



Victory Heights Primary School
City of Arabia
**Safeguarding and Child
Protection Policy**

Version Date: August 2026

Last review date: August 2026

Next review date: August 2027

Responsible SLT: Principal

Key Contacts

Within School

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Ms Ben Rothwell - Principal

Tel: 058 581 9964 Email: principal@vhprimarycoa.ae

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (PS)

Ms Rob McCall - Deputy Headteacher

Tel: 050 634 8442 Email: rmcall@vhprimarycoa.ae

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (FS)

Ms Natalie Doidge - Head of EYFS

Tel: 052 918 0688 Email: ndoidge@vhprimarycoa.ae

Nominated Governor for Child Protection and Safeguarding

Ms Rachael Wilding

Email: rachael@edsidera.com

Chairman of Board of Governors

Mr Dinesh Kothari

Email: dinesh.kothari@interstar.ae

External Contacts

Ministry Of Education Child Protection Unit

Email: CPU@moe.gov.ae – Tel: 80085

Community Development Authority Child Protection Section

Tel: 800988 Website: www.cda.gov.ae

Ministry Of Interior Child Protection Centre

Tel: 116111 Website: www.moi-cpc.ae

Al Ameen Service

Tel: 800-4-888

Dubai Foundation For Women And Children

Tel: +97146060300 Email: help@dfwa.ae, Website: www.dfwac.ae

Dubai Police

Tel: +971 460 9999 Email: mail@dubaipolice.gov.ae

Table of Contents

Equal Opportunities Statement	6
Safeguarding Policy Statement	6
Links to Other Policies	7
Introduction	8
Purpose	8
Context	8
Aims	8
Availability, Cover and Continuity	12
Safeguarding Training and Updates	13
Safeguarding Law and Guidance	14
Key Terminology	15
Types of Abuse	17
Physical Abuse	17
Emotional Abuse	17
Sexual Abuse	18
Neglect	18
Specific and Overlapping Safeguarding Harms	19
Child-on-Child Abuse	19
Bullying	19
Harmful Sexual Behaviour	20
Child Sexual Exploitation	20
Child Criminal Exploitation	21
Domestic Abuse	21
Female Genital Mutilation	21
Radicalisation and Extremism	21
Online Abuse and Digital Harm	22
Trafficking and Modern Slavery	22
Forced Marriage	22
Honour-Based Abuse	23
Serious Violence and Weapons	23
Reporting Concerns	23
Signs of abuse	24
Recognising and Responding to Disclosures	25
Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedures	27
Action by the DSL	28
Emergency Action	29

External Child-Protection Contacts	29
Informing Parents or Carers	30
Child's Voice	30
If the DSL Is Unavailable or There Is Professional Disagreement	31
Attendance and Punctuality	32
Children Missing Education (CME)	32
Continuity of Education in Extenuating Circumstances	34
Mental Health and Well-Being Monitoring	34
Student Education and Involvement in Safeguarding	36
Safeguarding Through the Curriculum	36
Student Voice and Peer Involvement	37
Internet Filtering and Monitoring	37
Enhanced Keyword Alerts	37
Monitoring Reports	37
Parental Controls and Engagement	38
Regular Staff Training	38
Use of National Guidance and Tools	38
Commitment to Continuous Improvement	38
Preventing Extremism and Terrorism:	40
Radicalisation and Extremism Risk Assessment	40
Transport/Bus Policy	41
Urgent Medical Care and Safeguarding Protocols	43
Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations About Adults	44
Concerns About Staff, Supply Staff, Trainee Teachers, Volunteers or Contractors	44
Concerns About the Principal	44
External Reporting	44
Safe Working Practice	45
Use of Photography and Recording Devices	45
Safeguarding SEND and Children of Determination	46
After School Activities	47
Reporting	47
Child Protection Vetting	47
Site Safety	49
Safeguarding Record Transfer	50
Allegations against the Principal/DSL	51
Appendix 1	54
Identifying Signs of Child Abuse	54
Appendix 2	58

What to do when a child confides in you	58
Appendix 3	60
Guidance on Toileting Needs	60
Appendix 4	61
Briefing Sheet for Temporary Staff and Volunteers	61
Appendix 5	62
Transporting Children for School Activities	62
HR Responsibility	62
Driver Requirements	62
Bus Escorts	62
Appendix 6	63
Victory Heights Reporting Tool - Safeguard by Wasil	63
Appendix 7	64
MOI Child Protection Centre REFERRAL FORM	64
Appendix 8	67
Child Protection Flow Chart	67
Appendix 9	68
Bullying Flowchart	68
Appendix 10	69
Lanyard Colours	69
Appendix 11	70
Guidelines for Writing a Factual Report on a Safeguarding Issue	70
Purpose	70
Key Principles for Writing Safeguarding Reports	70
Words to Avoid in Safeguarding Reports	70
Example of a Poorly Written Report	71
Rewritten as a Factual Report	71
Checklist Before Submitting the Report	71
Additional Safeguarding Resources	72
Monitoring and Compliance	73
Policy Development and Review Approach	73
Version Control Table	73

Equal Opportunities Statement

The aims of the School and the principles of excellent pastoral care will be applied to all, irrespective of their race, sex, disability, religion or belief; equally these characteristics will be recognised and respected, and the School will aim to provide a positive culture of tolerance, equality and mutual respect.

Safeguarding Policy Statement

At Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia , we are unwavering in our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people under our care. Our safeguarding policy is guided by the principles outlined in the UK Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), most recently updated in July 2025, with amendments taking effect from September 2025.

Operating within the United Arab Emirates, our policy also adheres to local legislation, including Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 (Wadeema's Law), which underscores the rights of children to protection from all forms of neglect, exploitation, and abuse. Furthermore, we align with international legal frameworks and conventions, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to ensure a comprehensive and globally informed approach to safeguarding.

This policy is designed to foster a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment where every child is empowered to thrive. We are dedicated to continuous improvement, regularly reviewing and updating our safeguarding practices to reflect evolving standards and best practices.

Links to Other Policies

This policy forms part of a suite of policies and procedures that together promote the safeguarding and wellbeing of children at Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia. It should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy (including Cyberbullying)
- Personal Digital Devices Policy
- Responsible Use Policy
- Educational Visits and Trips Policy
- Behaviour and Sanctions Policy
- HR Manual
- Intimate Care Policy
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Data Protection and Privacy Policy
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy
- Medication Management Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

These policies collectively reflect our commitment to creating a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment for all children.

Introduction

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia fully recognizes its responsibility to safeguard, promote and protect the safety of all children. The guiding principle is the belief that it is always unacceptable for a child to experience abuse of any kind. This policy has been formulated to ensure that Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia takes every possible measure to prevent abuse. It aims to ensure that none of its staff or volunteers engage in behaviour that could allow abuse to occur or actions that could be misinterpreted by children, their families or other adults as constituting or leading to abuse.

Child abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and or emotional ill treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment resulting in the actual or potential harm to a child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility of trust or power according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

A child protection policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children from harm and makes clear to all what is required in relation to the protection of children. It helps to create a safe and positive environment for children and to show that all staff of Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia take our responsibility of care seriously.

Purpose

An effective whole school child protection policy provides clear direction to staff and others in regard to expected behaviour when dealing with child protection issues. An effective policy also makes explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child.

Context

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia recognizes that children have a right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively and succeed in school if they are suffering emotionally or physically. School staff are uniquely placed to recognize signs of abuse and build strong bonds with children in their care.

Aims

The aim of Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia child protection policy is to safeguard children from all forms of violence, negligence, abuse, exploitation in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the UAE Child Protection Law 2016 ('Wadeema's Law' – Federal Law No.3 2016). The Convention refers to all children up to the age of 18 years.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as protecting children from maltreatment, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care (UNICEF). The best interests of the child should be the primary consideration, children are to be protected from all forms of discrimination and every child has the right to life, survival and development.

It is our aim to

- Raise awareness of child protection, safeguarding roles and responsibilities with school staff and volunteers.
- Develop, implement and review procedures in our school that enable all staff and volunteers to identify and report cases, or suspected cases of abuse.
- Support children with additional needs.
- Ensure the practise of safe recruitment in checking and recording of the suitability of staff and volunteers who work with children.
- Establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Ensure that allegations or concerns against staff are dealt with in accordance with the Dubai Ministry of the Interior and Department of Education policies and procedures.

The whole school will aim to:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are heard.
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or to have concerns.
- Include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- Follow the procedures set out by the Department of Education and the Ministry of the Interior.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and its staff, by setting out its obligations on child protection, on the school website and the parents handbook, and that parents are offered a copy of the policy on request.
- Ensure that children have an understanding of the Child Protection Policy by making a child-friendly copy available, as well as delivering lessons on child-protection and safeguarding issues through the course of MSC lessons and other appropriate means, where applicable.
- Notify the Ministry of Interior Child Protection Centre of any suspected cases of child abuse.

- Inform parents of any concerns, and provide them with opportunities to change the situation, where this does not place the child at greater risk.
- Develop effective links with the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) Child Protection Centre and local police.
- Liaise with other agencies that support children.
- Ensure there is a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) appointed.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead in Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia is Ben Rothwell(Principal).

In the event of this person being unavailable please report to Rob McCall or Natalie Doidge Deputy DSLs.

The DSL responsibilities are to:

- Ensure that the school directors and staff are fully aware of and understand their responsibilities and obligations under this policy.
- Ensure that staff have appropriate training and attend training annually.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers know the name of the designated DSL, their role and contact details.
- Keep written records of child protection concerns, ensuring that they are stored securely and separately from the main pupil files.
- Ensure that copies of child protection records and/or records of concerns are transferred accordingly (separate from pupil files) when a child leaves the school.
- Ensure that when a pupil leaves the school their information is transferred to the new school immediately.

Responsibilities of adults within the School Community:

All adults working at Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia have a shared responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This includes maintaining an exemplary understanding of safeguarding best practice and the legal frameworks that underpin it.

- All staff are required to remain vigilant and alert to the signs and indicators of abuse, neglect, or harm.
- All adults must ensure that their safeguarding knowledge remains current and in line with local and international expectations. This includes the **mandatory reading of the annual update of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)***, and participation in school-led safeguarding training.

- If a member of staff identifies that a child may be at risk, they must record their concern factually and report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) **as soon as practically possible**, and always within the same day.
- If a child makes a disclosure of abuse, the adult must respond in line with the disclosure procedures outlined in this policy.
- If the disclosure involves an allegation against a member of staff, the adult must follow the school's **Allegations Against Staff** procedures immediately and directly inform the Principal or DSL.

All members of the school community must understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that failure to report concerns or follow procedures could place a child at further risk and result in disciplinary action.

Duty of Care

School staff have a crucial role in shaping the lives of young people. They have a unique opportunity to interact with children in ways that are both affirming and inspiring. This policy has been produced to help staff develop the safest possible learning and working environments which safeguard children and reduce the risk of staff being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

One of the key additions to legislation contained in the UAE Child Protection Policy, prepared by the Community Development Authority (CDA), is the mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse by child care providers, making school staff legally compelled to report concerns.

This means that adults should:

- Understand what child protection and safeguarding means and understand different types of abuse.
- Always act and be seen to be acting in the child's best interests.
- Pay particular attention to incidents of bullying and take immediate action.
- Have thorough knowledge of Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia Bullying Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Avoid any conduct that would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intent.

Availability, Cover and Continuity

During school hours, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a trained Deputy DSL will be available to discuss safeguarding concerns and provide advice to staff.

Robust cover arrangements will be maintained whenever the DSL is unavailable because of absence, leave, training or other commitments. All staff will be informed of the nominated Deputy DSL assuming responsibility during that period. Safeguarding responsibilities will not be left uncovered.

Appropriate safeguarding cover will also be arranged for:

- educational visits and residential trips;
- after-school activities and aftercare;
- school events taking place outside normal hours;
- holiday programmes and activities;
- periods when pupils are on site but the DSL is not physically present.

Where the DSL or Deputy DSL is not present on site, staff will have access to a clearly communicated emergency contact arrangement. Safeguarding concerns requiring immediate action must not be delayed until the DSL returns to school. In an emergency or where a child is believed to be at immediate risk, staff must contact the appropriate UAE emergency or child-protection authority directly and notify the DSL as soon as possible.

The school maintains a secure electronic safeguarding platform for recording and managing safeguarding concerns. The platform is accessible to authorised staff from approved devices, including mobile devices, and automatically alerts the Designated Safeguarding Lead when a concern is submitted, including outside normal school hours.

All safeguarding concerns must be recorded on the platform as soon as possible. However, submitting a report does not replace immediate verbal contact with the DSL or a Deputy DSL where a child may be at immediate or significant risk of harm. In an emergency, staff must take immediate action in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures, including contacting the appropriate UAE emergency or child-protection authority where necessary.

Access to safeguarding records is restricted according to role, and all information stored on the platform will be handled securely and confidentially.

A recorded safeguarding handover will take place whenever lead responsibility passes between the DSL and a Deputy DSL. The handover will identify:

- new or urgent concerns;
- children currently subject to safeguarding monitoring or intervention;
- referrals made or awaiting action;
- advice received from external agencies;
- actions, decisions and agreed timescales;
- relevant arrangements for trips, activities or periods outside normal school hours.

Handover records will be stored securely and access will be restricted to those who require the information to safeguard the child.

Safeguarding Training and Updates

The DSL and Deputy DSLs will undertake formal role-specific safeguarding and child-protection training at least once every two years. This training will provide them with the knowledge and skills required to fulfil their responsibilities within the UAE context and in accordance with the safeguarding standards adopted by the school.

In addition to formal biennial training, the knowledge and skills of the DSL and Deputy DSLs will be refreshed at least annually and whenever significant guidance, legislation or local procedures change. Updates may include professional briefings, relevant reading, safeguarding networks, case reviews and training relating to emerging risks.

All other staff, including temporary, part-time, administrative and support staff, volunteers and adults who do not work directly with children, will:

- receive safeguarding and child-protection training as part of their induction;
- receive a formal safeguarding update at least annually;
- receive regular safeguarding information and briefings throughout the year;
- read Part One of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* in full;
- confirm that they understand the school's safeguarding procedures, reporting routes and Staff Code of Conduct.

Training and updates will reflect current UAE requirements, the National Child Protection Policy in Educational Institutions and relevant international safeguarding guidance adopted by the school. The school will maintain an accurate record of attendance, completion and staff understanding.

Safeguarding Law and Guidance

The Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia Child Protection Policy is influenced and derived from the following pieces of legislation and documentation.

Primary UAE Requirements

- UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 on children's rights (Wadeema's Law) [Link](#)
- UAE Federal Decree Law No. 26 of 2025 Regarding Child Digital Safety [Link](#)
- UAE National Child Protection Policy in Educational Institutions [Link](#)
- Federal Decree-Law No. 45 of 2021 concerning Personal Data Protection [Link](#)
- Standards for clinics in Educational and Academic Settings (2020) [Link](#)
- UAE School Inspection Framework Section 5 The protection, care, guidance and support of students (2016) [Link](#)

International Frameworks Adopted by the School

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) [Link](#)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026) [Link](#)
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused (2015) [Link](#)
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child [Link](#)
- BSO Standards (2023) [Link](#)
- How to complete a risk assessment to assess the risk of people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism (2023) [Link](#)
- Combating Terrorism and Extremism (2024) [Link](#)
- Working together to improve school attendance (2026) [Link](#)

Key Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that risk comes from within or outside the home, including online;
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Child protection forms part of safeguarding and refers to the action taken to protect children who are suspected of experiencing, or being at risk of experiencing, significant harm.

Child refers to any person under the age of 18.

Staff refers to all adults working for or on behalf of the school, whether full-time, part-time, permanent, temporary, employed, contracted or unpaid. This includes leaders, teachers, support and administrative staff, supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers, contractors, external providers and members of the governing body.

Parent or carer refers to birth parents and any adult who has parental responsibility for, or provides care to, a child. This may include foster carers, adoptive parents, step-parents and guardians.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) refers to the senior member of staff with lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. The DSL provides advice and support to staff, manages safeguarding concerns and referrals, works with external agencies, oversees safeguarding records and helps ensure that safeguarding arrangements are effective throughout the school.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment. It may involve an adult or child causing harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse may be physical, emotional or sexual and may include neglect, exploitation or exposure to harmful behaviour or environments. It can take place wholly online or through a combination of online and offline activity.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs where this is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Child-on-child abuse refers to abuse of one child by another child or group of children. It may occur inside or outside school and may take place online. It includes bullying, discriminatory abuse, physical abuse, abuse within intimate relationships, harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment, sexual violence, the sharing or creation of nude or semi-nude images, including AI-generated or digitally manipulated images, and initiation or hazing-type behaviour.

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) refers to sexual behaviour displayed by a child that is developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful towards themselves or others, or may involve abuse, coercion, intimidation, exploitation or violence. Harmful sexual behaviour exists on a continuum and must be considered in the context of the child's age and stage of development.

Sexual harassment refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online or offline. It may include sexual comments, jokes, gestures, rumours, unwanted attention or the non-consensual sharing or manipulation of sexual images.

Sexual violence refers to sexual acts or activity that take place without consent, or where a child is unable to give consent. Concerns about sexual violence must always be treated as safeguarding matters.

Consent means having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent must be informed, voluntary and specific, and it may be withdrawn at any time. A child's age, understanding, vulnerability, power imbalance, coercion, fear or pressure may affect their capacity or freedom to consent.

Nudes and semi-nudes refers to nude or semi-nude images, videos or livestreams that are created, shared or manipulated by children or adults. This includes images generated or altered using artificial

Types of Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. It may involve an adult or another child inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse may take place on a single occasion or repeatedly over time. It may occur within or outside the family home or school and can take place wholly online or through a combination of online and offline activity.

Children may experience more than one form of abuse, neglect or exploitation at the same time. Safeguarding concerns should therefore be considered holistically rather than in isolation.

The four principal categories of abuse are physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. This is sometimes referred to as fabricated or induced illness.

Physical abuse may be caused by an adult or another child.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child that causes, or is likely to cause, severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It may involve:

- conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person;
- imposing expectations that are inappropriate for the child's age or stage of development;
- preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction;
- repeatedly silencing a child or making fun of how they communicate;
- verbal abuse, including persistent criticism, belittling, humiliation, rejection, threats or name-calling;
- causing a child to feel frightened, unsafe, controlled or in danger;
- serious bullying, including cyberbullying;

- witnessing or experiencing domestic abuse; or
- the exploitation or corruption of a child.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all forms of maltreatment, although it may also occur independently.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing, coercing, manipulating or enticing a child to take part in sexual activity. It may occur whether or not the child understands what is happening and may involve physical contact or non-contact activity.

Physical-contact abuse may include assault by penetration and other sexual activity such as touching a child's body over or under clothing, kissing or causing a child to touch another person in a sexual manner.

Non-contact abuse may include:

- involving a child in looking at or producing sexual images;
- encouraging a child to watch sexual activity;
- making, sharing or manipulating nude or semi-nude images of a child, including images generated or altered using artificial intelligence;
- sexual comments, communication or grooming;
- exposing a child to sexual content or activity; or
- encouraging a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Sexual abuse can take place online and technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. It may be committed by adults or other children. Most sexual abuse is committed by someone known to the child.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, where this is likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. After birth, it may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing or shelter;
- protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger;
- provide adequate supervision or ensure appropriate care arrangements;
- ensure access to necessary medical care or treatment;
- meet the child's educational needs; or

- respond to the child's basic emotional needs.

Neglect may also involve abandonment, unsafe living conditions, inadequate stimulation or a failure to act when a child's needs or risk of harm are known.

Specific and Overlapping Safeguarding Harms

The following harms may involve one or more of the four principal categories of abuse. This list is not exhaustive.

Child-on-Child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse occurs when a child or group of children harms another child. It can take place inside or outside school and online. It may include:

- bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying;
- racism, faith-targeted abuse and other discriminatory behaviour;
- physical assault or threats of physical harm, including threats involving weapons;
- abuse within intimate personal relationships between children;
- sexual harassment and sexual violence;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- consensual or non-consensual creation or sharing of nude or semi-nude images, including AI-generated or digitally manipulated images;
- upskirting or other non-consensual recording;
- coercing someone to engage in sexual activity; and
- initiation or hazing-type violence or rituals.

The school maintains a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. It will never be dismissed as banter, joking, part of growing up or "boys being boys". The absence of reported incidents does not mean that abuse is not occurring.

All concerns will be taken seriously and managed through the school's safeguarding procedures. Appropriate support will be considered for the child who may have experienced harm, the child alleged to have caused harm and any other affected children.

Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another person physically or emotionally and involves an imbalance of power.

Bullying may be:

- physical, such as hitting, kicking, damaging belongings or theft;
- verbal, such as threats, insults, name-calling or discriminatory remarks;
- relational or emotional, such as exclusion, humiliation, intimidation or spreading rumours; or
- online, including harmful messages, images, impersonation or exclusion through digital platforms.

Bullying can cause significant distress and may affect a child's physical health, emotional wellbeing, development, attendance and learning. Severe or persistent bullying may constitute a safeguarding concern and must be reported to the DSL in addition to being managed under the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Harmful sexual behaviour refers to sexual behaviour displayed by a child that is developmentally inappropriate, may cause harm to themselves or others, or involves coercion, intimidation, exploitation or violence.

Sexual behaviour exists on a continuum from developmentally expected behaviour to inappropriate, problematic, abusive or violent behaviour. Staff must not dismiss concerning behaviour as curiosity or experimentation without considering the child's age, stage of development, consent, power imbalance, frequency and impact.

All concerns involving harmful sexual behaviour require a safeguarding response.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group uses an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity.

This may occur:

- in exchange for something the child needs or wants;
- for the financial advantage or increased status of the person causing the harm; or
- through threats, coercion, grooming or control.

Child sexual exploitation can take place in person or online. A child may appear to cooperate because of grooming, coercion or fear and may not recognise that they are being exploited. Exploitation may be committed by an individual or facilitated by an organised group or network.

Child Criminal Exploitation

Child criminal exploitation occurs where an individual or group uses an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity.

It may involve theft, violence, carrying weapons, transporting illegal items, financial offences or digitally facilitated criminal activity. Children may be criminalised for actions undertaken as a result of coercion or exploitation and may identify with, or feel loyalty towards, the individual, group or network exploiting them.

Children who have been criminally exploited must be recognised and supported as potential victims of abuse.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse may involve physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, stalking, harassment or emotional and psychological abuse between people connected through a family or personal relationship.

Children may experience domestic abuse by seeing, hearing or being directly affected by abusive behaviour in the home. Domestic abuse also includes abuse directed by a child towards a parent or caregiver. Exposure to domestic abuse is a safeguarding concern, even where the child is not the direct target.

Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia, or other injury to female genital organs, for non-medical reasons. It is a serious form of child abuse and a violation of a child's rights.

Any concern that a child may be at risk of, has undergone or may be taken outside the UAE for female genital mutilation must be reported immediately to the DSL and managed through the applicable UAE child-protection procedures.

Radicalisation and Extremism

Radicalisation is the process through which a person comes to support terrorism or extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Children may be exposed to radicalising influences in person or online, including through social media, gaming, misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy narratives. Staff must report concerns immediately through the school's safeguarding procedures. The school will

respond in accordance with applicable UAE law and reporting arrangements, informed where appropriate by international safeguarding guidance.

Online Abuse and Digital Harm

Online abuse is abuse facilitated through digital technology, including social media, messaging services, online games, livestreaming platforms, artificial intelligence tools and other digital environments.

It may include:

- cyberbullying and discriminatory abuse;
- grooming and sexual or criminal exploitation;
- coercion, blackmail or sextortion;
- creation or sharing of nude or semi-nude images;
- AI-generated or digitally manipulated sexual images and deepfakes;
- impersonation or identity misuse;
- exposure to harmful, violent, extremist or age-inappropriate content;
- encouragement of self-harm, suicide or disordered eating; and
- misuse of a child's personal information, image or location.

Online abuse may take place alongside offline abuse. Concerns must be recorded and reported through the school's safeguarding procedures.

Trafficking and Modern Slavery

Child trafficking involves recruiting, transporting, transferring, harbouring or receiving a child for the purpose of exploitation. Movement across a border is not required for trafficking to occur.

Exploitation may be sexual, criminal, domestic, financial or labour-related and may constitute modern slavery. Children may be controlled through threats, violence, debt, fear, isolation or the removal of identification documents.

A child may not recognise or disclose that they are being exploited. Indicators must be considered alongside the child's individual circumstances and reported immediately.

Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is one entered into without the free and full consent of one or both people, including where pressure, threats, coercion, deception or abuse are used.

Concerns that a child may be at risk of forced marriage must be reported immediately to the DSL. Staff must not approach family members or attempt mediation where doing so could increase the risk to the child. The school will seek advice from the appropriate UAE child-protection authority.

Honour-Based Abuse

So-called “honour”-based abuse refers to acts of violence, threats, coercion or control committed to protect or defend the perceived honour of a family or community.

It may include forced marriage, female genital mutilation, physical assault, emotional abuse, restrictions on movement, surveillance, abandonment or threats to life. There is no honour in abuse, and all such concerns must be treated as safeguarding matters.

Staff must not approach family or community members where this could place the child at increased risk.

Serious Violence and Weapons

Children may be at risk of, or involved in, serious violence within school, at home or in the wider community. Indicators may include increased absence, changes in friendships, unexplained injuries, declining attainment, self-isolation, carrying weapons or association with individuals or groups involved in violence.

Any concern involving a weapon, a threat of serious harm or an immediate risk of violence must be reported without delay and managed through the school’s emergency and safeguarding procedures.

Reporting Concerns

Staff must remain alert to the possibility that safeguarding harms overlap and may be concealed, normalised or underreported. Children may not recognise that they are being abused or may find it difficult to disclose what is happening.

Staff do not need proof before reporting a concern and must not investigate suspected abuse themselves. All concerns must be reported immediately to the DSL or a Deputy DSL and recorded on the school’s safeguarding platform.

Where a child is at immediate risk of harm, staff must take urgent action in accordance with the school’s safeguarding procedures, including contacting the appropriate UAE emergency or child-protection authority where necessary.

Signs of abuse

Recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation is not always straightforward. Children may not recognise that what is happening to them is abusive, may be frightened or unable to explain it, or may communicate their concerns indirectly.

Staff are not responsible for determining whether abuse has occurred or for investigating a concern. Their responsibility is to remain alert, respond appropriately, record what they have seen or heard and report the concern immediately so that the DSL and appropriate child-protection authorities can determine what action is required.

Staff should remember that:

- many forms of abuse do not leave visible physical signs;
- a child may experience more than one form of abuse, neglect or exploitation;
- signs and indicators may be physical, emotional, behavioural, social, educational or online;
- changes in behaviour, attendance, wellbeing, relationships or engagement with learning may indicate that a child needs help;
- children may communicate distress through words, behaviour, play, drawings, writing or digital activity;
- children may disclose abuse directly, indirectly or in stages;
- a child may retract, minimise or appear uncertain about a disclosure;
- delayed disclosure is common and does not mean that the information is untrue;
- children may remain attached or loyal to a person who is harming them;
- abuse can affect any child, regardless of age, sex, nationality, race, religion, culture, disability, family background or socioeconomic circumstances;
- children with SEND, communication difficulties or medical conditions may face additional barriers to recognising or reporting abuse;
- behaviour that appears challenging, sexualised, withdrawn or unusual should not automatically be attributed to a child's age, SEND, disability or family circumstances;
- abuse may take place inside or outside the home or school and may occur wholly online or through a combination of online and offline activity; and
- the absence of a disclosure or visible injury does not mean that a child is safe.

Individual indicators do not necessarily prove that abuse has occurred. However, staff do not need certainty or proof before reporting a concern. A combination or pattern of apparently minor indicators may be significant and must not be overlooked.

Refer to: Appendix 1 - Identifying signs of child abuse.

Recognising and Responding to Disclosures

Children are most likely to share concerns with an adult whom they know and trust. A disclosure may be direct, but it may also emerge indirectly through conversation, behaviour, play, drawings, writing, schoolwork or online communication.

When a child shares information that may indicate abuse, neglect or exploitation, the member of staff or volunteer must:

- remain calm and listen carefully;
- take the child seriously;
- allow the child to speak in their own words;
- avoid interrupting or expressing shock, disbelief or judgement;
- use only open and necessary prompts, such as “Tell me what happened” or “Explain what you mean”;
- not ask leading, suggestive or repeated questions;
- not investigate, confront the person alleged to have caused harm or seek evidence;
- not promise secrecy or complete confidentiality;
- explain that the information must be shared with people who can help keep the child safe;
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking;
- avoid making promises about what will happen next;
- report the concern immediately to the DSL or a Deputy DSL;
- make an accurate, factual record as soon as possible, using the child’s exact words where relevant; and
- record and submit the concern through the school’s safeguarding platform.

Where a child may be at immediate risk, the member of staff must make direct verbal contact with the DSL or a Deputy DSL without delay. Recording the concern on the safeguarding platform does not replace this immediate verbal escalation.

Staff must preserve any potentially relevant evidence and must not photograph injuries or access, copy, forward or delete digital material unless directed by the DSL or an appropriate authority. Where urgent medical attention is required, the child’s immediate health and safety take priority.

A child must never be asked to repeat their account unnecessarily. Poor questioning or an informal investigation may cause further distress, contaminate evidence and compromise subsequent child-protection or criminal proceedings.

Refer to: Appendix 2 - What to do if a child confides in you.

Refer to: Appendix 11 - Guidelines for Writing a Factual Report on a Safeguarding Issue

Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedures

The prime concern at all stages must be the safety and interests of the child. Legal and regulatory requirements are necessary for guidance on best practice in safeguarding children. UNICEF explains safeguarding as “taking all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children’s welfare is minimised; and where there are concerns about children and young people’s welfare, taking appropriate action to address those concerns”.

The following procedures should be read in conjunction with the flow chart (Appendix 8). If a member of staff suspects abuse e.g. through physical injury etc. they must:

1. Make a full and accurate record of their concerns using Safeguard by Wasil
Refer to: Appendix 11 - Guidelines for Writing a Factual Report on a Safeguarding Issue
2. Include body maps if necessary.
3. Consider if there is a requirement for immediate medical intervention and if so assistance must be called for.

Following a report of concerns from a member of staff, the DSL must:

1. Decide whether or not there are sufficient grounds for suspecting child abuse, in which case a referral must be made to the Ministry of the Interior Child Protection Centre in Dubai. It is operated by the United Arab Emirates Ministry of the Interior and its mandate is to protect children across the UAE.
2. If there is no risk of harm the DSL will either actively monitor the situation or seek advice from the MOI Child Protection Centre.
3. The DSL must confirm any referrals in writing to the MOI Child Protection Centre, within 24 hours, including the actions that have been taken. The written referral should be made using the Referral Form attached to this document.
4. If a child is in immediate danger and urgent protective action is required, the police should be called using the 999 service. The DSL should also notify the MOI Child Protection Centre of the occurrence and what action has been taken. The DSL should seek advice from the police/MOI Child Protection Centre about informing the parents.
5. Normally the school should try to discuss any concerns about a child’s welfare with the family and where possible seek their agreement before making a referral to the MOI

Child Protection Centre. However, this should only be done when it will not place the child at increased risk. The child's views should also be taken into account.

6. Where there is doubt or reservations about involving the child's family, the DSL should clarify with the MOI Child Protection Centre whether the parents should be told about the referral and, if so, when and by whom. This is important in cases where police may need to conduct a criminal investigation.

The Child Protection Centre, located in Al Barsha is open between 8 am and 3 pm for drop in services. A member of staff can be contacted 24 hours a day:

Hotline phone number 800988

Mobile phone number 056 682011

Email child@CDA.gov.ae

When making a statement it is important to relay the clear facts, any suspicions or allegations and whether or not there has been any contact with the child's family.

If the DSL feels unsure about whether a referral is necessary they can phone MOI Child Protection Centre to discuss concerns and obtain advice. To do so will not constitute a child abuse referral and may well help to clarify a situation.

Refer to: Appendix 11 - Guidelines for Writing a Factual Report on a Safeguarding Issue

Action by the DSL

Following receipt of a safeguarding concern, the DSL or Deputy DSL will:

1. review the available information promptly and consider the child's immediate safety and welfare;
2. speak with the person who raised the concern where clarification is necessary, without asking them to investigate further;
3. consider the child's wishes and feelings, taking account of their age, understanding, communication needs and best interests;
4. determine whether immediate medical attention, emergency protection, consultation with a child-protection authority, or a formal external referral is required;
5. consult the appropriate UAE child-protection authority where advice is required. Consultation must not delay emergency action or a referral where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child may be at risk of harm;
6. make an external referral whenever required by UAE law, applicable regulatory requirements or the level of risk identified;

7. record all actions, discussions, advice, decisions and outcomes on Safeguard by Wasil, including the rationale where a referral is or is not made;
8. ensure that agreed actions are allocated to a named person and completed within an appropriate timescale; and
9. continue to monitor the child's safety and wellbeing and review the concern in light of any further information.

The threshold for reporting is concern or reasonable suspicion, not proof. The DSL must not delay a referral in order to conduct an internal investigation.

Where the DSL decides that an external referral is not required, the rationale must be recorded and appropriate support, monitoring and review arrangements must be established. The concern should be reconsidered if further information emerges, circumstances change or agreed support does not reduce the risk.

Emergency Action

Where a child is in immediate danger, has suffered serious harm or requires urgent protection:

- Dubai Police must be contacted on **999**;
- emergency medical assistance must be requested on **998**, where required;
- the child must not be left alone;
- the DSL or a Deputy DSL must be informed immediately, where they are not already involved; and
- the relevant child-protection authority must be notified as soon as possible.

Emergency action must not be delayed while awaiting completion of an electronic record, speaking with parents or seeking approval from another member of staff.

External Child-Protection Contacts

The appropriate referral route will depend upon the nature, urgency and circumstances of the concern. Relevant reporting channels include:

- **Community Development Authority Child Protection:** 800988
- **Ministry of Interior Child Protection Centre:** 116111
- **Dubai Police emergency:** 999
- **Ambulance emergency:** 998
- **Ministry of Education Child Protection Unit:** through its current published reporting channel

The DSL will ensure that contact details are checked regularly and updated whenever an authority changes its reporting arrangements.

Any written referral or supporting documentation requested by an authority must be submitted securely and within the timeframe specified by that authority. A copy of the referral, confirmation of submission and any advice received must be retained on Safeguard by Wasil.

Informing Parents or Carers

Parents or carers will normally be informed when the school has a concern about their child and will usually be involved in planning appropriate support.

However, parental agreement is not required before making a safeguarding referral. Parents or carers must not be contacted before consultation with the DSL or relevant authority where doing so may:

- place the child or another person at increased risk;
- lead to intimidation, coercion or retaliation;
- result in the loss or destruction of evidence;
- compromise a child-protection or police investigation;
- cause an alleged perpetrator to abscond; or
- otherwise be contrary to the child's best interests.

Where there is uncertainty, the DSL will seek advice from the appropriate child-protection authority about whether, when and by whom parents or carers should be informed. The decision and rationale will be recorded.

Child's Voice

The child's wishes and feelings will be heard and taken seriously throughout the safeguarding process. The child will be given age-appropriate information about what is happening and what may happen next, unless sharing that information could place them or another person at risk or compromise an investigation.

The child's wishes will inform decision-making but will not prevent the school from taking action necessary to protect them or another child.

If the DSL Is Unavailable or There Is Professional Disagreement

If the DSL is unavailable, the concern must be reported immediately to a Deputy DSL.

If no member of the Safeguarding Team can be contacted and a child may be at risk, the member of staff must contact the appropriate child-protection or emergency authority directly and record the action taken.

Any member of staff who remains concerned that appropriate action has not been taken must escalate the matter to the Principal, a Deputy DSL, the nominated safeguarding governor or the appropriate external authority. No member of staff will be penalised for making a safeguarding report in good faith.

Where a concern involves the Principal or DSL, staff must follow the separate procedure for allegations or concerns involving the Principal and must not report the matter to the person who is the subject of the concern.

Attendance and Punctuality

At Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia, we recognise the critical role that regular attendance and punctuality play in safeguarding our students. Consistent attendance is not only essential for academic success but also for ensuring that students are safe and well-cared for.

Our approach is informed by *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* and *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*, alongside applicable KHDA requirements and UAE child-protection legislation. While the UK guidance is not statutory in the UAE, the school adopts its relevant safeguarding principles as international best practice

Please see the **Attendance and Punctuality Policy** for further details

Children Missing Education (CME)

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia recognises that children missing education can be at significant risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or radicalisation. We are committed to taking swift and proportionate action when a child's whereabouts becomes unknown or their attendance raises concern.

Repeated or prolonged absence from education can be an important warning sign of safeguarding concerns, including neglect, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, serious violence, mental health concerns or other harm. Patterns of absence will therefore be considered alongside the child's wider circumstances and any existing safeguarding information.

Children may be considered at risk of CME if:

- They are absent from school for a prolonged period without explanation
- They fail to return after an approved leave of absence
- They are withdrawn mid-term with no confirmed enrolment at another school
- There is a pattern of irregular attendance and communication from parents is limited or non-existent

The school takes the following actions in relation to CME:

- The Attendance Team and Pastoral Leads closely monitor absence patterns through iSams.
- When a child is absent without explanation, the school will attempt to contact the family on the first day of absence. Further action and escalation will be proportionate to the child's circumstances, known safeguarding risks and the

school's ability to establish the child's whereabouts. The school will not wait for a fixed number of days where there is reason to believe that a child may be at risk.

- If no contact is made, and the child is considered to be at potential risk, the matter is escalated to the DSL and may be referred to the Dubai Child Protection Centre or KHDA as appropriate.
- If a family is relocating, the school will request confirmation of the new school and transfer safeguarding records accordingly.
- For international families, the school encourages early communication of moves to avoid a safeguarding risk due to administrative oversight.

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia follows all relevant KHDA guidance and international best practices in preventing children from falling out of education. Our CME procedures are also consistent with Working Together to Improve School Attendance statutory guidance.

See also: Children Missing Education Policy

Use of Data for Safeguarding

All absences and lateness are logged within our student information system, allowing staff to generate regular reports for the DSL and safeguarding team. These reports help identify any patterns that may indicate a safeguarding concern, such as frequent absences following weekends or holidays, which could be a signal of neglect or other welfare issues.

The DSL reviews attendance records weekly, collaborating with teaching staff to ensure that any potential concerns are swiftly addressed. Where needed, support strategies are developed in partnership with parents to improve attendance.

Collaboration with External Agencies

For persistent attendance issues, the school works closely with external agencies, such as the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) and local child protection services. These partnerships ensure that we address any barriers to regular attendance and provide appropriate interventions to safeguard the child.

Continuity of Education in Extenuating Circumstances

At Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia , we are committed to ensuring the continuity of education for all pupils, including during extenuating circumstances such as extended absences due to health issues or other personal challenges. In line with our safeguarding and attendance principles, we provide access to online learning resources to ensure that children can continue their education remotely when necessary.

Teaching staff will support the delivery of this online work, ensuring it aligns with the curriculum and is accessible to all pupils. Our inclusion team will work closely with families to provide additional support for pupils with specific learning needs, ensuring that no child is left behind during times of disruption. The safeguarding of pupils remains a priority in these situations, and regular contact will be maintained with both students and families to monitor progress and wellbeing.

When necessary, we work collaboratively with the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) and other relevant external agencies to ensure that attendance is maintained and that any barriers to regular attendance are addressed.

Mental Health and Well-Being Monitoring

Staff will remain alert to signs that an absence may be connected to a safeguarding or mental health concern, including self-harm, disordered eating or suicidal ideation. Staff will not attempt to diagnose a mental health condition; concerns will be shared with the DSL and referred to appropriately qualified professionals where necessary.

- **Initial Assessment:** As part of the process for students with extended absences, we assess the potential impact on their mental health. This includes:
 1. Identifying any changes in behaviour, mood, or engagement with learning
 2. Regular communication with parents to check on the child's emotional state.
 3. Offering students access to virtual well-being support, including one-on-one check-ins with the pastoral team.
- **Ongoing Monitoring and Support:** During the period of absence, the pastoral team and class teacher will maintain weekly well-being check-ins with the student. These check-ins allow staff to monitor the child's emotional state, discuss any concerns, and offer strategies to support their well-being.

If emotional or social regression is identified, the school will provide additional resources, such as virtual social interaction sessions or access to counselling services through our support network.

- **Reintegration Support:** Upon the child's return to school, a reintegration plan is developed to assess and address any emotional or social challenges they may face.

This plan includes:

1. A gradual reintegration into the school environment, with adjustments to help the student feel secure.
2. Regular follow-up meetings with both the student and their parents to discuss progress and ensure they are receiving appropriate emotional and academic support.
3. Collaboration with External Agencies: If necessary, the school will collaborate with external agencies, such as child psychologists or local mental health services, to ensure that any deeper emotional issues are addressed professionally.

By embedding mental health assessments and emotional support into our continuity plans, we ensure that all students are not only academically supported during absences but also cared for emotionally and socially.

This provision underscores our commitment to both the educational and emotional welfare of our students, regardless of the circumstances.

For more information see: Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Student Education and Involvement in Safeguarding

At Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia , we believe that safeguarding is most effective when children are empowered to understand their rights, recognise unsafe situations, and take an active role in keeping themselves and others safe. In line with UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 (Wadeema’s Law) and the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), our curriculum and wider school culture are designed to build pupils’ knowledge, confidence, and voice around safeguarding themes.

Safeguarding Through the Curriculum

Safeguarding education is embedded across our curriculum in age-appropriate and meaningful ways:

- **Computing Curriculum:** Pupils learn about online safety, respectful digital communication, privacy and how to report concerns or seek help. They are taught to critically evaluate online content and understand risks including cyberbullying, grooming, misinformation, exploitation, inappropriate content and the misuse of generative AI, including AI-generated or digitally manipulated images.
- **Moral, Social and Cultural Studies (English) and Social Studies (Arabic):** These UAE-mandated subjects provide a structured platform for exploring topics such as children's rights, empathy, healthy relationships, emotional wellbeing, peer pressure, and safety in the wider community.
- **Whole School Enriching Curriculum:** Through weekly ELLI (Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory) themes, assemblies, *Mindful Mondays*, *Wellbeing Wednesdays*, and enrichment days such as Safer Internet Day and Anti-Bullying Week, children engage with real-life scenarios and explore values such as resilience, kindness, and mutual respect. See also: Whole School Enriching Curriculum
- **Rights Respecting Schools Approach:** Our work is underpinned by the articles of the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**, many of which are mirrored in Wadeema’s Law. Children are taught that they have the right to feel safe, be listened to, and be protected from harm — and that these rights come with responsibilities to protect others as well.

Student Voice and Peer Involvement

- **Pupil Voice and Feedback:** Through circle time, class charters, pastoral surveys, and School Council meetings, students regularly contribute to how safeguarding is discussed and delivered across the school.

By embedding safeguarding into both the academic curriculum and the fabric of school life, we ensure that every child at VHPS-COA is not only protected — but also informed, empowered, and confident in their right to be safe.

Internet Filtering and Monitoring

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia is committed to ensuring a safe online environment for all pupils and staff. Our approach to online safety includes both proactive measures and ongoing monitoring to safeguard against harmful or inappropriate content. The school employs a comprehensive internet filtering system to prevent access to such content while using school devices and networks.

The school's online-safety approach considers the four broad areas of online risk: content, contact, conduct and commerce. This includes risks arising from harmful or age-inappropriate material, unsafe interaction with others, harmful online behaviour, exploitation, scams and other financially motivated harms.

Enhanced Keyword Alerts

Our filtering system is configured to flag specific keywords or phrases that may indicate safeguarding concerns, such as references to bullying, radicalization, self-harm, or accessing inappropriate material. These flagged terms generate immediate alerts, which are automatically sent to both the IT department and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for prompt investigation and action.

The system is continuously updated to reflect the latest online threats, ensuring we remain proactive in identifying potential risks to our students' safety.

Monitoring Reports

In addition to real-time alerts, the system generates daily and weekly reports detailing any flagged content. These reports are reviewed by the DSL and IT staff, enabling the school to identify any patterns or trends that may indicate ongoing issues or vulnerabilities among

students. This regular review process allows for early intervention and tailored support for individuals who may be at risk.

Parental Controls and Engagement

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia recognises the importance of extending online safety beyond the school environment. To support this, we offer regular workshops and resources for parents, providing guidance on how to manage their children's internet use at home. These sessions cover the dangers of unsupervised internet access and offer practical advice on setting up parental controls and monitoring.

A detailed guide on internet safety at home is also available to parents, outlining the school's expectations and how we can collaborate to ensure safe online practices are upheld outside school hours.

Regular Staff Training

To ensure staff are fully equipped to handle the evolving nature of online risks, all staff members are required to complete the National Online Safety course **annually**. This course focuses on the latest developments in digital safety, including new online threats and harmful apps, and provides practical strategies for identifying and addressing these risks in a school environment.

Additionally, staff are trained to recognise early signs of online abuse, misuse, or inappropriate behaviour among students, ensuring swift intervention where necessary.

Use of National Guidance and Tools

In line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*, we review our filtering and monitoring arrangements using relevant Department for Education tools and guidance, including the *Plan Technology for Your School* self-assessment tool. Although DfE standards are not statutory in the UAE, the school uses the DfE Cyber Security Standards as an international benchmark alongside applicable UAE requirements. Staff receive guidance on emerging online risks, including the safe and responsible use of generative AI.

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The effectiveness of the school's filtering and monitoring systems will be formally reviewed at least once every academic year. The review will be led by the responsible member of the Senior Leadership Team, with support from the DSL and IT staff. It will include checks that

filtering and monitoring operate appropriately across all internet-connected devices and relevant locations, and a record of the review and any resulting actions will be maintained.

Filtering and monitoring arrangements will also be reviewed following a significant safeguarding incident, material system change or identification of a new or emerging online risk.

For more information, see our **Internet Safety Policy**.

Preventing Extremism and Terrorism:

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia is committed to assessing and managing the risk of individuals being drawn into terrorism or supporting extremist ideologies. Our approach complies with applicable UAE requirements and is informed by relevant international safeguarding frameworks, including the principles of the UK's Prevent strategy. The UK Prevent Duty is not a statutory requirement in the UAE but provides a useful framework for identifying and responding to risks of radicalisation.

As part of our safeguarding approach, we regularly assess the risk of pupils, staff, or other individuals being exposed to radicalising influences. This includes monitoring for signs of vulnerability or exposure to extremist ideologies, as well as harmful online content such as misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories that could influence beliefs, wellbeing, or safety. Where concerns arise, we follow established referral pathways, working with local authorities and, where necessary, with national agencies to ensure that individuals at risk receive appropriate support.

Our approach includes providing regular training for staff to identify signs of radicalisation and harmful online narratives, and working in partnership with local authorities and the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) to safeguard our community from these risks.

Radicalisation and Extremism Risk Assessment

As part of our safeguarding arrangements, Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia undertakes a Radicalisation and Extremism Risk Assessment to identify, assess and address risks relating to radicalisation and extremism. The assessment is reviewed regularly and whenever local, national or international developments indicate a change in risk. It considers potential risks within the school, online and in the wider community and identifies appropriate preventative and responsive measures.

Where concerns arise, the school will follow its safeguarding procedures and work with the appropriate UAE authorities, which may include KHDA, the Ministry of Interior, the Community Development Authority or Dubai Police, depending on the nature and urgency of the concern.

The following UK guidance is used as a non-statutory risk-assessment resource:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-risk-assessment-templates/how-to-complete-a-risk-assessment-to-assess-the-risk-of-people-becoming-terrorists-or-supporting-terrorism>

Transport/Bus Policy

Start of Bus Service

On the child's first scheduled day of using the school bus, they will be transported home after school. From the following day onward, the child will be collected from home in the morning and returned after school each day.

Safety Measures

All buses are equipped with seat belts, and children are instructed to wear them at all times while the vehicle is in motion. For younger children, parents must provide an appropriate car seat, which will remain on the bus for daily use.

Children will only be released to a parent, carer or other adult authorised by the school. If no authorised adult is present at the agreed drop-off point, the child will remain under the supervision of the bus nanny while the school contacts the family and follows its non-collection procedure.

At the end of every journey, the driver and bus nanny will complete and record a physical check of the entire vehicle to confirm that no child remains on board. Any discrepancy between the passenger list and the children collected, transported or handed over must be reported to the school immediately.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency or road traffic incident, the driver or bus nanny must first contact the appropriate emergency service where urgent police or medical assistance is required. The School Manager must then be informed immediately, followed by the Principal or another nominated senior leader. Parents will be informed as soon as it is safe and appropriate to do so. All incidents must be formally recorded and reviewed in accordance with the school's safeguarding, health and safety, and incident-reporting procedures.

Bus Schedules and Route Management

The school operates morning and afternoon bus routes. Each bus has a dedicated list that includes the route schedule and space for parental signatures. Bus nannies record the exact time of each child's pick-up and drop-off daily. The Facilities Team works closely with the transport provider to periodically review and improve route efficiency. Any adjustments to the schedule are shared with parents in advance, along with a confirmed implementation date.

Daily and Weekly Coordination

Updated bus sign-off lists are prepared weekly by the Facilities Team. These are either distributed via Reception or handed directly to the bus nannies. Any amendments to the list due to changes in transport arrangements are jointly managed by Facilities and Reception. Bus nannies must return their completed and signed sheets to Reception each morning upon arrival, covering the previous afternoon and current morning journey.

Use of Buses for Off-Site Activities

School buses are also used for transporting children to and from off-site activities. Each trip is supervised by a school staff member alongside the assigned bus nanny. Parents must complete and return a *School Transport Permission Letter* for their child to participate. Only those with signed permission will be permitted to travel. Copies of the permission letters are held by the department organising the trip. Transport arrangements for off-site activities follow the same procedures as regular school transport.

Parent Transport Notifications

The school's 'Connect' app provides parents with notifications relating to their child's school-bus journey, including confirmation when the child has arrived at school. These notifications provide additional reassurance to families but do not replace the passenger register, physical headcounts, recorded handovers or end-of-route vehicle checks completed by the driver and bus nanny.

Any discrepancy between the app notification and the child's actual location must be reported to the school immediately and treated as a priority safeguarding concern.

Urgent Medical Care and Safeguarding Protocols

Where a child requires urgent medical attention and there is a concern that abuse may have occurred, the child's immediate health and safety take priority. Emergency medical assistance must be requested where required, and the child should be taken by an appropriate means to the nearest suitable medical facility.

The DSL or Principal will notify and seek advice from the appropriate child-protection authority or Dubai Police as soon as possible. Where sexual abuse is suspected, any forensic examination should be coordinated by the police, child-protection authority and receiving medical professionals. However, necessary emergency treatment must never be delayed.

Parents or carers will normally be informed that their child requires urgent medical attention unless the police or child-protection authority advises that doing so may place the child or another person at increased risk or compromise an investigation. The child must be accompanied and supported by a responsible adult at all times.

Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations About Adults

Concerns About Staff, Supply Staff, Trainee Teachers, Volunteers or Contractors

Any safeguarding concern or allegation relating to an adult working in or on behalf of the school must be reported immediately to the Principal. Staff must not investigate the matter themselves or delay reporting while attempting to gather further information.

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold must still be reported and managed under the school's low-level concerns procedure.

Concerns About the Principal

Any safeguarding concern or allegation relating to the Principal must be reported immediately to the Chair of Governors or nominated board-level safeguarding representative. The Principal must not be involved in managing or investigating the concern.

External Reporting

The school will report concerns and allegations to the appropriate UAE authority in accordance with the nature and seriousness of the concern and applicable mandatory-reporting requirements.

Relevant contacts include:

- Community Development Authority Child Protection: 800988
- Ministry of Interior Child Protection Centre: 116111
- Dubai Police emergency: 999

Safe Working Practice

All staff and volunteers at Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia are expected to model the highest standards of professional conduct and integrity. By behaving in a respectful, fair, mature, and safe manner, adults protect both their pupils and themselves.

To maintain safe and professional boundaries, all adults must:

- **Work in an open and transparent way**, avoiding actions that could cause a reasonable person to question their intentions or motivation.
- **Dress appropriately** for their role, reflecting professionalism and suitability for the activities being undertaken.
- **Respect personal space** and ensure that any physical contact with pupils is appropriate, non-intrusive, and always in the child's best interests.
- **Understand and not misuse** their position of power or trust over students, including—but not limited to—avoiding:
 - Accepting regular or significant personal gifts from children or their families
 - Giving personal gifts to students outside of agreed school systems (e.g. prize-giving or class rewards)
- **Avoid behaviours or activities outside school** that could compromise their professional role or bring the school into disrepute.
- **Refrain from initiating or engaging in social contact with pupils outside of school**, including through email, messaging platforms, or social media.
- **Ensure classrooms and working spaces remain observable**, e.g. by keeping glass panels on doors uncovered. Visibility is key to maintaining safe and accountable practices.
- **Seek guidance from the Principal** if concerns arise regarding a particular child or class dynamic that may place a staff member in a vulnerable or difficult position.

Use of Photography and Recording Devices

Staff must only use school-approved devices and platforms to photograph, record, store or share images of pupils. Personal mobile phones, cameras, personal cloud storage and personal messaging accounts must not be used for this purpose, except in a genuine emergency expressly authorised by the Principal or DSL and recorded afterwards.

Staff must check the child's current consent permissions before capturing, using or publishing any image or recording.

Images and recordings must only be used for an authorised educational, safeguarding or school-communication purpose and must be stored and shared in accordance with the school's safeguarding and data-protection policies.

Images or recordings of pupils must never be shared through personal social-media accounts or with unauthorised third parties.

Safeguarding SEND and Children of Determination

There is a wealth of research based evidence to support the view that children with SEND or people of determination are more vulnerable to maltreatment or abuse and neglect. Therefore knowing and understanding the link between disability and child abuse and neglect is an important step towards planning targeted and appropriate prevention intervention strategies. Safeguarding children with disabilities is the same as safeguarding their non-disabled peers however it requires high standards of practice, increased awareness and support for children and their families.

Children with SEND or Children of Determination may face additional safeguarding barriers. These may include:

- communication difficulties that affect their ability to recognise, explain or report harm;
- assumptions that changes in behaviour, mood or presentation are related to the child's SEND rather than a safeguarding concern;
- increased isolation from peers;
- a greater risk of bullying, exploitation or abuse without outward signs;
- dependence on adults for personal or intimate care;
- difficulty understanding appropriate boundaries, consent or unsafe behaviour; and
- concerns relating to toileting, unexplained injuries or unusual physical or emotional attachment to adults or peers.

No safeguarding concern should be dismissed or explained solely by reference to a child's SEND, disability, medical condition or behaviour.

Remember: Children with SEND or Children of Determination may be more isolated from their peers and may find it difficult to express concern.

Language relating to SEND and neurodevelopmental conditions will be respectful, child-centred and consistent with the child's identified needs, preferred terminology and relevant professional documentation.

** Refer to Appendix 3 Guidance on toileting needs*

After School Activities

All external providers have a duty of care towards students and they are responsible for understanding the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy at VHPS-COA. All providers are required to submit background checks, Good Conduct certificates and to attend a training course on Safeguarding and Child Protection facilitated by VHPS-COA.

Reporting

All external providers must report any safeguarding concern **immediately and directly** to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL. The Head of After School Activities should also be informed, but this must not delay the safeguarding report.

The concern must be recorded promptly and factually using the school's agreed reporting procedure. Where a child is in immediate danger or requires urgent medical attention, the school's emergency safeguarding procedures must be followed without delay.

Child Protection Vetting

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia strongly recognises the need for vigilant awareness of child protection issues. It is important that all staff have appropriate induction and training to fully understand their roles and responsibilities and are confident about carrying them out. Staff, pupils, and parents should feel secure that they can raise any issues or concerns about the safety or welfare of children and know that they will be listened to and taken seriously.

This will be achieved by maintaining an ethos of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and protecting staff. This is supported by having clear child protection policies, appropriate induction and training, briefing and discussion of relevant issues, and relevant learning.

As part of our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia follows a robust safer recruitment process. This includes:

- Where an applicant has taught, worked in school leadership or undertaken a relevant governance role in England, the school will carry out any applicable supplementary checks through the current GOV.UK services. These may include checking the individual's teacher record and, where relevant to the role, conducting a Section 128 direction check.

- UK checks are supplementary and do not replace UAE employment, professional licensing, police-clearance, Good Conduct Certificate, reference or overseas-checking requirements.
- Ensuring that appropriate safeguarding and suitability checks are completed for employees, agency or supply staff, volunteers, contractors and external activity providers before they undertake unsupervised work with children. The school will maintain an auditable record of the checks completed.

Refer to Appendix 4 Briefing sheet for Temporary Staff and Volunteers Refer to Appendix 5 Transporting Children for School Activities

For more information see: [Safer Recruitment Policy](#)

Site Safety

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia is committed to maintaining a secure and well-monitored environment that ensures the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and staff. To support this, a **lanyard and visitor identification system** is in place for all adults on site.

- All staff, regular visitors, and contractors must wear the correct **lanyard** at all times. The colour-coded lanyard system (outlined in **Appendix 10**) clearly indicates the level of safeguarding clearance and access granted.
- Visitors who have not undergone full safeguarding checks may instead be issued a **Visitor sticker**. These individuals **must be escorted at all times** by a member of staff with appropriate safeguarding training and site access.
- **Contractors and service providers** working on school premises must provide the safeguarding and suitability documentation required by the school before commencing work. Unescorted access may be granted only where the required checks have been completed and verified and the school has expressly authorised it. Otherwise, the individual must remain appropriately supervised while pupils are present.
- All visitors must sign in and out at the security check, verify their identity where required, and receive appropriate information about the school's safeguarding, conduct and emergency procedures.
- Staff must challenge and report any adult not wearing an appropriate lanyard or visitor sticker, or anyone not following site access procedures.

These systems ensure that all adults on campus are easily identifiable and appropriately supervised, reinforcing our commitment to a safe and secure school environment.

Safeguarding Record Transfer

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia is committed to ensuring that safeguarding records are shared appropriately when a child transfers to a new school. Effective record-sharing helps to ensure that any safeguarding concerns continue to be monitored and addressed.

- **Requests from New Schools:** Safeguarding record requests from a child's new school will be handled by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Information will be shared securely and in accordance with data protection and safeguarding best practices.
- **Proactive Information Sharing:** If no safeguarding record request is received from the new school and there are known safeguarding concerns about the child, Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia will take proactive steps to ensure that the new school is informed. This is to safeguard the welfare of the child and ensure continuity of support.
- **Secure Transfer of Information:** All safeguarding records will be transferred securely, separately from the child's academic records, and only to an identified safeguarding lead at the receiving school. Confirmation of receipt will be requested.
- **Transfer and Retention Records:** The school will retain a record of what information was transferred, the date and method of transfer, the recipient and confirmation of receipt. Copies of safeguarding information will be retained only where required by applicable UAE law, regulatory requirements or the school's approved records-retention schedule, and will be stored securely.

Where a child has current safeguarding risks or ongoing support needs, the DSL will consider speaking directly with the receiving school's DSL and sharing relevant information before the child transfers, so that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place from the child's first day.

By implementing this approach, we ensure that safeguarding concerns remain a priority, even when a child moves to a new educational setting.

Allegations against the Principal/DSL

As the Principal is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), any allegation or safeguarding concern relating to the Principal/DSL—including a concern that may meet the harm threshold or a low-level concern—must be reported **immediately and directly to the Chair of the Board of Governors**. The concern must not be reported to, or managed by, the Principal/DSL.

The Chair will act as the case manager and will:

- consider the immediate safety and welfare of any child involved;
- ensure that appropriate safeguarding support is provided by a Deputy DSL who is not involved in the concern;
- seek advice from and make any required notification to the relevant UAE child-protection, police, regulatory or education authority without delay;
- undertake only those preliminary enquiries necessary to establish the basic facts, taking care not to compromise any external investigation;
- agree with the relevant authorities whether an investigation is required and by whom it should be conducted; and
- maintain a secure record of the concern, advice received, decisions, actions and outcomes.

If a child is in immediate danger or a criminal offence may have been committed, Dubai Police and the appropriate child-protection authority must be contacted immediately. Action must not be delayed while awaiting contact with the Chair.

If the Chair is unavailable, or the concern relates to the Chair, it must be reported to the nominated alternative governor or proprietor and, where necessary, directly to the appropriate external authority.

Information will be shared strictly on a need-to-know basis. Confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible, but it cannot be promised where information must be shared to protect a child, comply with the law or support an appropriate investigation.

The current contact details for the Chair and nominated alternative reporting person will be made available to staff, parents and pupils through the school's safeguarding information and reporting arrangements.



Victory Heights Primary School City
of Arabia
**Safeguarding and Child
Protection Policy
Appendices**

	29
Appendix 1	32
Identifying Signs of Child Abuse	32
Appendix 2	36
What to do when a child confides in you	36
Appendix 3	38
Guidance on Toileting Needs	38
Appendix 4	39
Briefing Sheet for Temporary Staff and Volunteers	39
Appendix 5	40
Persons involved in Transporting Children for School Activities	40
Appendix 6	41
Victory Heights Reporting Tool - MyConcern	41
Appendix 7	42
MOI Child Protection Centre REFERRAL FORM	42
Appendix 8	45
Child Protection Flow Chart	45
Appendix 9	46
Bullying Flowchart	46
Appendix 10	47
Lanyard Colours	47
Appendix 11	48
Guidelines for Writing a Factual Report on a Safeguarding Issue	48
Purpose	48
Key Principles for Writing Safeguarding Reports	48
Words to Avoid in Safeguarding Reports	48
Example of a Poorly Written Report	49
Rewritten as a Factual Report	49
Checklist Before Submitting the Report	49

Appendix 1

Identifying Signs of Child Abuse

It is always preferable for intervention to take place at the earliest possible stage. All school staff are well placed to observe a child's outward symptoms which may be indicative of child abuse.

It is important to recognise that indicators of abuse may suggest that a child is being abused or is at risk of harm, however indicators alone cannot confirm that a child is being abused. Each child should be seen in the context of their family and wider community and a proper assessment carried out by appropriate persons. It is also important to keep in mind that if you feel unsure or concerned, discuss your concerns. Don't keep it to yourself.

Physical abuse

Most children will collect cuts and bruises as part of the rough-and-tumble of daily life. Injuries should always be assessed holistically taking into account the explanation given. Most accidental bruises are seen over bony parts of the body e.g. elbows, knees, shins and are often on the front of the body. Some children however will have bruising that is more likely inflicted rather than accidental.

Important indicators of physical abuse are bruises or injuries that are either unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given, or those that are visible on the "soft" parts of the body, where accidental injuries are unlikely e.g. cheeks, abdomen, back and buttocks. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern, although this can be more complicated with burns as these are often delayed in presentation due to blistering taking place sometime later.

The physical signs of abuse may include:

- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body Multiple bruises - in clusters, often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh.
- Burns.
- Human bite marks.
- Broken bones.
- Scalds, with upward splash marks.
- Multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge.

Changes in behaviour that can also indicate physical abuse:

- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation.
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts.
- Flinching when approached or touched.
- Reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather.
- Poor attendance - repeated infections etc.
- Withdrawn behaviour.
- Running away from home.

No list of symptoms can be exhaustive. They may give rise to concern but are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, as there are often no outward physical signs. Most harm is a result of low warmth, high criticism homes, not from single incidents. Children who appear to be well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers.

It is sometimes possible to spot emotionally abusive behaviour from parents and carers, by the way that the adults speak to, or behave towards their children. An appropriate challenge or intervention could affect positive change.

Changes in behaviour which can indicate emotional abuse include:

- Neurotic behaviour e.g. continuous hair twisting, rocking.
- Inability to play.
- Fear of making mistakes.
- Sudden speech disorders.
- Self harm.
- Fear of a parent being approached regarding their behaviour.
- Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is often perpetrated by people who are known to and trusted by the child e.g. relatives, family friends, neighbours, babysitters, people working with the child at school, organisers of clubs or activities that the child participates in.

It is important to remember that it is not just adult men who sexually abuse children, there are increasing allegations of sexual abuse of children by women and sexual abuse can also be perpetrated by other children or young people.

Characteristics of child sexual abuse:

- It is often planned and systematic - people do not sexually abuse children by accident, though sexual abuse can be opportunistic.
- Grooming the child - people who abuse children take care to choose a vulnerable child and often spend time making them dependent.
- Grooming the child's environment - abusers try to ensure that potential adult protectors (parents and other carers especially) are not suspicious of their motives.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- Pain or itching in the genital area.
- Bruising or bleeding near the genital area.
- Sexually transmitted disease.
- Vaginal discharge or infection.
- Stomach pains.
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down.
- Pregnancy.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn.
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people.
- Having nightmares.
- Running away from home.
- Sexual knowledge which is way beyond their age or developmental level.
- Sexual drawings or language.
- Bedwetting.
- Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia.
- Self harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts.
- Saying that they have secrets that they cannot tell anyone about.
- Substance or drug abuse.
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money.
- Not allowed to have friends (especially in adolescence).
- Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults.

Neglect

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, yet have some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children.

Neglect is often noticed at a stage when it does not pose a risk to the child. Research would suggest that an appropriate intervention or conversation at this early stage can address the issue and prevent a child continuing to suffer until it reaches a point when they are at risk of harm.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children.
- Constantly dirty or “smelly”.
- Inappropriate clothing for the conditions.

Changes in behaviour which may also indicate neglect may include:

- Complaining of feeling tired all the time.
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments.
- Having few friends.
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

Bullying

Bullying is not always easy to recognise as it can take a number of forms. Signs that a child may be being bullied can be:

- Returning from school with cuts and bruises.
Torn clothes.
- Asking for stolen possessions to be replaced.
Falling out with previously good friends.
Becoming moody and bad tempered.
- Avoiding leaving their home.
- Aggression with younger siblings.
- Struggling at school unlike before.
- Sleep problems.
- Anxiety.
- Becoming withdrawn and isolated.

Appendix 2

What to do when a child confides in you

1. **Give the child your full attention.**
Offer a safe, calm space where they feel listened to.
2. **Show empathy, support, and warmth** — but avoid displaying distress or negative emotion.
Reassure the child with phrases like *“That must have been very hard for you,”* or *“You’ve done the right thing by telling someone.”*
3. **Listen without asking leading questions.**
Avoid interrogating — allow the child to share at their own pace.
4. **Clarify only if necessary.**
It may be appropriate to gently check whether the child is describing abuse or neglect, and whether anyone else is aware.
5. **Check for immediate safety or medical needs.**
If the child is hurt, seek first aid and inform the School Nurse immediately.
6. **Avoid repeated disclosures.**
Wherever possible, ensure the child only shares their account once. This helps reduce trauma and protects the integrity of any future investigation.
7. **Make a factual written record** as soon as possible.
Refer to **Appendix 11** for guidance on writing a clear and objective safeguarding report.
8. **Report the disclosure to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.**
This must happen the same day, and ideally within minutes. Do not delay.
9. **Take care of yourself.**
Disclosures can be emotionally difficult — seek support from the DSL or a senior leader if needed.

What not to do

- Do not promise complete confidentiality — explain that you may need to pass information to keep them safe.
- Do not question the child in detail or ask leading questions.
- Do not make assumptions, accusations, or speculate.
Do not malign the alleged perpetrator or offer false reassurances.
- Do not delay reporting the concern to the DSL.

Questioning skills

To avoid leading questions when clarifying what a child has said, you should use open

questions with a child rather than closed questions.

The following table gives some examples of closed and open questions:

Closed questions	Open questions
Do	Tell me
Did	Explain to me
Can	Describe to me

Avoid using "Why?". This can confuse a child and lead to feelings of guilt.

Initial responses to a child

When a child has made a disclosure it can be a relief for them, however they are likely to feel vulnerable and confused. Here are some helpful suggestions:

Do say:

"Thank you for telling me."

"I am sorry it has happened to you."

"I am going to help you, and you are going to tell me what to do." "It should not have happened."

"You are not to blame."

Do not say:

"It will be alright soon."

"I promise everything will be ok." "It is their fault."

Appendix 3

Guidance on Toileting Needs

The majority of children are appropriately toilet trained and able to manage their own needs competently before they start school. Special protection should be provided for children who have a physical, sensory or intellectual impairment, or medical condition that has an adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities. Anyone with a diagnosis that affects aspects of their personal development must not be discriminated against. It is also unacceptable to refuse admission to children who are delayed in achieving continence.

Each child and situation is unique. The following guidance may be helpful to support pupils and agree on a plan which will work towards maximum independence and support for the child in the school setting.

- Gather as much information as possible from the parents/carers and child. How have they tried to introduce toilet training at home? What happens at home? Has the child any regular routines or patterns which could inform the routine set up by the school? Have the parents/carers noticed any particular difficulties or phobias which the school should be aware of? Can the parents /carers suggest a strategy for dealing with the problem?
- An appropriate toileting programme will need to be discussed and agreed so that the child, parents/carers and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- Clothes should be easy for a child to pull up and down.
- Parents should be requested to provide the school with appropriate changes of pants/trousers etc. in case of an accident.

See also: Intimate Care Policy

Appendix 4

Briefing Sheet for Temporary Staff and Volunteers

Information for staff on short term contracts in Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia .

While working in Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia , you have a duty of care towards pupils. This means that at all times you should act in a way that is consistent with their safety and welfare.

A supervised volunteer who regularly teaches or looks after children must ensure they also are accompanied by another employee, while the Principal will make a reasonable decision about which checks should be undertaken on temporary staff and volunteers.

If at any time you have a concern about a child, particularly if you suspect or think they may be at risk of abuse or neglect, it is your responsibility to share that concern with the school DSL, who is Ben Rothwell, or any member of the Safeguarding Team.

This is not an exhaustive list but you may become concerned as a result of:

- Observing a physical injury, which you think may have been non-accidental.
- Observing something in the appearance of a child which suggests they are not being sufficiently well cared for.
- Observing behaviour that leads you to be concerned about a child.
- A child telling you that they may have been subjected to some form of abuse.

In any of the circumstances listed, you must write down what you saw or heard, date and sign your account, and give it to the DSL. This may be the beginning of a legal process - it is important to understand that legal action against a perpetrator can be seriously damaged by any suggestion that the child has been led in any way.

If a child talks to you about abuse, you should follow these guidelines:

- Rather than directly questioning the child, just listen and be supportive.
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events, but don't push the child to tell you more than they wish.
- Make it clear that you may need to pass on information to staff in other agencies who may be able to help - do not promise confidentiality. You are obliged to share any information relating to abuse or neglect.
- Write an account of the conversation immediately, as close to verbatim as possible. Put the date and timings on it, and mention anyone else who was present. Then sign it and give your record to the designated DSL, Ben Rothwell.

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia has a policy on safeguarding children which you can find, together with local procedures, in the school clinic.

If you have a concern, discuss it with the DSL, Ben Rothwell in the first instance. If she is unavailable please see the Deputy DSLs - Rob McCall or Natalie Doidge.

Appendix 5

Transporting Children for School Activities

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children during transport to and from school activities, including field trips. All transport arrangements must minimise risk and adhere to safeguarding and health and safety standards.

HR Responsibility

The HR Department is responsible for ensuring that all bus drivers meet the statutory requirements for working with children. This includes:

- Verification of a valid UAE driving licence for the appropriate class of vehicle
- Medical fitness to drive
- Background checks, including a recent Good Conduct Certificate and any other police clearance as required under UAE law
- Completion of Safeguarding and Child Protection training provided by the school

Driver Requirements

All drivers must:

- Hold a valid and appropriate UAE driving licence
- Be medically fit to drive and free from any condition that may impair driving ability
- Never drive under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or medication that impairs judgement or reaction time
- Avoid using mobile phones or other distractions while driving
- Adhere strictly to road safety laws, including speed limits and traffic signals
- Ensure the vehicle is roadworthy (brakes, tyres, lights, wipers, mirrors, etc.) and clean
- Ensure that all seat belts are functioning and worn by all passengers at all times
- Use booster seats where applicable and childproof locks as required

Bus Escorts

Every school bus will be accompanied by a designated bus nanny. Their responsibilities include:

- Checking children on and off the bus safely using the official register
- Ensuring each child is seated properly and wearing a seatbelt
- Supporting children during transit and maintaining order

Appendix 6

Victory Heights Reporting Tool - Safeguard by Wasil

Please use Safeguard by Wasil to detail any cause for concern you may have with regards to the well-being of a child in Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia , which is in line with the Child Protection Policy.

There is also a 'Report a concern' button prominently displayed on Desk, and concerns can also be made to the Wasil Safeguard bot on Slack. When making a concern on Slack, be careful to delete the original message, once the concern has been acknowledged.

Safeguard by Wasil can be accessed at <https://www.wasilsafeguard.com>

Appendix 7

MOI Child Protection Centre REFERRAL FORM

PUPIL DETAILS

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Address:

Parent/Carer name:

Contact Details:

Telephone No:

Home:

Mobile:

Work:

Child's 1st Language:

Nationality:

Does the child have a disability

If yes, please describe:

☐ Yes

☐ No

SCHOOL DETAILS

Current School:

Year Group

Last School attended:

REASON FOR REFERRAL (please circle)

Suspected / Disclosed physical abuse

Suspected / Disclosed sexual abuse

Suspected / Disclosed emotional abuse

Suspected / Disclosed neglect

Description/Additional Information

Please give the name of the member of staff responsible for liaison with MOI Child Protection Centre.

Name (please print):

Position

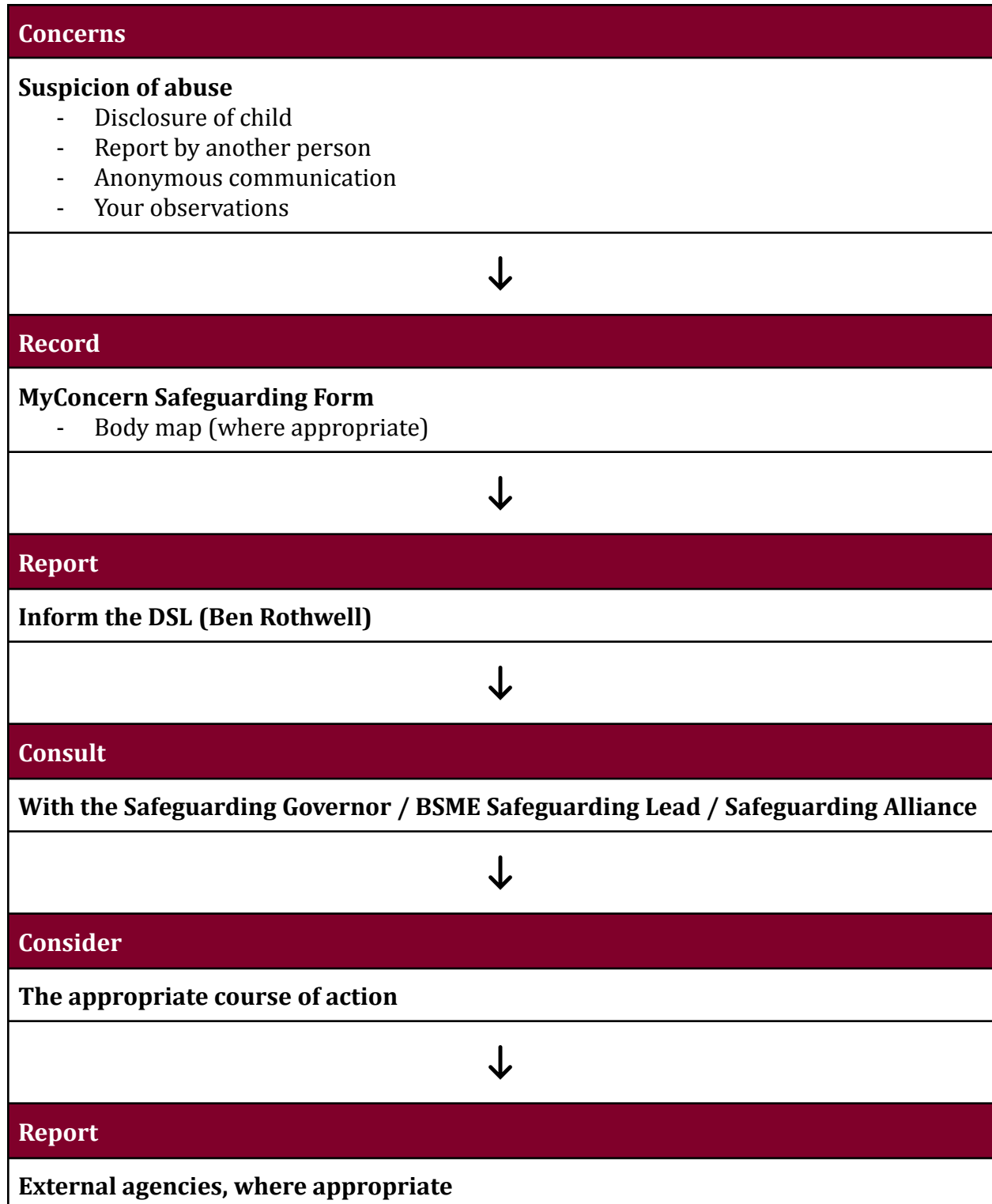
Telephone No:

Principal's Signature:

Date: _____

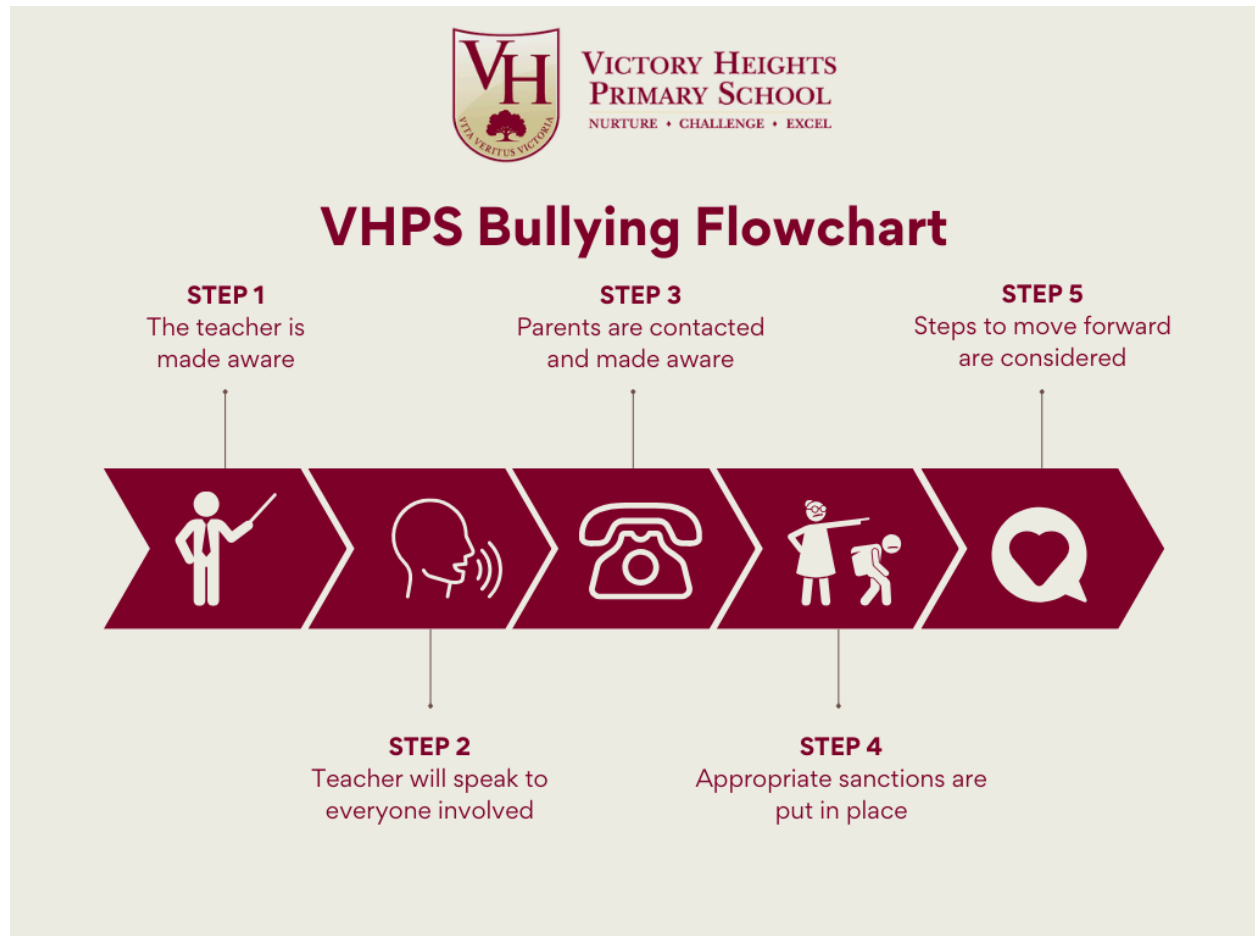
Appendix 8

Child Protection Flow Chart



Appendix 9

Bullying Flowchart



See also: [Anti-bullying \(including cyber-bullying\) Policy](#)

Appendix 10

Lanyard Colours

Lanyards Keep Our School Safe

Please do not be offended if you are challenged for not wearing a lanyard. If you forget your lanyard, please collect a **temporary visitor pass**.



Visitors



Parents



Staff



Inspectors



External
Staff



Appendix 11

Guidelines for Writing a Factual Report on a Safeguarding Issue

Purpose

To ensure that safeguarding issues are reported factually, clearly, and concisely on the school's electronic platform, minimizing opinions and extraneous details while focusing on evidence-based observations.

Key Principles for Writing Safeguarding Reports

1. **Be Factual**

- Record only what you have **seen, heard, or been informed of without inserting personal opinions.**
- Use **direct quotes when applicable**, especially when reporting something a child, parent, or colleague said.

2. **Be Clear and Concise**

- Use **simple, straightforward language.**
- Avoid **unnecessary details** or speculation.

3. **Provide Chronological Detail**

- Present events in the **order they occurred.**
- Include **dates, times, locations, and names** of involved individuals.

4. **Be Accurate**

- **Double-check for factual accuracy** before submitting.
- Ensure names, dates, and times are correct.

5. **Maintain Confidentiality**

- Avoid sharing unnecessary names unless directly involved.
- Ensure the report is submitted only on the school's secure electronic platform.

6. **Be Professional**

- Avoid **emotional or loaded language.**
- Stick to reporting **observable behaviors and specific actions.**

Words to Avoid in Safeguarding Reports

- **Emotional language:** Avoid words like "angry," "frustrated," "upset," unless directly quoted.
- **Speculation or Assumptions:** Avoid phrases like "I think," "it seems," "probably."

- **Judgmental words:** Avoid words like "naughty," "good," "bad," "lazy," or "attention-seeking."
- **Minimizing language:** Avoid phrases like "it wasn't that bad," "only," "just."
- **Exaggeration or vague terms:** Avoid words like "always," "never," "a lot," or "constantly."

Example of a Poorly Written Report

Date: 5th February 2025

Time: 11:30 AM

"During break time, Sam was being his usual difficult self and pushed another student, Jake, near the playground. Sam's been acting this way for a while, and honestly, I think he's just doing it for attention. Jake cried, but it wasn't that bad—he cries all the time anyway. I spoke to Sam about his behavior, and he had nothing useful to say. Sam's parents really need to step in at this point."

Rewritten as a Factual Report

Date: 5th February 2025

Time: 11:30 AM

Location: School playground

At 11:30 AM during morning break, I observed Sam (Year 3) push Jake (Year 3) near the swing area of the playground. I was approximately 10 meters away and witnessed the incident directly. Jake fell to the ground and began crying. When I approached Jake, he said, "Sam pushed me really hard." I checked for any visible injuries and found none. Jake continued to cry for about 2 minutes before calming down.

I spoke to Sam immediately after the incident. Sam stated, "I didn't mean to push him that hard." I informed him that pushing is not acceptable and that the incident would be reported. Jake was escorted to the school nurse as a precaution. The incident was reported to the class teacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at 11:45 AM.

Checklist Before Submitting the Report

By following these guidelines, reports will be professional, factual, and effective in supporting safeguarding protocols.

Additional Safeguarding Resources

In addition to the resources already listed in this policy, the following have been added in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) 2025:

- Lucy Faithfull Foundation – Shore Space: An anonymous and confidential online support service for young people who are worried about sexual thoughts, feelings, or behaviours, providing advice and resources to help prevent harm.
Website: <https://www.shore.space>
- Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse (CSA Centre): Provides evidence-based resources, training, and guidance to support professionals in identifying and responding to child sexual abuse.
Website: <https://www.csacentre.org.uk>
- The Children's Society – Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation: Practical resources and guidance for recognising, preventing, and responding to child sexual exploitation.
Website: <https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk>

Monitoring and Compliance

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored regularly in line with the Policy Review Policy. Updates and changes will be documented in the Version Control Table to ensure transparency and continuous improvement.

Policy Development and Review Approach

This policy is developed in alignment with current safeguarding best practice and statutory guidance, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE), Working Together to Safeguard Children, and relevant KHDA and BSO frameworks. It reflects local and international safeguarding expectations and is reviewed regularly to incorporate updates to legislation, inspection feedback, and internal evaluations. Contributions from safeguarding leads, the inclusion team, and other key stakeholders ensure the policy remains practical, robust, and fit for purpose within our school context.

Version Control Table

Policy Title: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Policy Owner: Principal

Last Approved By: Primary Leadership Team

Version Number	Date Approved	Approved By	Changes Made	Next Review Date
1.0	October 2025	Governors	Initial policy release	August 2026
1.1	August 2026	Governors	Updated in line with KCSIE 2026 recommendations.	August 2027