CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

KEY CONTACTS WITHIN THE SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER

NAME	:	Mrs. Bitty Devasia (Counsellor)
CONTACT NUMBER	:	055 8818902

DEPUTY CHILD PROTECTION OFFICERS

NAME	:	Mrs. Gaushabanu Bawoor Nabisab Bawoor
CONTACT NUMBER	:	052 1235392

NOMINATED GOVERNOR FOR CHILD PROTECTION

NAME	:	Mr. Tariq Hermi
CONTACT NUMBER	:	050 5823032

ALTERNATIVE REFERRALS

When members of the school have **URGENT** and **IMMEDIATE** concerns for the safety and welfare of a child or young person during school hours they should make an immediate referral to a member of the Child Protection Team or any accessible member of the Leadership Team.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY OF SCHOLARS INDIAN PRIVATE SCHOOL

1. INTRODUCTION

Scholars Indian Private School takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care.

2. PURPOSE

2.1 An effective whole-school child protection policy is one which provides clear direction to staff and others about 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.

2.2 There are three main elements to our child protection policy;

a) Prevention through the creation of a positive physical and digital school atmosphere and the teaching, and pastoral support offered to pupils.
b) Protection by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.
c) Support to pupils who may have been abused.

2.3 This policy applies to all pupils, staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to Scholars Indian Private School.

2.4 This school recognises that it is an agent of referral and not of investigation.

3. SCHOOL POLICY

3.1 We recognise that for our pupils, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps to prevent abuse.
Our school will therefore:

a) Establish and maintain an environment where pupils feel safe and secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
b) Ensure that pupils know that there are adults within the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
c) Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for personal, social and Health Education which equip pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse. School Enrichment Days and assemblies are the key means of delivery currently. Further information can be obtained from the Child Protection Officer (CPO).
d) Include in the curriculum material which will help pupils develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills. Further information can be obtained from the CPO.
f) Arrange online trainings and webinars for students to ensure continued efforts towards prevention of abuse through online mediums.
e) Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from outside agencies.

4. FRAMEWORK and UAE CONTEXT

4.1 Child protection is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate school procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the Person for Child Protection and Safeguarding

4.2 In the United Arab Emirates there is currently no infrastructure of Educational Safeguarding and/or Social Care Services. Following cases which caused concern in the Emirati community, Sheikh Mohammed, the Ruler of Dubai, supported the drafting of a Federal law on child protection "to ensure a secure and stable future for children in the U.A.E."

4.3 In April 2012, it was reported that Dubai had "embraced a new policy to protect children against all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect and offer support and care for those in needs." The policy "aims to provide protection to Emirati and expatriate children under the age 18 who live permanently or temporarily in Dubai." The Dubai Strategic Plan 2015 calls for the provision of "proper social services to meet the requirements of the local community."

4.4 **In November 2012, the UAE Cabinet approved "Wadeema's Law" to "protect children in the UAE.....The law includes creating special units that intervene when children are at risk.....and.....stresses that all children have rights regardless of religion and nationality." This was later passed by the Federal National Council as the 'Child Rights Law' in December 2015.**

4.5 In present circumstances, the lack of infrastructure means that the school's scope for onward referral is very limited. The Dubai Consulate or Embassy of the child's country of nationality could be one option. Professional counsellors, consultants, psychologists could also be considered, but there would be financial implications. In the most extreme cases, it could be that direct referral to the Police would be indicated.

4.6. **The Ministry of Interior and the National Programme for Happiness launched 'Child Digital Safety' initiative in March 2019. (Refer to https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/cyber-safety-and-digital-security for more details.)**

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them. There are, however, key people within the school who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. The names of those carrying out these responsibilities for the current year are listed on the cover sheet of this document.

5.2 It is the role of the Child Protection Officer to ensure that all of the child protection procedures are followed within the school, and to make appropriate, timely referrals if practicable. If for any reason the **Child Protection Officer** is unavailable, the **Deputy Child Protection Officer** has been identified who will act in their absence. Additionally, it is the role of the Child Protection Officer to ensure all staff employed including temporary staff and volunteers within the school are aware of the school's internal procedures, to advise staff and to offer support to those requiring this.

5.3 The role of the **Nominated Governor for Child Protection** is to ensure that the school has an effective policy, that the Guidelines are complied with and to support the school in this aspect. Governors should not give any details relating to individual child protection cases or situations to ensure confidentiality is not breached.

5.4 The Child Protection Officer and the Principal provide an annual report for the governing body detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by all staff and governors and other relevant issues.

5.5 The Child Protection Officer and Online Safety Leader work in collaboration in case of online abuse.

6. PROCEDURES

6.1 All action is taken in line with the following guidance;

6.2 Staff members are kept informed about child protection responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings and awareness training. There may be other adults in the school who rarely work unsupervised, more usually working alongside members of the school staff. However, the Principal will ensure they are aware of the school's policy and the identity of the Child Protection Officer.

6.3 Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse or an allegation of abuse **must** report it immediately to the Child Protection Officer (CPO) or in their absence, the Deputy Child Protection Officer. A written record verbatim with primary details will be required from them. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff. In case of a suspected abuse, the person submits a written record of what he/she has observed and why it seems to be a case of abuse/neglect. The Child Protection Officer or their Deputy will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations in accordance with the procedures outlined within this policy, after informing the School Principal, who is also the Online Safety Leader.

6.4 Additional questions may be asked to the child, by the CPO, only to get necessary information.

Authorized external agencies, will be contacted for further investigation.

6.5 The school will always undertake to share an intention to refer a child with the parents unless to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On these occasions' advice will be taken.

6.6 A statement in the school brochure will inform parents about our school's duties and responsibilities under child protection procedures. Parents' can obtain copy of the school child protection policy on the Scholars Indian Private School website.

7. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

7.1 The Principal and all other staff who work with children will undertake appropriate child protection awareness training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, that is kept up to date by refresher training at three yearly intervals as set out in Safeguarding Children in Education.

7.2 The school will ensure that the Child Protection Officer also undertakes training and refresher training at two yearly intervals to keep knowledge and skills up to date Temporary staff and volunteers who work with children in the school will be made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities.

7.3 Support will be available for staff from the Principal in the first instance, and from members of the school's leadership team where there are concerns about queries about child protection. All staff should have access to advice and guidance on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are referred to in the staff handbook.

8. PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

8.1 Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a pupil nor should they agree with a pupil to keep a secret, as where there is a child protection concern this must be reported to the Child Protection Officer and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.

8.2 Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a "need to know basis" only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held confidentially to themselves.

9. RECORDS AND MONITORING

9.1 Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.

9.2 Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event in context, and giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken.

9.3 These file notes are kept in a confidential file/digital folder, which is separate to other files, and

stored in a secure place by the Child Protection Officer. In the same way notes must be kept of any pupil who is being monitored for child protection reasons.

9.4 If a pupil transfers from the school, these files will be copied for the new establishment and forwarded to the pupil's new school marked confidential and for the attention of the receiving school's Child Protection Officer.

10. ATTENDANCE AT CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS/ MEETINGS

10.1 It is the responsibility of the Child Protection Officer to ensure that the school is represented or a report is submitted to any child protection conference/workshops/meetings called for children on their school roll or previously known to them. Whoever attends should be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and be prepared to make decisions on registration at the end of the conference/workshops/meetings.

10.2 When a child is placed on the Child Protection Register and is, therefore, a child with a plan, it is the Child Protection Officer's responsibility to ensure that the child is monitored regarding their school attendance, welfare and presentation.

11. SUPPORTING PUPILS AT RISK

11.1 Our school recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth or view the world as a positive place.

11.2 This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, whilst at school their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

11.3 This school will endeavour to support pupils through:

a) The curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
b) The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
c) The implementation of the school's behaviour management policies.
d) A consistent approach agreed by all staff which will endeavour to ensure the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued.
e) Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the pupils and their families.
f) A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's best interest to do so.
g) The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.
h) Recognition that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse so staff who work in any capacity with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and / or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.
i) Recognition that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

11.4 This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in school. These are the policy for the teaching of PSHE, the policy for the management of pupils' behaviour (including our policy on physical intervention and our policy on bullying) and the health and safety policy.

12. SAFE SCHOOL, SAFE STAFF

12.1 It is essential that the high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted with regard to alleged child abuse by parents are similarly displayed when members of staff are accused of abuse.

12.2 Only authorised agencies may investigate child abuse allegations (Currently, in RAK this would mean the Police only). Whilst it is permissible to ask the child(ren) simple, non-leading questions to ascertain the facts of the allegation, formal interviews and the taking of statements is not.

12.3 If for any reason it is decided that a referral is not appropriate, it will be necessary to address matters in accordance with the school's complaints/disciplinary procedures.

13. USE OF THE SCHOOL PREMISES BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS

13.1 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, using the school premises, the Governing Body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection.

14. WHISTLE BLOWING

14.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fails to do so.

14.2 All staff are expected to fully comply, at all times, with the School's Professional Code of Conduct.

14.3 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary they should speak to a member of the School's Leadership Team.

14.4 If a member of staff has concerns about the conduct of a member of the School's Leadership Team (other than the Principal) they should contact the Principal.

14.5 If a member of staff has concerns about the conduct of the Principal they should contact the Chairman of the School.

15. ROLE OF SCHOOL STAFF

It is important that all staff members believe that it can happen to any child. Therefore, when a child confides in a staff member, it must not be taken lightly. It takes immense courage to open up about abuse and it is the adult's duty to make them feel safe and trusted. Any such incident, or in cases which seem like abuse may have taken place, staff member should inform the Child Protection Office as soon as possible. It is not their responsibility to investigate and should not discuss it with colleagues. The child must be made well aware that the matter will need to be escalated, but handled in a sensitive way and no promises of confidentiality should be made. Staff must be mindful and conscious of different types of abuse, which are as given below.

- Physical abuse: It involves physically harming the child by hitting, throwing, burning or doing

anything which causes a physical injury.

- Sexual Abuse: Forcing a child to involve in sexual activities counts as sexual abuse, also the ones which do not involve contact.
- Emotional Abuse: Emotional abuse includes verbal and emotional, involving isolation or rejection of the child.
- Neglect: Neglect means persistently failing to meet the basic needs of the child, physically and psychologically.

The effects of abuse can be seen in different ways, depending on the child. Some common signs are as below. They may not necessarily mean abuse has taken place, but could be a possible cause of concern:

- Sudden change in the behavior or personality of the child – becomes reserved/withdrawn
- Fear of authority figures
- Difficulty maintaining good relationships with peers, prefers to sit alone and not interact with classmates
- Self-harm tendencies
- Not interested or fearful of going home
- Having too much sexual knowledge, as compared to children of their age

With our massive dependency on technology and the digital space undergoing major advancements, children need to be protected from the cyber world too. There are a whole lot of issues which accompany online use and presence.

Cyber abuse/exploitation includes any form of abuse or threat which involves online means. This can include the following:

Cyber-bullying: Harassment that takes place over electronic devices with the intention of emotionally hurting or defaming a child.
Online sexual abuse: This can mean sextortion, i.e. asking for sexual favours in return for getting back your private pictures or videos or in return for money. It can also involve sending or exposing the child to content of sexual nature, like pornography.
Grooming: Building trusting relationship with the child to exploit them sexually.
Online enticement: Enticing children into illegal and inappropriate acts, including sexting.

We understand and realise that home may not be a safe place for many students and our staff members will be extra vigilant towards identifying signs and symptoms of abuse. The following are some signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect, to be paid attention to during virtual classes:

- Physical injuries, bruises, cuts, burns, marks which are either unexplained or of suspicious nature
- Difficulty sitting, walking or moving due to pain or soreness
- Any acts or behaviour of sexual nature
- Uncontrolled and unexplained outbursts of emotions (anger, irritability, crying)
- Lack of response towards the teacher, looking 'lost' or immersed in thoughts
- Poor personal hygiene
- Poor physical growth

16. ROLE OF PARENTS

Parents are given regular awareness on different types of abuse and the signs and symptoms to look for. They are encouraged to have conversations with children, right from kindergarten, so that children can open up to them. School must work in collaboration with parents to ensure a safe

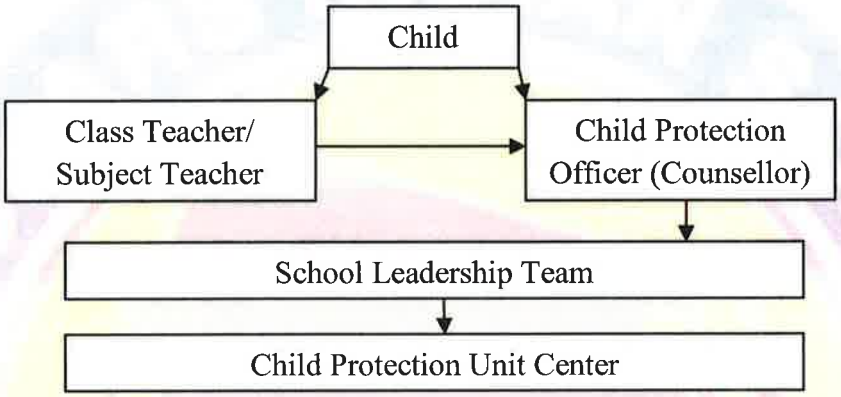
environment for children, which is conducive for their holistic development. Parents must be cautious and inform the school about any staff member, who seems to make the child fearful or uncomfortable in any way.

17. POLICY REVIEW

a) The School's Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy.

b) The Leadership Team is also responsible for ensuring that the list of key contacts on the cover sheet is kept up to date.

18. CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING SYSTEM



WHAT TO DO ON DISCLOSURE

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

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Listen, hear and believe (Listen carefully, take it seriously)

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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)

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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)

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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)

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Report to the DCPO

INVOLVEMENT OF OUTSIDE AGENCIES

Useful Contact numbers:

- Aman Centre for Women and Children through RAK Police – **07-2356666**
- Sharjah Protection Centre **-800 700**
- Community Development Authority, CDA, Dubai- **800 988**
- Ministry of Interior Child protection Hotline – **116111**
- Ministry of Interior Child protection website – **www.moi-cpc.ae**

Adopted: April, 2014 **Reviewed and updated: September, 2025**

Hameed Ali Yahya K. M.
Principal

SCHOLARS
INDIAN SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS REPORT FORM

Student Name: Class:			
Type of Abuse Suspected			
Physical	Psychological	Sexual	Neglect
Details of the observation or the disclosure(exact words spoken by the child)			
If there was an injury, describe: (location, color, size)			
Date :		Time:	
Reporting Person:		Sign :	
Handed over To CPO : ☐ Yes, same day itself ☐ No- Reason			
Contact No. of student:			
Action Taken (to be completed by the Child Protection Officer)			
Date:			
Name:		Sign:	