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#	Description of Changes	Rev. No	Date of Issue
1	First Issue	00	21 June 24

ICS Vision

The “School of Choice” inspiring, challenging, and empowering a 21st-century learning community through an ethical and innovative education system.

ICS Mission

Provide a safe, friendly learning environment where lifelong learners follow an international curriculum which promotes academic excellence and nurtures key values and competencies in our global-minded, future leaders.

Introduction

- At ICS, every student has the right to an educational environment that upholds, cares for, respects, and protects their dignity.
- This policy outlines ICS's responsibility to implement student protection measures that focus on preventing maltreatment and handling concerns related to student safety, in line with ADEK guidelines.

Purpose

- Protect students under ICS's supervision from all acts and omissions constituting maltreatment, in compliance with UAE Federal laws.
- Identify and support students who are at risk of harm, in alignment with UAE laws concerning child protection.
- Ensure all ICS staff and volunteers are mandated reporters of suspected student maltreatment, inside and outside the school.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of the ICS principal, staff, and parents in addressing concerns of student maltreatment.
- Ensure ICS is responsible for the care and protection of all students and coordinates efforts to safeguard their wellbeing.

Definitions

- **Child:** Any resident of the UAE under 18 years of age.
- **Child Protection Coordinator Officer (CPC/CPR):**
  - Appointed staff member at the educational institution trained to act upon child protection concerns.
  - Key contact for staff and authorities when a concern is identified.
  - Point of contact to respond to emergencies, report to the CPU and other authorities, liaise with parents, and provide ongoing support to the child.
- **Child Protection Unit (CPU):**
  - Organizational unit at ADEK developing and implementing student protection mechanisms.
  - Responsible for receiving and assessing student maltreatment concerns.
- **Child Protection Specialist (CPS):**
  - ADEK-appointed individuals authorized to preserve child rights and protect the child within the limits of their powers.
- **Educational Institution:**
  - Any learning, care, and/or educational entity under ADEK's regulatory jurisdiction (nurseries, private schools, charter schools, etc.).
- **Mandated Reporter:**
  - A person required by law to report student maltreatment concerns, including educators and adults who a student seeks for help in notifying authorities.
- **Parent:**
  - Legally responsible person or custodian of a child as defined by UAE law.
- **Safeguarding:**
  - Protecting students from all risks of harm, including maltreatment and other risks impacting their health, development, and safety.
- **School Day:**
  - The educational institution's operating hours, including time spent on school buses and extracurricular activities.
- **Staff:**
  - Any individual employed by the school, whether internally or externally, on a contractual basis.

- **Student:**
  - A resident enrolled in an educational institution in Abu Dhabi.
- **Student Maltreatment:**
  - Abuse (physical, emotional, sexual), including neglect, exploitation, bullying, and cyberbullying of a student.
- **Student Protection:**
  - Measures taken to prevent, protect, and support students from the risk of maltreatment while under the educational institution's supervision.
- **Supervision:**
  - The responsibility of overseeing and ensuring a student's security and wellbeing during school-related activities inside or outside the school premises.
- **Invited Visitor:**
  - Temporary visitor to the educational institution, interacting with students (e.g., a guest speaker, career fair representative).
- **Volunteer:**
  - Non-remunerated individuals engaged by the educational institution to interact with students (e.g., parent chaperones).
- **Acronyms:**
  - **ADEK:** Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge
  - **CPC/CPO:** Child Protection Coordinator/Officer
  - **CPS:** Child Protection Specialist
  - **CPT:** Child Protection Team
  - **CPU:** Child Protection Unit
  - **FCA:** Family Care Authority
  - **MoE:** UAE Ministry of Education
  - **MoI-CPC:** UAE Ministry of Interior – Child Protection Center

Types of Student Maltreatment

- **Physical Abuse:**
  - Intentional physical act that results in or threatens physical injury or harm to the student's health, survival, and development.
- **Emotional Abuse:**
  - Actions that make a student feel unloved, worthless, and interfere with their emotional development.
- **Sexual Abuse:**
  - Involvement of a student in sexual activity, whether they fully comprehend it or not, violates laws or social taboos.
  - May occur between an adult and a student or between students, where one is in a position of responsibility or power.
  - The intent is to gratify the needs of the other person.
- **Neglect:**
  - Failure of a parent or supervising adult to provide for a student's basic needs, leading to harm or risk of harm to their health or development.

- **Exploitation:**

- Use of a student in work or activities for others' benefit, including sexual and economic exploitation.
- **Sexual Exploitation:**
  - Abuse of power by an adult or group to coerce or deceive a student into sexual activity for profit (monetary, social, or political).
- **Economic Exploitation:**
  - Use of a student below the minimum age for labor in activities that benefit others.

- **Bullying:**
  - Repeated physical, social, or verbal aggression by students who perceive themselves in a position of power over weaker students.
  - Can occur individually or in groups, in online (cyberbullying) or offline settings.
  - **Cyberbullying:**
    - Online bullying that follows the student via social networks or mobile phones, often having a wider reach than real-world bullying.

Principles

- The safety and wellbeing of the student are ICS's top priority in all safeguarding actions.
- The ICS principal and all staff are responsible for recognizing, responding to, and managing risks to student protection.
- ICS staff and volunteers are protected from penalties for fulfilling their responsibilities to report maltreatment.
- All students have the right to be heard, treated with dignity, and receive necessary support when needed.
- Zero tolerance for all forms of maltreatment is implemented and upheld at ICS in all environments related to students.

ICS Policy

Legal Obligations and Rights

- This policy at ICS is developed in alignment with federal student protection regulations and related policies, following ADEK guidelines (see “References” section).
- ICS complies with the provisions of this policy. The school develops and publishes a student protection policy that meets the minimum standards and adheres to the specific context of ICS, ensuring no contradictions with ADEK’s guidelines.
- ICS adopts this policy and publishes it on the school website to ensure transparency and accessibility to all stakeholders.
- ICS ensures full compliance with the **Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions (ECA, 2024)** guide, which provides clear steps for managing reported abuse-related offenses.
- The ICS student protection policy is communicated, understood, and agreed upon by all stakeholders, including board members, staff, volunteers, parents, and students.

- A student-friendly version of the policy is provided to students, and their consent is sought if concerns about their protection arise.

- At ICS, the principal acts as the guardian of all students under the school's supervision and takes responsibility for protecting their rights, ensuring that they are not exposed to any form of maltreatment.
- All ICS students are entitled to equal care, protection, and safety. The school takes full responsibility for their wellbeing while they are under ICS's supervision.

Reporting of Concerns of Maltreatment within ICS

- ICS staff, including any person in regular or temporary contact with students (educators, support staff, and volunteers), are required by Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights to report all cases of alleged or suspected maltreatment to the ADEK Child Protection Unit (CPU) within 24 hours.
    - ICS staff follows the outlined procedures, including using the **Safety Concern Referrals in Abu Dhabi Educational Institutions** and **Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions (ECA, 2024)** guides.
- Any concerns of student maltreatment that occur inside or outside of ICS are immediately reported to the ICS Child Protection Coordinator (CPC) or their appointed representative.
- ICS adheres to the **National Policy for the Prevention of Bullying in Educational Institutions** (MoE) when handling bullying cases.
    - All bullying concerns are managed according to this framework, with severe bullying (cases that have or risk having significant physical or emotional effects on the student) treated as maltreatment and handled under this policy.
- ICS appoints a **Child Protection Coordinator (CPC)** and forms a **Child Protection Team (CPT)**, with the following roles:
    - The ICS CPC undergoes ADEK-mandated training and is preferably a senior staff member or an experienced individual working with students at educational risk.
    - The ICS CPT typically includes 3-5 members, such as the school counselor, social worker, and senior leadership team members, any of whom may take on the role of CPC.
        - In cases where such a team cannot be fully formed, the CPC manages all student protection concerns. A delegate is always available to perform CPC duties when the CPC is unavailable.

Procedure for Reporting Concerns

- Any ICS staff member or volunteer who receives an allegation or has a concern about a student being maltreated or at risk of maltreatment (as outlined in the **Types of Maltreatment** section), immediately reports the concern to the ICS CPC, their representative, or any other CPT member.
    - This includes concerns of maltreatment occurring both inside and outside the school premises.

- If the reporter cannot reach the CPC, their representative, or any other CPT member, or if it is not in the best interest of the student to inform the CPC or team, the concern is reported

directly to ADEK CPU or the Family Care Authority (FCA) by completing the **Safety Concern Form** on the digital safety concern portal.

Emergency Cases

- In cases where the student is in imminent danger, the ICS CPC immediately reports the situation to:
    - The Police (999)
    - The ICS Principal
    - Complete and submit the **Safety Concern Form** online on the digital safety concern portal.
- Details of emergency cases follow the guidelines outlined in the **Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions (ECA, 2024)** document.

Reporting of Concerns of Maltreatment

- All ICS staff must report any suspected case of maltreatment to the CPC or ADEK's CPU within 24 hours of suspicion.
- Bullying cases will be handled according to the National Policy for the Prevention of Bullying, and severe cases will be treated as maltreatment.
- ICS will appoint a CPC and a Child Protection Team (CPT), who will handle student protection concerns and report them to ADEK annually.

Data Confidentiality

- All case reports and student data will be kept confidential, shared only with authorized personnel and authorities involved in the case.
- No discussions of active or closed cases are permitted with unauthorized parties, media, or other ICS staff.

Training

- The CPC and CPT at ICS will undergo all ADEK-mandated training related to student protection and safeguarding.
- ICS staff will complete safeguarding training and confirm their understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
- Volunteers and invited visitors at ICS will receive proper induction and training on the school's student protection policies.

Vetting, Hiring, and Monitoring of Staff, Volunteers, and Visitors

- All ICS staff, volunteers, and invited visitors will be vetted and screened before working with students, including conducting criminal background checks.

- The ICS principal will be responsible for ensuring the suitability of all staff and volunteers working with students.

- Continuous monitoring of staff and immediate reporting of inappropriate behavior will be conducted by the principal.

Acceptable Adult Behaviors

- ICS staff and volunteers must respect and protect students' rights at all times.
- Inappropriate behaviors towards students must be reported immediately.
- Allegations of serious misconduct, including sexual misconduct, will be directly reported to the police and the Family Care Authority (FCA).

Student Protection Learning Resources

- ICS will provide age-appropriate student protection learning resources to students to support their understanding of personal safety and wellbeing.
- Trained ICS staff will deliver lessons on student protection and safety in classrooms and counseling sessions.
- Students will be informed of how to seek help and report concerns about their safety.

Policy Dissemination and Review

- The ICS student protection policy will be published on the school's website and shared annually with parents, staff, and volunteers. A student-friendly version will also be made available.
- The policy will be reviewed and updated at least every 5 years, or as needed.

Roles and Responsibilities

ADEK

- Develop and enforce student protection policies.
- Provide support to ICS in implementing its student protection measures.
- Monitor compliance with student protection standards and support schools where needed.

ICS Principal

- Ensure full compliance with the student protection policy.
- Oversee student safety and ensure preventive measures against maltreatment are in place.
- Communicate with students, parents, and staff about safety concerns.
- Report any suspicion of maltreatment and ensure proper training of staff and volunteers.
- Conduct parent orientation sessions to promote the policy and inform parents of their roles and responsibilities.

ICS Staff and Volunteers

- Report any alleged or suspected maltreatment immediately.

- Care for students while under ICS supervision.

- Understand and uphold the ICS student protection policy, including attending mandatory safeguarding training.

Parents

- Cooperate with ICS staff in matters related to student safety and behavior.
- Attend scheduled meetings with ICS regarding student progress and safety.
- Communicate any concerns about their child's behavior or wellbeing to ICS staff.

Compliance

- ICS must comply with this policy by the start of the 2025/2026 academic year.
- ADEK will rigorously monitor compliance, and failure to comply may result in legal or administrative penalties as outlined by UAE Federal laws and ADEK regulations.

References

- UAE Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights (Wadeema's Law).
- ADEK, National Policy for the Prevention of Bullying in Educational Institutions.
- Abu Dhabi Early Childhood Authority, Student Protection Policy for Educational Institutions (2024).