school's practice. We ensure that designated members of staff are in place for child protection who have received appropriate training and support for the role.

We ensure that:

- Stringent vetting procedures are in place for staff and other adults to ensure suitability to work with children including robust arrangements for site security, background checks of all adults working in school and appropriate procedures expected of all visitors
- Safeguarding practice and procedures are in place to ensure that child protection arrangements are known and accessible to everyone, allowing pupils and adults aware of who they can talk to if they are worried and which procedures they should take
- Maintain thorough communication systems with up-to-date information records that can be accessed and shared by those who need it, adhering to confidentiality where expected
- A high priority is given to staff training in all safeguarding areas, extending expertise widely and building internal capacity to handle sensitive issues and situations
- Teachers deliver a curriculum that promotes safeguarding, teaching pupils how to protect themselves from harm and how to take responsibility for their own and others' safety. Pupils will take part in health education lessons to help learn how to keep themselves safe.

We expect courteous and responsible behaviour by the students, enabling everyone to feel secure and well-protected and have developed well thought out and workable day-to-day arrangements to protect

and promote pupils' health and safety. The school will maintain rigorous monitoring of child absence with appropriate follow-up actions to ensure that pupils attend regularly and are monitored accordingly.

We support all students through:

- The content of the curriculum
- The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued
- School policies, which are aimed at supporting vulnerable students in the school.

## 3: Safeguarding - Definitions and Examples

**Safeguarding**
Safeguarding refers to the proactive measures taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes ensuring a safe environment, preventing harm or abuse, and responding effectively to concerns. Safeguarding covers all aspects of a child's well-being, including their physical and mental health, safety, and development.

**Child Protection**
Child protection is a key aspect of safeguarding that focuses specifically on protecting children who are at risk of or experiencing significant harm. It involves taking immediate and appropriate action to ensure the safety of a child when concerns arise about abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

### 3.1: Types of Abuse

There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

**Physical Abuse**
Physical abuse is 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 or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

**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 a child 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 children. These may include interactions that are beyond a 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 (including cyber 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, although it may occur alone.

**Sexual Abuse**
Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. 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 also 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 of 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.

**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 carer 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 caregivers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

*Definitions taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2015).

## 3.2 Indicators of Abuse

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For those reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. 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.

A child who is being abused or neglected may:

- Have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries.
- Show signs of pain or discomfort.
- Keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather.
- Be concerned about changing for PE or swimming.
- Look unkempt and uncared for.
- Change their eating habits.
- Have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships.
- Appear fearful.
- Be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety.
- Self-harm.
- Frequently miss school or arrive late.
- Show signs of not wanting to go home.
- Display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn.
- Challenge authority.
- Become disinterested in their schoolwork.
- Be constantly tired or preoccupied.

- Be wary of physical contact.
- Be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol; and/or
- Display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age and/or stage of development.
- Acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends' or adults recently acquainted with the child's family.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed. 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.

## 3.3 Impact of Abuse

The impact of child abuse, neglect and exploitation should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach and the rest of their childhood, and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

## 3.4 Children who may be Vulnerable

Some children are more vulnerable to abuse and neglect than others. Several factors may contribute to that increased vulnerability, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues, a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur, as well as an individual child's personality, behaviour, disability, mental and physical health needs and family circumstances.

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

- Disabled or have special educational needs.
- Young carers.
- Affected by parental substance misuse, domestic abuse and violence or parental mental health needs.
- Asylum seekers.
- Vulnerable to being bullied or engaging in bullying behaviours.
- Living in temporary accommodation.
- Living transient lifestyles.
- Living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations.
- Vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality.
- At risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE).
- At risk of being drawn into extremism.

This list provides examples of vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive. Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats for children with communication needs.

**Positive Handling of Students**
There may be times when adults in Arcadia Global School, during their school duties, must intervene physically using positive handling techniques with students and prevent them or others coming to harm. Such intervention should always be reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances and be the minimum necessary to resolve the situation. The staff member is required to document the incident in full, giving a description and full account of the incident. Witnesses to the incident should be identified where possible. The incident should be recorded on the MyConcern site under staff safeguarding as a self-referral. More details can be found in the school's Positive Handling Policy available on the school website.

## 3.5: Early Intervention

At Arcadia Global School we recognise that providing early intervention is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early intervention means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. All school staff are trained to notice any concerns about children which may help to identify that they would benefit from early help.

At Arcadia Global School we are committed to working in partnership with children, parents and other agencies to:

- Identify situations in which children and/or their families would benefit from early help.
- Undertake an assessment of the need for early help; and provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family, developing an action plan that will focus on activity to improve the child's outcomes.
- Careful consideration should be taken regarding who to involve in the 'Early Intervention' process. The process should involve the child and family as well as all the professionals who are working with them. However, if by doing so this puts the child at further risk, relevant best interest's decisions should be made, in consultation with UAE inter-agencies.

The school will keep the needs and circumstances of children receiving early help under constant review. If the child's situation does not improve and/or the child's parents and/or the child do not consent to early help being initiated, the school will make a judgement about whether, without help, the needs of the child will escalate. If so, a referral to Children's Social Care may be necessary.

## 3.6: Helping Children to Keep Themselves Safe

The UAE School Inspection Framework stipulates that governing bodies and proprietors are 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 taught to understand and manage risk through our advisory and Moral Education lessons, and through all aspects of school life. Our 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. Discussions about risk are empowering and enabling for all children and promote sensible behaviour rather than fear or anxiety. Children are taught how to conduct themselves and how to behave in a responsible manner. Children are also reminded regularly about online safety, the risks of sharing content and images online and tackling bullying, including cyber bullying procedures.
At Arcadia Global School we continually promote an ethos of respect for children and our students are encouraged to speak to a member of staff of their choosing about any worries they may have. The school provides easy access to a 'I Want to Talk' form either via a QR code or paper copy to act as a communication tool for children who may not feel comfortable talking face to face.

## 3.7: Supporting those who have been affected by safeguarding.

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved.

We will support students, their families, and staff by:

- Taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously.
- Nominating a link person (usually the DSL) who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact.
- Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a student, separate link people will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest.
- Responding sympathetically to any request from students or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety.
- Maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies.
- Storing records securely.
- Offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support.
- Following the procedures laid down in our child protection, whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures.
- Cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

## 3.8: Notifying Parents

The DSL will make a referral to UAE agencies, and the police, if it is believed that a student is suffering or is at risk of suffering harm. The student (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless in doing so would increase the risk to the child or create undue delay.

Staff should ordinarily follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, any staff member can refer their concerns directly to UAE agencies, or the police if:

- The situation is an emergency and the DSL, the deputy DSLs, the headteacher and/or the chair of governors are all unavailable
- They are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the student's safety, or
- For any other reason they make a judgement that a direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

In any of those circumstances, staff may make direct child protection referrals and share information without being subject to censure or disciplinary action. However, staff must inform the DSL and/or Principal first, then only with follow up permission from the Executive Principal (Child Protection Officer) & Safeguarding Governor will outside agencies be involved.

The contact details of relevant outside agencies can be found in the appendices of this policy.

## 3.9: Seeking support from outside agencies

The school recognises that effective safeguarding requires collaboration with external agencies that specialise in child protection and welfare. Where appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will liaise with relevant UAE agencies (KHDA, MoE), law enforcement, and healthcare professionals to seek guidance and support.

Staff members must report any concerns to the DSL, who will determine if external intervention is necessary after consultation with the Principal, Executive Principal (Child Protection Officer) & Safeguarding Governor. In situations where there is an immediate risk to a child's safety, the school will make an urgent referral to the appropriate authority.

## 3.10: Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour

Members of staff who become concerned about a student's sexualised behaviour, including any known online sexualised behaviour, should record their concerns and report them to the DSL as soon as possible, as with any other safeguarding concern.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the school will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator.
Any instances of sexual harm caused by one student to another and any situation where there are concerns about power imbalance, coercion or force will be discussed with UAE agencies, and potentially the police.

In responding to cases involving children or young people who have committed sexually abusive behaviours or where a child displays sexualised inappropriate behaviour but evidence of sexual harm towards other children is not clear cut, the school may seek consultation and advice from external organisations.

In deciding the most appropriate response, relevant considerations will include:

- The nature and extent of the inappropriate/abusive behaviours. In respect of sexual abuse, it is necessary to distinguish between normal childhood sexual development and experimentation, and sexually inappropriate or aggressive behaviour
- The context of the abusive behaviours
- The child/young person's development, family and social circumstances
- The need for services, specifically focusing on the child/young person's harmful behaviour as well as other significant needs; and/or
- The risks to self and others, including other children in the school, household, extended family, peer group and wider social network.

The school is committed to participating in plans both to provide students who are at risk from other children and those students who may present a risk to other children with appropriate services to address any concerns and, wherever possible, to facilitate ongoing access to education in school for all children concerned, subject to appropriate risk assessments and risk management plans.

## Youth Produced Sexual Imagery

All incidents of youth-produced sexual imagery (YPSI) will be dealt with as safeguarding concerns. The primary concern at all times will be the welfare and protection of the young people involved. Young people who share sexual imagery of themselves or their peers are breaking the law.

However, the school believes it is important to avoid criminalising young people unnecessarily. The school will therefore work in partnership with external agencies with a view to responding proportionately to the circumstances of any incident.

All incidents of YPSI should be reported to the DSL as with all other safeguarding issues and concerns. Staff will not make their own judgements about whether an issue relating to YPSI is more or less serious enough to warrant a report to the DSL. What may seem like less serious concerns to individual members of staff may be more significant when considered in the light of other information known to the DSL, which the member of staff may not be aware of.

If staff become concerned about a YPSI issue in relation to a device in the possession of a student (e.g. mobile phone, tablet, digital camera), the member of staff will secure the device (i.e. it should be confiscated). Staff will not look at or print any indecent images. The confiscated device will be passed immediately to the DSL (see 'Viewing the imagery' below).

The DSL will discuss the concerns with appropriate staff and speak to young people involved as appropriate. Parents/carers will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm. If, at any point in the process, there is concern that a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to UAE Agencies and police. The police will always be informed when there is reason to believe that indecent images involve sexual acts and any child in the imagery is under 13 years of age.

The DSL will make a judgement about whether a reported YPSI incident is experimental as in Section 11 above or aggravated. Aggravated incidents involve criminal or abusive elements beyond the creation, sending or possession of sexual images created by young people. These include possible adult involvement or criminal or abusive behaviour by young people such as sexual abuse, extortion, threats, malicious conduct arising from personal conflicts, or creation or sending or showing of images without the knowledge or against the will of a young person who is pictured.

Review of what response is necessary will facilitate consideration of whether:

- There are any offences that warrant a police investigation
- Child protection procedures need to be invoked
- Parents/carers require support in order to safeguard their children
- A multi-agency sexual exploitation (MASE) meeting is required
- Any of the perpetrators and/or victims require additional support.

Examples of aggravated incidents include:

- Evidence of adult involvement in acquiring, creating or disseminating indecent images of young people (possibly by an adult pretending to be a young person known to the victim)
- Evidence of coercing, intimidating, bullying, threatening and/or extortion of students by one or more other students to create and share indecent images of themselves
- Pressure applied to a number of students (e.g. all female students in a class or year group) to create and share indecent images of themselves
- Pressurising a student who does not have the capacity to consent (e.g. due to their age, level of understanding or special educational needs) or with additional vulnerability to create and share indecent images of themselves

- Dissemination of indecent images of young people to a significant number of others with an intention to cause harm or distress (possibly as an act of so-called 'revenge porn', bullying or exploitation)
- What is known about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage or are violent
- Sharing of indecent images places a young person is at immediate risk of harm, for example the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming

The DSL will make a judgement about whether or not a situation in which indecent images have been shared with a small number of others in a known friendship group with no previous concerns constitutes an aggravated incident, or whether the school is able to contain the situation in partnership with all parents of the students involved, arrange for the parents to ensure that all indecent images are deleted and that the young people involved learn from the incident in order to keep themselves safe in future.

In the latter instance, the DSL will usually consult with the police to check that no other relevant information is held by those agencies and to ensure an agreed response is documented before proceeding.

## Viewing the Imagery

Adults should not view youth-produced sexual imagery unless there is a good and clear reason to do so. Wherever possible, the DSL's responses to incidents will be based on what they have been told about the content of the imagery.

Any decision to view imagery will be based on the DSL's professional judgment. Imagery will never be viewed if the act of viewing will cause significant distress or harm to a student.

If a decision is made to view imagery, the DSL will be satisfied that viewing:

- Is the only way to make a decision about whether to involve other agencies (i.e. it is not possible to establish the facts from the young people involved)
- Is necessary to report the image to a website, app or suitable reporting agency to have it taken down, or to support the young person or parent in making a report
- Is unavoidable because a young person has presented an image directly to a staff member or the imagery has been found on a school device or network

If it is necessary to view the imagery, then the DSL will:

- Never copy, print or share the imagery; this is illegal
- Ensure viewing is undertaken by the DSL or Deputy DSL with delegated authority.
- Ensure viewing takes place with another member of staff present in the room, ideally the DDSL or a member of the senior leadership team. The other staff member does not need to view the images
- Wherever possible ensure viewing takes place on school or college premises, ideally in the headteacher or DSL's office
- Ensure wherever possible that images are viewed by a staff member of the same sex as the young person in the imagery
- Record the viewing of the imagery in the student's safeguarding record, including who was present, why the image was viewed and any subsequent actions; and ensure this is signed and dated and meets the wider standards set out by Ofsted for recording safeguarding incidents

## Deletion of Images

If the school has decided that other agencies do not need to be involved, then consideration will be given to deleting imagery from devices and online services to limit any further sharing of the imagery.

## 3.11: Sexual Exploitation of Children

Sexual exploitation involves an individual or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of an individual or groups of children or young people. Victims can be boys or girls. Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs, alcohol and sometimes accommodation. Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to the trafficking of children.

The school teaches children about consent and the risks of sexual exploitation in the PSHE and SRE curriculum. A common feature of sexual exploitation is that the child often does not recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and does not see her/himself as a victim. The child may initially resent what she/he perceives as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation of children and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL. The DSL will consider the need to make a referral to UAE agencies, and the police. Parents will be consulted and notified as above.

## 3.12: Radicalisation and Extremism

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of the school's wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse.
Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism.
The government defines extremism as vocal or active opposition to fundamental UAE values.
Even very young children have been exposed, in rare circumstances, to extremism at home and elsewhere including online.

As children get older, they look for adventure and excitement and they may start to ask questions about their identity and belonging. During that stage of their development, they are vulnerable to extremist groups that may claim to offer answers, identity and a social network apparently providing a sense of belonging. Many of those extremist groups make sophisticated use of the internet and social media to target young people and spread their ideology, making young people more vulnerable to being influenced by extremist ideas.
The school has defined responsibilities to ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school.

During the process of radicalisation, it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised. The school is committed to preventing students from being radicalised and drawn into any form of extremism or terrorism. The school promotes the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs by providing students with opportunities through the curriculum to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and learn how to discuss and debate points of view; and by ensuring that all students are valued and listened to within school.

Staff are trained to report all concerns about possible radicalisation and extremism to the DSL immediately as they would any other safeguarding concern. The school recognises the importance of providing a safe space for children to discuss controversial issues and building their resilience and the critical thinking skills they need in order to challenge extremist perspectives.

The school will discuss any concerns about possible radicalisation identified in school with a child's parents/carers as with any other safeguarding or child protection issue unless there is reason to believe that doing so would place the child at risk and will also support parents/carers who raise concerns about their children being vulnerable to radicalisation.

The school expects all staff, volunteers, governors, visiting professionals, contractors and individuals or agencies that hire school premises to behave in accordance with the school's Staff Code of Conduct, will challenge the expression and/or promotion of extremist views and ideas by any adult on school premises or at school events and, when necessary, will make appropriate referrals in respect of any such adult.

Parents and staff may find the website www.educateagainsthate.com informative and useful. The website is designed to equip school and college leaders, teachers and parents with the information, tools and resources they need to recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people and how best to support them. The website provides information on training resources for teachers, staff and school and college leaders.

# 4. Safeguarding Team Roles and Responsibilities

### 4.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL holds primary responsibility for safeguarding and child protection at Arcadia Global School. This includes:

- Oversee the case management of any safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring all safeguarding policies and procedures are effectively implemented.
- Maintaining accurate and up-to-date safeguarding records.
- Liaising with external safeguarding agencies, law enforcement, and child protection services.
- Delivering and overseeing safeguarding training for staff.
- Supporting students and families affected by safeguarding concerns.

### 4.2 Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

The DDSL supports the DSL and assumes responsibility in their absence. Responsibilities include:

- Assisting in managing safeguarding concerns and maintaining case records.
- Supporting staff with safeguarding queries and training.
- Collaborating with external agencies and professionals.

### 4.3 Safeguarding Team

The Safeguarding Team is responsible for ensuring a whole-school approach to child protection. The team:

- Meets regularly to review safeguarding concerns and school-wide initiatives.
- Conducts risk assessments related to safeguarding.
- Ensures that safeguarding remains a priority in school operations.

### 4.4 Child Protection Officer

The Child Protection Officer:

- Provides guidance on safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Conducts initial investigations into safeguarding concerns where appropriate.
- Liaises with the DSL and external authorities when necessary.

### 4.5 Governance

The school's **governing body** ensures accountability and oversight in safeguarding practices. The governing body:

- Monitors the effectiveness of safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Ensures compliance with UAE and international safeguarding regulations.
- Supports the DSL and Safeguarding Team in implementing safeguarding best practices.

## 5: Case Management and Reporting Concerns

**5.1: Levels of Concern**

At Arcadia Global School, reported concerns are triaged by the DSL based on their severity. The different levels of concern are outlined below.

**5.2: Low Level Concern**

A low-level concern is an indication from staff, parent or associated adult practice, actions or conduct that could result directly or indirectly in a potential safeguarding risk for students. Staff members are required to formally record concerns about the ongoing wellbeing of staff or community members.

Any Low-level concern must be recorded using MyConcern.

**5.3: Medium Level Concern**

A medium-level concern is an issue that suggests potential safeguarding risks that need to be monitored and assessed further. These may include ongoing behavioural concerns, repeated low-level incidents, or disclosures that require further investigation.

Responses to medium-level concerns include:

- Documenting all concerns in the safeguarding record.
- Discussing concerns with the child, where appropriate.
- Consulting with parents or guardians unless doing so places the child at greater risk.
- Implementing early intervention strategies, such as mentoring or counselling support.
- Monitoring the situation closely and escalating to high-level concern if necessary.

**5.4: High-Level Concern**

A high-level concern refers to serious safeguarding risks, including disclosures of abuse, visible signs of harm, or immediate danger to a child. These concerns require immediate action.

Responses to high-level concerns include:

- Immediate reporting to the DSL and senior leadership team.
- Making a formal referral to UAE child protection agencies and law enforcement if required.
- Ensuring the child's immediate safety and providing necessary support.
- Maintaining confidentiality and ensuring records are securely stored.
- Engaging external safeguarding professionals for intervention.

**5.5: Reporting Concerns**
All staff members, volunteers, and visitors must report any safeguarding concerns immediately, following the school's child protection and safeguarding procedure (see flowchart below). Concerns should be logged using the school's designated safeguarding reporting system—**MyConcern**, which ensures an accurate and confidential record of each case.

The reporting process includes:

1. **Completing a safeguarding concern form** via MyConcern or speaking directly to a member of the Safeguarding team.
2. **Ensuring that all reports are factual, detailed, and free from assumptions or personal opinions.**
3. **Following up with the DSL** regarding any necessary next steps or external referrals.

Failure to report safeguarding concerns appropriately may result in disciplinary action.

**For parents, visitors, and external stakeholders:**
If you need to report a safeguarding concern, you can:

- **Fill out a paper safeguarding concern form**, available at **Reception**, which will be handed directly to the DSL or
- **Submit a safeguarding concern via Microsoft Forms**, which will be sent directly to the **DSL and DDSLs** for immediate action.

**5.6: Record Keeping and Data Protection**
Arcadia Global School maintains robust record-keeping procedures to ensure all safeguarding concerns are documented appropriately and securely.

Key principles include:

- All safeguarding records are stored securely, with access limited to the DSL, DDSL, and safeguarding team staff.
- Records are kept in line with UAE data protection laws and school policies.
- Information is shared on a need-to-know basis to protect the child's welfare.
- Safeguarding records are transferred securely if a child moves to another school, ensuring continuity of care.

## 6: Staff Complaints, Allegations and Self Disclosure

**6.1: Complaints Procedure**
Our complaints procedure will be followed when a student or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a student who initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a student or attempting to humiliate them, bullying or belittling a student or discriminating against them in some way. All complaints received should follow the Staff Complaints Policy.

Complaints are managed by all members of the staff body and where escalated are dealt with by the Principal, DSL, other members of the senior leadership team and governors. An explanation of the complaint's procedure is included in the class information presentation for parents and students. Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's feedback and complaints policy. This can be found in the policy appendices. Complaints which escalate into a safeguarding concern will automatically be managed under the school's child protection and safeguarding procedures and need to be logged on MyConcern under staff safeguarding.

### 6.2: Staff Allegations
A safeguarding allegation refers to a formal or informal complaint or suspicion of abuse, neglect, harm, or mistreatment of a vulnerable person. Staff members are required to report via MyConcern any practice, actions or conduct which directly or indirectly placed a student, group of students or community member in immediate or future danger.
When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed.

Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Depending on the allegation staff will be suspended on full pay, pending a full investigation. This ensures that allegations are investigated fairly, quickly and consistently and that all parties are protected. In the event of suspension, the school will provide support and a named contact for the member of staff.

As stated above, all safeguarding allegations against staff should be reported to the DSL. Staff, parents and governors are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing, including content placed on social media sites.

Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the school or historical allegations will be reported to the police. In accordance with the safeguarding policy, the school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

**6.3: Self Disclosure**
If a staff member finds themselves in a situation whereby safeguarding protocols may have been compromised, they must follow the self-disclosure procedure. This enables them to confidentially report all relevant information on the MyConcern platform under Staff Safeguarding as a self-referral. This process ensures transparency, accountability, and the continued safety and well-being of all members of the school community.

**6.4: Whistle Blowing Procedure**
Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague - including visiting professionals and volunteers - towards a student are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation.

Arcadia Global School's Whistleblowing Policy enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence, and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. Please see the Whistleblowing policy for more details.

Staff are expected to report all concerns about poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues - including what may seem minor contraventions of the school's Code of Conduct – to the DSL, DDSL and/or Principal, to facilitate early intervention in order to maintain appropriate boundaries and a safe culture that protects children and reduces the risk of serious abuse in school.

In the instance that a complaint needs to be made about the Designated Safeguarding Lead, concerns should be directed to the child protection officer.

## 7: Recruitment and Training

**7.1: Safer Recruitment**
To protect children, Arcadia has strict procedures for appointing staff. These are contained in a safer recruitment policy (linked in appendices), which is regularly reviewed and updated. All local staff undergo a local police check.

All expatriate staff must provide a police check from the country they are coming from as well as a DBS check. Staff should be aware of the guidance from the DfE on disqualification by association with effect from February 2015.
Our school endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ 'safe' staff and allow 'safe' volunteers to work with children.
Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

- Complete an application form which includes their employment history and explains any gaps in that history.
- Provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children.
- Provide evidence of identity and qualifications.

- If offered employment will be subject to vetting and barring checks relevant to their country of origin.
- If offered employment, provide evidence of their right to work in the UAE.
- Be interviewed by a panel of at least one member of SLT who is safer recruitment trained. .

The school will:

- Ensure that every job description and person specification for roles in school includes a description of the role holder's responsibility for safeguarding.
- Verify the preferred candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities.
- Obtain references for all shortlisted candidates, including internal candidates.
- Carry out additional or alternative checks for applicants who have lived or worked outside the UAE.
- Ensure that applicants for teaching posts are not subject to a prohibition order issued by the country of origin.

All new members of staff and volunteers will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and code of conduct. All staff are required to sign to confirm they have received a copy of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct.
The school obtains written confirmation from supply agencies and third-party organisations that they have satisfactorily undertaken all appropriate checks in respect of individuals they provide to work in the school that the school would have undertaken if they were employing the individual directly.
Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained. The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken and ensures that the record is maintained.

**Governors**
All governors will be the subject of enhanced police checks.

**Volunteers**
Volunteers will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school and contact with students. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised or be allowed to engage in regulated activity.

**Contractors**
The school checks the identity of all contractors working on-site and requests police checks where appropriate. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or in regulated activity.

**7.2: Single Central Record**
The school maintains a Single Central Record (SCR) that details safeguarding and vetting checks for all staff, including:

- Identity verification and right-to-work checks.
- DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) or equivalent police checks for expatriate staff.
- Professional qualification and reference verification.
- Training records, including safeguarding and child protection training.

The SCR is monitored regularly by the safeguarding governor and is updated whenever new staff or volunteers join the school.

**7.3 Safeguarding Training**
All staff members, volunteers, and governors receive safeguarding training tailored to their roles. Training includes:

- Annual child protection training for all staff.
- Induction safeguarding training for new employees.
- Specialist training for the DSL, DDSL and members of the safeguarding team.
- Online safety training, recognising signs of abuse, and handling disclosures.
- Regular refresher courses to ensure compliance with UAE and international safeguarding standards.

Records of all training sessions are logged in the Single Central Record to ensure compliance and accountability.

**8: Relevant Legislation & policies**
Ensuring compliance with current child protection laws is fundamental to safeguarding children at Arcadia School. The following legislation in the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates informs our safeguarding policies and practices:

**8.1 United Kingdom Legislation**
The school aligns its safeguarding procedures with key UK legislation, ensuring best practices in child protection:

- **Children Act 1989** – Establishes that a child's welfare is the paramount consideration in legal proceedings and outlines local authority responsibilities for child protection.
- **Children Act 2004** – Introduced following the Victoria Climbié case, requiring inter-agency cooperation and establishing Local Safeguarding Children Boards.
- **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006** – Introduced the framework for vetting individuals working with children and vulnerable adults.
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)** – Provides statutory guidance for schools on safeguarding responsibilities.
- **Online Safety Act 2023** – Mandates online platforms to protect users, particularly children, from harmful content, with enforcement by Ofcom.
- **Child Exploitation Prevention Laws (2025)** – New measures criminalising the exploitation of children by gangs, introducing prevention orders to restrict suspected groomers from contacting children.

**8.2 United Arab Emirates Legislation**
Arcadia School adheres to UAE child protection laws, ensuring compliance with local regulations and safeguarding standards:

- **Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 (Wadeema's Law)** – Defines children's rights, including protection from neglect, exploitation, and abuse. It mandates reporting obligations for suspected child abuse cases and imposes legal penalties for non-compliance.
- **Federal Law No. 5 of 2012 on Combatting Cybercrimes** – Criminalises the online exploitation of children, including the production, distribution, and possession of child pornography.

- **Federal Law No. 15 of 1980 on Publications and Publishing** – Regulates media content to prevent the dissemination of harmful materials to minors.

These legislative frameworks guide our safeguarding policy, ensuring a safe, compliant, and proactive approach to child protection.

## 8.3: AGS Relevant Policies

## This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the below Policies.

Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2024
Safer Recruitment Policy
Positive Handling Policy
Health and Safety Policy and Guidelines
First Aid and emergency Policies and Procedures
AGS School Clinic Policy
KCH School Clinic Policy and Procedures
AGS Online Safety and Cyber Bullying Policy
Whistleblowing Policy
Intimate Care Policy

## 9: Appendices

9.1 Safeguarding Visitor/parent Incident Report Form and Microsoft Form QR code.
9.2 AGS Safeguarding Team Poster
9.3 AGS Safeguarding and Child Protection Reporting Procedure
9.4 AGS Safeguarding Flowchart
9.5 Safeguarding information for external service providers and contractors
9.6 I Want to Talk Form and QR Code
9.7 Ten Points well-being Journal - https://tenpoints.io/

## 9.1 Safeguarding Visitor/parent Incident Report Form

**AGS Safeguarding Visitor/Parent Incident Report Form**

| Information about the child/children concerned | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Name: | | Class: | |
| Name: | | Class: | |
| Name: | | Class: | |
| Name: | | Class: | |

| Information about the incident | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Date: | | Time: | | Location: | |
| | | | | | |
| Were there any witnesses to the incident? | | | | | |
| **Names of any adults who were witness to the incident** | | | | | |
| Name: | | Name: | | Name: | |
| Name: | | Name: | | Name: | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| Was medical treatment provided? | | Was the child taken to hospital? | |
| **Reporter Information** | | | |
| Individual submitting report: | | | |
| Signature: | | | |
| Date: | | | |

## 9.2 AGS Safeguarding Team Poster

**9.3 AGS Safeguarding and Child Protection Reporting Procedure**

**9.4 AGS Safeguarding Flowchart**

**9.5 Whistle Blowing External contact information**

**Call Toll-free: 800 035704530**

**Online Web Link: alshirawi.ethicspoint.com**

**Mobile Link: alshirawi-mobile.ethicspoint.com**

## 9.6 I Want to Talk Form and QR Code

### I Want To Talk!

If you need to talk about something that is making you feel upset, unsafe, or uncomfortable, please fill out this form. A member of the safeguarding team will reach out to you as soon as possible.

**Confidentiality Notice:**

Your safety and well-being are our priority. We will keep this information private, but if we believe you are at risk, we may need to share it with someone who can help.

* Required

* This form will record your name, please fill your name.

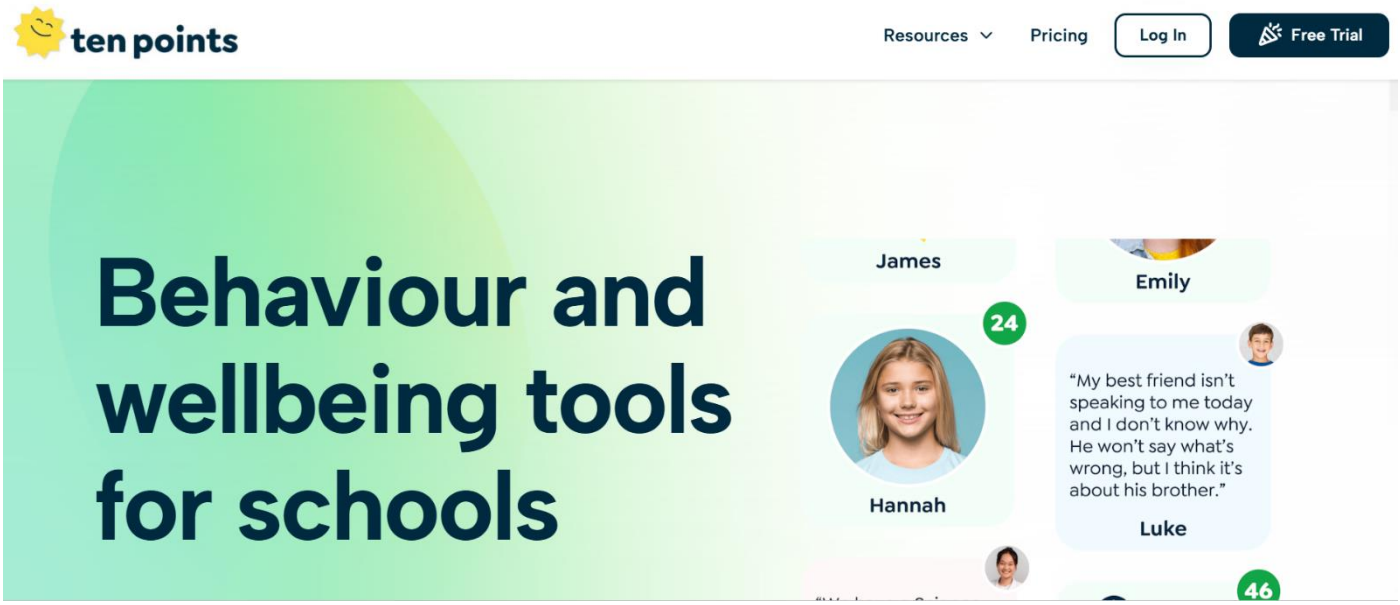
1. Your Name

2. Year and Class e.g. 5B *

3. How urgent is this? *

- ◯ Urgent – I need to talk today
- ◯ Important – I would like to talk soon
- ◯ Not urgent – Just something I want to share

4. **What would you like to talk about?** *(Please provide as much detail as you can e.g Who, Where, When, How did it make you feel, What happened?)* *

5. Is there anything else you would like to share? *

**9.7 Ten Points well-being Journal**