

Aspen Heights British School

Child Protection Policy

Academic Year: 2025–2026

Reviewed: August 2025

Next Review: August 2026

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Child Protection Policy

Introduction and Principles

Every student has the absolute right to grow up free from fear, abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Aspen Heights British School (AHBS) is committed to fulfilling this duty through proactive prevention, early identification, and coordinated response to all concerns of maltreatment.

This section operationalises the **ADEK Student Protection Policy v1.1** (Sept 2024) and meets the obligations of the UAE Federal Decree Law No. (3) of 2016 – Child Rights (Wadeema) and related legislation.

Monitoring and Compliance

Aspen Heights British School acknowledges that compliance with the ADEK Student Protection Policy (v1.1, 2024) is a legal and regulatory requirement. The school understands that ADEK will actively monitor, review, and evaluate safeguarding practice and documentation through audits, inspections, compliance checks, and formal reporting processes. Any failure to meet the requirements of the ADEK Student Protection Policy may result in legal accountability and administrative penalties in accordance with UAE Federal Law and ADEK regulatory frameworks.

Core Principles

1. Best Interests of the Child – All decisions prioritise the student’s safety and wellbeing.
2. Zero Tolerance – AHBS does not condone or ignore any form of maltreatment.
3. Accountability – All adults working in or with the school are responsible for protecting students.
4. Equality and Non-Discrimination – Protection applies equally to all students regardless of nationality, gender, disability, or background.
5. Child’s Right to Participation – Students are listened to and involved in matters affecting their safety.
6. Confidentiality – Information is shared only with those who need to know to protect the child.
7. Partnership with Parents and Agencies – The school works closely with families, ADEK, the Family Care Authority (FCA), and the Ministry of Interior Child Protection Centre (MoI-CPC). In alignment with the AHBS home-school partnership agreement at the enrollment stage, parents are expected to engage in the attendance requirements, if changes of behaviour are being reported, and ensuring safe online practices.

Definitions and Types of Maltreatment

Definitions mirror ADEK v1.1. Maltreatment includes any act or omission that harms a student’s physical, emotional, or moral wellbeing.

Type	Definition / Examples
Physical Abuse	Hitting, shaking, poisoning, burning, or otherwise physically harming a student.
Emotional Abuse	Persistent criticism, humiliation, rejection, isolation, or exposure to domestic conflict.
Sexual Abuse	Involvement of a child in sexual activity, contact or non-contact, that they cannot comprehend or consent to.
Neglect	Failure to meet a child’s basic needs for food, shelter, health, supervision, or education.
Exploitation	Using a child for another’s gain – labour, prostitution, criminal activity, or online exploitation.
Bullying / Cyber-Bullying	Repeated physical, verbal, social, or digital aggression between peers where there is a power imbalance.

Mandated Reporting Procedures

All AHBS employees, volunteers, and invited visitors are *mandated reporters*. They must report any suspicion, disclosure, or evidence of abuse or neglect immediately to the CPC/CPLO, who will escalate within 24 hours.

Reporting Flow

1. Identification of Concern – Staff observes signs or receives disclosure.
2. Immediate Action – Ensure the student’s immediate safety; do not promise confidentiality.
3. Notify CPC/CPLO – Report using the MyConcern system.
4. CPC Assessment – Determine if the concern meets the threshold for ADEK reporting.
5. Safety Concern Portal Submission – CPC completes and submits the Safety Concern Form within 24 hours.
6. Notification Chain – Form automatically shared with ADEK CPU, FCA, and MoI-CPC.
7. Emergency Cases – If the child is in immediate danger, call 999 and inform the Principal and ADEK CPU immediately.
8. Follow-Up and Support – CPC coordinates counselling and records outcomes confidentially.

All reporting documentation must be stored separately from academic files in a password-protected folder accessible only to the CPC and Principal.

Handling Allegations and Emergencies

Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

- Report immediately to the Principal and CPC.
- The Principal informs ADEK and the ISP Director of Education.
- The accused is temporarily removed from student contact pending investigation.
- If the allegation involves the Principal, report directly to ADEK and the Governing Board.

- Investigations follow due process, ensuring confidentiality and support for both the student and staff member.

Emergency Response

- In immediate danger, call 999 (Police) and 800 555 (ADEK Helpline).
- Ensure the student is supervised and safe until authorities arrive.
- Do not interview or probe the student beyond initial safety questions.
- Document exact words spoken and actions taken.
- Notify the Principal and CPC as soon as possible.

Support for Affected Students

- Provide access to the School Counsellor for emotional support.
- Offer a quiet, safe space on campus.
- Maintain regular communication with the family (where appropriate).
- Liaise with external agencies for ongoing case management (e.g., FCA, ADEK CPU).

Student Voice, Support and Wellbeing

Student Assent Process

Aspen Heights British School is committed to ensuring that students are active participants in matters related to their safety and wellbeing. Where a safeguarding or maltreatment concern is identified, and in accordance with ADEK guidance, the school will provide the student with age-appropriate, clear, and honest information about the concern, reporting actions, and available support. The student will be given the opportunity to share their views, feelings, and wishes, which will be documented and considered when planning protective actions. While legal decisions will be made by authorised adults and agencies, the student's understanding and voice will be sought through a **student assent process**, ensuring they do not feel confused, misled, or excluded. Staff must not coerce or influence assent, and communicating with the student must always prioritise emotional safety, dignity, and safeguarding best practice.

AHBS believes students are active partners in their own protection.

- Students are encouraged to express their opinions safely through the Student Council and Wellbeing Surveys.
- Peer mentoring programmes promote inclusion and respect.
- The curriculum teaches self-advocacy, emotional regulation, and where to seek help.
- Displays and QR-coded posters provide contact information for trusted adults and helplines.

Reporting Flow (Text Summary)

1. Concern identified by staff → reported on MyConcern
2. Child Protection team reviews and shares with ADEK CPU where appropriate.
3. ADEK CPU reviews → refers to FCA and MoI-CPC if needed.
4. FCA conducts case management and provides feedback to school.
5. CPC maintains support plan and monitors student wellbeing.
6. All records kept securely; summary included in Safeguarding Committee report.

Record Keeping and Confidentiality

- Case records stored digitally and separately from academic files.
- Access restricted to Principal and CPC.
- Files retained for seven years after student departure.
- No information shared with unauthorised persons.
- ADEK may request copies during audits or investigations.

- Details of external access documented on individual cases on MyConcern

Monitoring and Evaluation

- CPC reviews case logs termly to identify patterns and training needs.
- Outcomes reported to Safeguarding Committee and Principal.
- Policy updated annually to reflect new ADEK guidance and federal law.
- Summary data (in non-identifiable form) included in ADEK Annual Safeguarding Report.

Appendix A1 – Safety Concern Reporting Flow

Purpose:

To clarify how staff must act when any suspicion or disclosure of abuse, neglect, or serious welfare concern arises.

Reporting Flow (Text Summary)

1. Observation / Disclosure

- Any staff member, volunteer, or visitor identifies or hears a concern.

2. Immediate Safety

- Ensure the child is safe. Do *not* promise confidentiality.

3. Reports via MyConcern

- Provide a factual verbal report through the MyConcern system.

4. Initial Review

- CPC assesses urgency and decides if ADEK reporting threshold is met. Along with reviewing as part of the weekly Safeguarding Meeting.

5. Submission to Safety Concern Portal

- CPC completes Safety Concern within **24 hours** of initial concern.

6. Automatic Notification Chain

- ADEK Child Protection Unit (CPU) → Family Care Authority (FCA) → Ministry of Interior – Child Protection Centre (Mol-CPC).

7. Emergency Cases

- If imminent danger: **Call 999**, then inform the Principal and ADEK CPU immediately.

8. Case Management

- ADEK / FCA take over for investigation and ongoing monitoring.

9. Follow-Up

- CPC implements a support plan, documents all actions, and updates Safeguarding Committee.

Appendix A2 – Key Roles and Contacts

Role	Name / Designation	Contact Details	Responsibilities
Principal	Gillian Hammond	ghammond@ahbs.ae	Overall safeguarding oversight
Child Protection Coordinator (CPLO)	Charlotte Clark	cclark@ahbs.ae	Designated lead for all cases
Deputy CPC	Tilly Cobley	tcobley@ahbs.ae	Supports case management & cover
School Counsellor	Saaniyah Kazi	skazi@ahbs.ae	Student emotional wellbeing
School Nurse	Lorraine	nurse@ahbs.ae	Medical assessment & referral
Security Manager	Arbab Anwer	aanwer@ahbs.ae	Campus security & visitor control
ADEK Child Protection Unit (CPU)	—	800 555	Oversight of all school cases

Family Care Authority (FCA)	—	800 911	Case management & family support
Police (Emergency)	—	999	Immediate response in danger
Ministry of Interior CPC	—	www.moi-cpc.gov.ae	National child protection coordination

Appendix A3 – Safe Working Practice Summary

All AHBS staff must follow safe working practices to protect both students and themselves.

Core Expectations:

- Always work in view of others where possible.
- Avoid being alone with a student in closed spaces; if unavoidable, ensure visibility through windows.
- Use only school communication systems with students.
- Maintain professional boundaries at all times.
- Avoid physical contact unless necessary for safety or comfort (e.g., first aid).
- Do not photograph or record students on personal devices.
- Report any boundary concern immediately to the CPC.

- Every staff member signs a **Safe Working Agreement Form** annually at induction confirming adherence to these principles.
- If the Safe Working Agreement is breached, iSP protocols and policies will be followed in alignment with this.

Appendix A4 – Intimate Care and Inclusion Guidelines

These guidelines ensure the dignity and safety of students who require physical assistance or personal care.

- Two adults must be present during any intimate care procedure when possible.
- Parents are informed in advance and consent is recorded.
- Staff providing care must be appropriately trained and known to the student.
- Detailed records of care are kept confidentially in the medical office.
- Students are encouraged to develop independence according to their abilities.
- Inclusive facilities (accessible toilets, privacy screens) are available.

Appendix A5 – Legislative References (Summary)

This policy aligns with UAE and ADEK legislation, including but not limited to:

- **Federal Decree Law No. (3) of 2016** – *Child Rights (Wadeema)*
- **Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021** – *Crimes and Penalties*
- **Federal Decree Law No. (18) of 2020** – *Private Education and its Amendments*
- **Federal Law No. (39) of 2022** – *Compulsory Education*
- **ADEK School Safeguarding Policy v1.2 (2025)**
- **ADEK Student Protection Policy v1.1 (2024)**
- **National Policy for the Prevention of Bullying in Educational Institutions (MoE, n.d.)**

End of Document

Reviewed: August 2025

Next Review: August 2026



Approved by: Principal, Safeguarding Committee, and Governing Board
Version: 2025–2026 (ADEK-aligned)