



مدرسة الرشيد الأمريكية الخاصة

Al Rushed American Private School

Child Protection Policy



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Introduction

The health, safety and well-being of all our children is of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our school. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school. Protecting children is everyone's responsibility at our school and this includes reporting any act committed by a parent, guardian or any other person, to a child enrolled in the school which results in neglect, physical or emotional injury or sexual harm.

All staff have a duty and will report any suspected or disclosed issues of child protection to the Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO).

Purpose

The safeguarding of children and young people from harm is the highest priority here at ARAS. Our students have a right to feel safe and protected from significant physical and emotional harm both inside and outside of school. This policy is a crucial part of promoting the welfare of our students; it is designed to inform our staff regarding the signs of child abuse and to equip them with the knowledge on what to do in the event of suspected abuse. This policy defines abuse, outlines signs of abuse and explains the procedures for investigating and reporting suspected cases. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behavior and well-being policies.

Aims

This policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. The policy has five main elements :

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse ;



- Supporting students who have been abused, in accordance with their agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

Policy Statement

Definitions:

Child abuse

Refers to the physical abuse, corporal punishment, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and also includes bullying, exploitation, and neglect .

Physical Abuse

Is the deliberate physical injury to a student, or the intentional neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This 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.

Corporal Punishment

A physical punishment inflicted on a child by a teacher or any adult in authority, such as the guardian, as a form of discipline, and is considered as Physical Abuse .

Emotional Abuse

Is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects to the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children they are worthless, unloved, and inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may cause the child to feel frightened, in danger, or to be exploited or corrupted.



Sexual Abuse

Involves but not limited to forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether they are aware of what is happening. It may involve physical contact, penetrative or nonpenetrative acts and also includes children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual images, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

This is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs which is likely to result in serious impairment to their health and development. May involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing or a failure to protect from physical and emotional harm or danger, or allow access to medical care or treatment, provide education and regular school attendance and maintain personal hygiene. It may also include the neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

The following guidelines are followed by the school during school time;

- No child, while under the school's responsibility is allowed to be isolated. They must remain in sight of a duty teacher and their whereabouts known to the teachers at all times.
- Any person, other than a parent or caregiver entering the school premises must report to the office.
- No school employ is allowed to punish a student such as;
 - Corporal punishment.
 - Depriving a child from food.
 - Provoking the student, either by mocking or ridiculing.



مدرسة الرشيد الأمريكية الخاصة

Al Rushed American Private School

- Psychological punishment such as verbal insult or threatening.
- Depriving the student from going to the rest room.
- Limiting student freedom or detaining him/her at school.
- Dismissing a student or depriving him/her from a school activity and leaving him/her unsupervised without referral to the administration.

Any similar act will be considered as a violation of the rules and regulations as per the guidelines of the educational council. Any school employee use a method mentioned above to punish a student will be suspended or his/her services will be terminated by school.

Situations to be considered;

Staff should be concerned if a student:

- Has any injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with the child 's activities.
- Regularly has unexplained injuries.
- Frequently has injuries even when apparently reasonable explanations are given.
- Offers confused or conflicting explanations about how injuries were sustained.
- Exhibits significant changes in behavior, performance or attitude.
- Indulges in sexual behavior which is unusually explicit and/or inappropriate to his or her age.
- Discloses an experience in which he or she may have been harmed.

If a student discloses that he or she has been harmed in some way, the member of staff should:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.



- Accept what is being said .
- Allow the child to talk freely .
- Reassure the child but not make promises that it might not be possible to keep.
- Not promise confidentially, as it might be necessary to refer the case to the appropriate authority.
- Reassure the pupil that what has happened is not their fault.
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell.
- Listen rather than ask direct questions.
- Ask open questions rather than leading questions.
- Not criticize the perpetrator.
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.

Procedures

When a child reports abuse, the teacher will inform the Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) within 48 hours. The teacher should also inform the DCPO as soon as possible if there is reasonable cause to believe that abuse is occurring. The DCPO will take initial steps to gather information regarding the reported incident. At this stage he/she will:

- Interview staff members as necessary and document information relative to the case.
- Consult with school personnel to review the child's history in the school.

The DCPO will then form a school-based response team to address the report. The response team may include the school doctor, nurse, counselor, teacher, and other individuals as the DCPO sees fit.

In all cases, follow up activities will be conducted in a manner that ensures that information is documented factually and that strict confidentiality is maintained.



Based on acquired information, a plan of action will be developed to assist the child and family. Actions that may take place are:

- Discussions between the child and the DCPO in order to gain more information.
- In-class observations of the child by the teacher, counselor, or administrator.
- Meetings with the family to present the school's concerns.
- Referral of the student and family to external professional counseling.
- Consultation with local authorities.

Subsequent to a substantiate case of child abuse or neglect, the following actions may take place:

- The DCPO will maintain contact with the child and family to provide support and guidance as appropriate.
- The DCPO will provide the child's teachers with ongoing support, and provide strategies for the teacher to use.
- The DCPO will maintain contact with outside therapists, in order to update the therapist about the progress of the child in school, and to keep the school informed about the progress of the therapy.
- The School Principal refers the case to local authorities for further action.

Responsibilities of the whole school staff

- There is a named person(s) in our school who is the DCPO.
- All members of the school staff have a responsibility to identify and report suspected abuse and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the students in the school. In doing so, they should seek advice and support as necessary from the DCPO.
- All staff is expected to attend regular and relevant professional development sessions.



مدرسة الرشيد الأمريكية الخاصة

Al Rushed American Private School

- All staff is expected to provide a safe and caring environment in which children can develop the confidence to voice ideas, feelings and opinions. Children should be treated with respect within a framework of agreed and understood behavior.
- All staff are expected to
 - be aware of symptoms of abuse.
 - report concerns to DCPO as appropriate
 - keep clear, dated, factual and confidential records of child protection concerns.

Specific responsibilities of the School Doctor/Nurse and Counselors:

- The school Doctor/Nurse or Counselor may be requested to provide physical treatment and emotional support after a child has been abused.
- The Doctor or Nurse may be required to conduct an examination if there are physical injuries and write an initial report about the child's physical and emotional condition.
- The Doctor/ Nurse and/ or Counselor can provide positive encouragement to the child, liaise with family members determine how best to promote the child's safety both at school and at home.
- Child abuse can leave deep emotional scars and the School Doctor or Nurse should recognize these and help develop a rehabilitation plan in liaison with the DCPO and other appropriate staff in the case team.
- In some cases, the child may have to take medication as a result of the abuse. The School Doctor or Nurse should ensure that all standards and procedures for administering medications in the school setting are met.



Specific responsibilities of the HR department and Security

- When recruiting any member of the teaching staff or support staff with access to children, all reasonable steps should be taken to ensure compliance as far as possible with the following:
 - Provision of an up-to-date police 'good conduct' letter and/or criminal records check.
 - That two or more references are taken up from previous employers with follow-up questions with regard to the applicant's compliance with any Child Protection procedure.
 - A declaration signed by the prospective employee on any application form and/or contract that s/he has not been convicted or undergoing court or disciplinary proceedings for any offence involving child abuse and/or breach in exercising a duty of care for children .
- The Security staff undertake to be vigilant and adhere to the procedures governing the access, detailed record-keeping, provision of a Visitor's Pass to be worn for ease of identification and monitoring of visitors to the school .

Appendices

APPENDIX 1

Possible signs of physical abuse

Bruising especially :

- Bruises on trunk.
- Bruises on upper arm, shoulders, neck consistent with gripping.
- Fingertip bruising/finger marks .
- Burns and scalds especially.
- Cigarette burn.
- Burns caused by lengthy exposure to heat .



Injuries or impressions :

- Human bite marks.
- Fractures, particularly spiral fractures.
- Swelling and lack of normal use of limbs.
- Any serious injury with no explanation or conflicting explanations/inconsistent.
- accounts .
- Untreated injuries .

Behavioral observations

- Unusually fearful with adults.
- Unnaturally compliant to parents.
- Refusal to discuss injuries/fear of medical help.
- Withdrawal from physical contact.
- Aggression toward others.
- Wears cover-up clothing.
- Neurotic behavior (such as rocking, hair-twisting, thumb sucking).
- Self-mutilation.
- Fear of parents being contacted.
- Extremes of passivity or aggression.
- Drug/solvent abuse.
- Running away.
- Compulsive stealing, scavenging.g

Appendix 2

Possible signs of emotional abuse

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags.
- Acceptance of punishment which appears excessive.
- Over-reaction to mistakes.
- Continual self-deprecation.



- Sudden speech disorders.
- Fear of new situations.
- Fear of making mistakes.
- •Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations.
- •Low self-esteem.
- •Self-harm.
- •Neurotic behavior e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking.

Appendix 3

Possible signs of sexual abuse

- Age-inappropriate sexual knowledge, language, behaviors
- Loss of appetite or compulsive eating.
- Regressive behaviors such as thumb sucking, needing previously discarded cuddly toys.
- Becoming withdrawn, isolated.
- Inability to focus.
- Reluctance to go home.
- Drawing sexually explicit pictures.
- Trying to be 'extra good' .
- Over-reacting to criticism.
- Have outbursts of anger/irritability.

Appendix 4

Possible indicators of Neglect

Behavioral Observations

- Constant hunger.
- Constant tiredness.
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school.
- Destructive tendencies.



مدرسة الرشيد الأمريكية الخاصة

Al Rushed American Private School

- Low self-esteem.
- Neurotic behavior.
- No social relationships.
- Running away.
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging.
- Multiple accidents and accidental injuries.

Physical Observations

- Poor personal hygiene.
- Poor state of clothing.
- Emaciation, pot belly, short stature.
- Poor skin tone and hair tone.
- Untreated medical problems.

Consistency of Policy

This policy should be read alongside the following other school policies:

- Wellbeing Policy.
- Behavior Policy.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Clinic Policy.
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WHAT TO DO ON DISCLOSURE

1. Stay calm

(Don't over-react, however shocked you may be).

2. Listen, hear and believe

(Listen carefully, take it seriously.)



مدرسة الرشيد الأمريكية الخاصة

Al Rushed American Private School

3. Give time for the person to say what they want

(Don't make assumptions and don't offer alternative explanations, ask questions beginning with Tell me about...Explain...Describe... Avoid 'who, what, when, where' questions).

4. Reassure and explain that they have done the right thing in telling.

(Do not promise confidentiality; explain that only those professionals who need to know will be informed).

5. Record in writing as near verbatim as possible and as soon as possible on a Disclosure Form

(Use the child's own words, make your record as soon as possible after the event, so that you don't forget anything, and include information about what action was taken afterwards).

6. Report to the DCPO Reporting Child Abuse

You can report child abuse to the Ministry of Interior through the hotline number **116111** or through the Ministry of Interior's Child Protection Centre's website <http://www.moi-cpc.ae/en/Report.Abuse.aspx> and the 'Hemayati' (Arabic for protect me) app (available on both Android and iOS).

You can also call the following numbers:

- EWAA Shelter for Women and Children on hotline number **8007283**
- Dubai Foundation for Women and Children on **800111**
- **Child protection center in Sharjah on toll-free helpline number 800 700.**
- Hemaya Foundation for Children and Women - Ajman on hotline



مدرسة الرشيد الامريكية الخاصة

Al Rushed American Private School

800himaya (**800446292**)

- Aman Centre for Women and Children through RAK Police on **07-2356666**

Policy Review

This policy is to be reviewed annually, though any deficiencies or weaknesses in children protection arrangements will be remedied without delay. The principal and child protection team(CPT) will undertake an annual review of the school's child protection/ safeguarding policies and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.

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