Al Wahda Private School

e- Learning Safeguarding

Policy 2020/2021

We Are Here To Help You !

AL Wahda Private School (AWPS) E-Safeguarding Policy

1. Scope and Purpose

1.1   This policy applies to all students at Al Wahda Private School (AWPS). All students are expected to employ safeguards effectively and manage risks independently. The purpose of this policy is to provide a safe, secure and supportive environment for all students. Any risks to employees must be directed to their relevant supervisors (Instructional Coaches, Head of Sections, Safeguarding Lead, Principal and Vice Principals)

1.2   The scope of the Online Safeguarding Policy covers the use of the internet and school enabled electronic communication devices including, but not limited to, email, mobile phones, games consoles, PCs, laptops, tablets and social networking sites.

2. Context

Being online is an integral part of children and young people's lives. Social media, online games, websites and apps can be accessed through mobile phones, computers, laptops and tablets – all of which form a part of children and young people's online world.

The internet and online technology provides new opportunities for young students' learning and growth, but it can also expose them to new types of risks. E-safety should form a fundamental part of schools' safeguarding and child protection measures. A whole school approach to online safety helps ensure staff, leadership, governors, and parents teach children about online safety.

Schools have a dual responsibility when it comes to e-safety: to ensure the school's online procedures keep children and young people safe, and to teach them about online safety, in and outside of school.

3. E-safety

AWPS recognizes that children, as individuals, have the right to be treated with dignity and respect, free from emotional or physical danger, abuse and neglect. Safeguarding children is fundamental to the general well-being social, emotional, physical and mental development of each child; consequently it is essential to have clear guidelines and procedures in place when dealing with matters involving child protection.

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognize children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

AWPS will not tolerate abuse or inappropriate use of technology, whether off-line or on-line, from any member of the AWPS community, from administrators, teachers, office staff, support staff, students or parents. Communications by all parties should be courteous and respectful at all times and reflect the highest professional standards.

Any reported incident of bullying or harassment, or other unacceptable conduct, will fall under the AWPS Student Safeguarding Policies and procedures and will result in the application of formal interventions.

AWPS also recognizes that peer-on-peer abuse may take place, and has formulated a more concrete policy and for this specific area.

4. Electronic contact with students

Electronic contact is defined as the communication or publication of information (including images) between two or more people using an electronic device. This may occur using (but is not limited to) landline and mobile phones, other handheld electronic devices, gaming equipment and computers. Electronic contact may include but is not limited to voice communication, text communication, instant messaging, email, social networking sites, blogs, photos and videos.

Teachers must:

- Use appropriate language with students and challenge any inappropriate language used by a student, or adult
- Use neutral language at all times in order to prevent any misunderstanding of intent, or possible accusations of misconduct.
- Respect a student's right to privacy.
- Be dressed appropriately at all times when visible online
- Please refer to the section in the AWPS Employee Handbook on Dress Code for appropriate attire and the updates AWPS Teacher dress code.

  Staff must request permission from the Principal and relevant Coordinator for any electronic contact with a student which is of a non-work-related nature before, during or after a course. For example, requesting mobile phone numbers from students is necessary for an excursion or any situation deemed as an emergency.
  However, staff should only give out the school WhatsApp mobile number, and not their own private number. Social-networking on Facebook etc. is strictly prohibited.

Communication between teachers and students is monitored through educational platforms, such as ClassDojo, Microsoft Teams, Edmodo and Google Classroom. Parent and teacher communication is established through the same platforms, with addition to WhatsApp if emergencies arise.

In any electronic contact with students, staff must pay particular attention to use neutral, un- emotive language that will not be misconstrued.

Staff must not exchange any information with a student that they would not be happy to share with the child's parent or guardian.

Students are underaged and staff are not allowed to befriend them on Facebook or any other social media platform.

5. Live video Sessions

Please note the following from the AWPS Safe-Guarding policy:
* *Never be alone with children at school activities without another adult being notified.*

This is the same in a virtual space. **Teachers must not therefore contact students using live streaming individually.** Teachers therefore must include a member of the Admin team in any individual communication with students.

- Teachers must first obtain permission from the parent or guardian stating they are aware of, and approve of the communication.
- ALL parents will be asked to give their consent to the Live video sessions. Only the children of those who give their consent can join these sessions.
- Broadcast times should be negotiated and mutually convenient for the vast majority of students (teachers can consult the Student Geographical Location document and liaise with their students/parents.
- The broadcast times should be shared with academic leadership by adding to the Work Record Set document
- Every live video broadcast must be recorded. These can be added to the website later. Students should be reminded periodically that these sessions are being recorded.
- Teachers will record the attendance of each live video broadcast.
- Teachers must be dressed appropriately at all times when on visible online
- Teachers must use appropriate language and challenge any inappropriate language or comments.

Students must:

- Use appropriate language at all times
- Use neutral language at all times in order to prevent any misunderstanding of intent • Respect other student's right to privacy.
- Be dressed appropriately at all times when on visible online

Parents Must:

- ALL Parents must give the school consent for their child to join live Zoom and Microsoft Teams video lessons
- Primary parents must ensure an adult is with their child during live Zoom lessons
- Please note: Under no circumstances should teachers live video or communicate on a one-to-one with individual students. This will be reported and lead to disciplinary action
- All staff and parents must periodically remind students of the potential dangers of sharing personal information on the internet, uploading photographs, online harassment and the potential for scams.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur through SMS, Text, and apps, or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation. Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behavior.

Al Wahda Private School monitors strictly its online platforms and will take strict action against any form of cyberbullying as per school policies and the UAE federal laws.

Training

Given the critical importance of understanding and complying with all aspects of this policy to ensure the protection of students, the Ministry of Interior – Child Protection Center in coordination and collaboration with SPEA shall conduct child protection training for school leaders and other specified staff for which attendance is mandatory.

Failure to comply with this policy

Failure to comply with this policy is subject to legal accountability and administrative penalties stipulated in accordance with SPEA's regulations, policies and requirements, in addition to the UAE Federal Law No.3 of 2016 on Child Rights, Federal Law No. 3 of 1987 on Penal Code, and any other local or Federal relevant laws effective at the time of the incident.

The Article 272 of the UAE Law No. 3 (1987) "Federal Penal Code" states that: "Any public official or person in charge of detecting crimes and arrested the accused, who fails or defers to denounce a crime within his knowledge shall be punished by detention or a fine. A fine shall be imposed upon any official who is not in charge of detecting or seizing crimes, and who neglects or delays to notify the concerned authorities of a crime which becomes known to him, in the course of or in respect of his job performance".

School contacts

Help Desk: 052 367 4217

Main school building: 06 516 0500

School Safeguarding Officers

Mustafa Abdulazim (Social Worker/ Boys' section)
 Daolat Ali (Social Worker/ Girls' section)

Outside contact details

It is mandated to report using the telephone hotline (116111) and the electronic reporting link available on the SPEA website

(https://www.SPEA.ac.ae/ar/Pages/childabusereportingabu-dhabiedusector.aspx).

SPEA Regional Office: 06 504 5400

Ministry of Interior Child Protection Centre: 02 3333999

Ministry of Social Affairs: 02 6429333

Sharjah Police Tel. 997