Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

2026-2027

Policy Information			
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Principal			
Vice Principal			
Author of policy's role	Ms. Shahanaz A.W		
Chair of Governors			

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"Every Child Matters"

1. Purpose

Happy Home English School (HHES) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. We recognise that the welfare of the child is paramount and that all children, regardless of age, culture, ability, gender, language, or background, have an equal right to protection from harm.

In line with the requirements of the Sharjah Private Education Authority (SPEA), HHES aims to provide a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment where every child feels secure, respected, and valued.

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy aims to:

- Protect children from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and harm.
- Ensure all staff and stakeholders understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Establish clear procedures for identifying, reporting, and responding to concerns.
- Promote a safe school culture through appropriate conduct and professional practice.
- Ensure compliance with all relevant safeguarding laws and regulatory requirements.
- Support ongoing monitoring and review to maintain effective safeguarding practices.

HHES recognises that safeguarding is a shared responsibility, and all members of the school community are expected to act in the best interests of children at all times.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff (including temporary and agency staff), governors, contractors, visitors, suppliers, service providers to the school, and any other individuals working with or supporting children at HHES.

It applies to all students, with particular attention given to those who may be vulnerable or at increased risk.

This policy covers:

- **Prevention** – Promoting a safe school environment and preventing abuse.
- **Early identification** – Recognising and supporting children who may be at risk.
- **Response** – Clear procedures for reporting and responding to safeguarding concerns.

This policy should be read alongside other key school policies, including:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Staff Recruitment and Code of Conduct
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Educational Visits and Off-Site Activity Policy
- Use of Technology and E-Safety Policy

3. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy complies with the following legislation and guidance:
National Child Protection Policy in Educational Institutions (UAE, 2022)
Guidelines and requirements of the Sharjah Private Education Authority

4. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:
Protecting children from maltreatment
Preventing harm to their health or development
Ensuring children grow up in safe and effective care
Taking action to enable all children to achieve the best outcomes

Child Protection
Child protection is part of safeguarding and refers to the actions taken to prevent children from suffering, or being at risk of, significant harm.
Abuse
Abuse is a form of maltreatment. It may involve causing harm to a child or failing to act to prevent harm.

Types of Abuse

Physical Abuse – Causing physical harm to a child or failing to prevent injury.

Sexual Abuse – Forcing or encouraging a child to engage in sexual activities, including non-contact activities such as exposure to sexual content or imagery.

Psychological (Emotional) Abuse – Causing persistent harm to a child's emotional or mental well-being.

Neglect – The ongoing failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional, or developmental needs.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the trained staff member responsible for overseeing safeguarding and child protection across the school. All concerns must be reported to the DSL without delay.

5. Prevention

HHES takes all reasonable steps to minimise the risk of harm to children and promote a safe school environment. Prevention is achieved through the following measures:

Designated Safeguarding Leads: A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL(s) and HASO are appointed, trained, and responsible for overseeing all safeguarding matters.

Staff Training and Commitment: All staff receive safeguarding training and are committed to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in line with the National Child Protection Policy in Educational Institutions in the United Arab Emirates (2022).

Zero-Tolerance Approach: The school maintains a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of abuse, and staff actively contribute to prevention.

Safe and Supportive Culture: A respectful, open, and inclusive environment is promoted where children feel valued, listened to, and respected.

Secure Learning Environment: A safe and positive environment is maintained to support children's learning and development.

Pastoral Support: Accessible pastoral systems ensure students know how and where to seek help both inside and outside school.

Quality Assurance: Safeguarding practices are regularly monitored through strong governance and quality assurance systems.

6.Protection

HHES protects children from abuse, neglect, and harm through strong safeguarding measures across all areas of school life.

These include:
Safe Recruitment: All staff, volunteers, contractors, and service providers undergo background checks, reference verification, and criminal record screening in line with Sharjah Private Education Authority requirements.

Staff Training: All staff receive regular safeguarding training on recognising abuse, safe practices, and reporting procedures.

Code of Conduct: Clear professional boundaries and expected behaviours are outlined and enforced through the Staff Code of Conduct.

Safe Environment: The school operates controlled access, visitor identification, and regular safety monitoring of premises.

Online Safety: Filtering systems, monitoring tools, and digital safety education ensure safe use of technology.

Reporting Systems: Clear and confidential channels are available for students, staff, parents, and visitors to report concerns.

Information Sharing: Safeguarding information is shared strictly on a need-to-know basis and stored securely in line with data protection requirements.

7. Signs and Symptoms of Abuse and Neglect

The following categories form the overarching criteria for registering a safeguarding concern, by completing a Safeguarding Concern Form:
1. Neglect
2. Physical abuse
3. Sexual abuse

4. Emotional abuse
5. Self-harm or abuse
6. Eating disorders (Reference Appendix 1)

8. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff and adults working in the school must:

- Follow this safeguarding policy at all times
- Put children's safety, rights, and wellbeing first
- Stay alert to any signs of abuse or neglect
- Report safeguarding concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Record concerns clearly, accurately, and without delay
- Keep professional boundaries and behave appropriately at all times

Failure to follow safeguarding procedures may result in disciplinary action.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)

The school will have an appropriate senior member of staff to take lead responsibility for child protection. This person should have the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources and, where appropriate, supporting and directing other staff.

• Takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection in the school. Their role and responsibilities will not be delegated; however, the activities of the DSL may be delegated to appropriately trained deputies.

• Receives refresher training every two years and regularly (at least annually) updates their knowledge and skills to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

• Acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community.

• Encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings.

• Is alert to the specific needs of children in need, including those with special educational needs.

• Keeps and maintains written records of all concerns.

• Ensures records of all concerns are stored securely and kept separate from the student's general file.

• Attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences and/or strategy meetings.

• Ensures that all staff have read and understood the child protection and safeguarding policy and Staff Code of Conduct and that all staff have signed that they have received copies of these and have read them.

• Keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training.

• Ensures that the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated annually

• Ensures the child protection and safeguarding policy are published on the school's website.

• Ensures parents are aware of the school's role in safeguarding and that referrals about suspected abuse and neglect may be made.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in this school is: **Mrs. Malathy** (Supervisor)

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. In case of absence, the Deputy Safeguarding Lead must be contacted.

The principal
The principal is responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
- Providing the communication of this policy to parents when their child joins the school and via the school website
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training, and resources and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- Ensuring that all staff undertake proper safeguarding and child protection training and update this regularly
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff where appropriate
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable

9. Training Requirements

All staff must receive safeguarding and child protection training appropriate to their roles:

- **Level 1 Safeguarding Training**:
  Basic safeguarding awareness training for all staff, helping them recognise signs of abuse, understand their responsibilities, and know how to report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Mandatory for all staff, including support staff, volunteers, and contractors; refreshed annually.
- **Level 2 Safeguarding Training:**
  Intermediate training for staff with safeguarding responsibilities, focusing on identifying concerns in more detail, responding appropriately, recording information accurately, and supporting the safeguarding process in coordination with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).Required for Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs), counsellors, school nurses, and designated safeguarding staff; renewed every two years.
- **Level 3 Safeguarding Training :**
  Advanced training for DSLs and senior staff on managing cases, making referrals, and leading safeguarding practices.

10. Referral and Reporting Systems

HHES maintains clear systems for reporting and responding to safeguarding concerns. All concerns must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL.

Procedures for Staff

All disclosures, allegations, or concerns must be reported immediately to the DSL/DDSL.

The DSL records the concern and takes appropriate action, which may include speaking with those involved, assessing risk, contacting parents where safe to do so, and ensuring follow-up support.

In serious cases, the DSL will refer the matter to the relevant authority in line with UAE child protection procedures.

Staff must report any concerns about colleagues to the DSL or Senior Leadership Team in line with the Staff Code of Conduct.

Reporting Systems for Pupils

Pupils are informed about trusted adults through assemblies, posters, and classroom discussions.

Clear and accessible reporting systems are in place to ensure pupils can raise concerns safely. Reference: Appendix 2

Any concern raised by a pupil must be reported immediately to the DSL following safeguarding procedures.

Communication with Parents

Parents are informed of the school's safeguarding responsibilities through the school website.

Parents will usually be informed when a referral is made, unless doing so may place the child at further risk or interfere with an investigation.

11. Allegations Against Members of Staff

- All allegations meeting the harm threshold (risk of harm, criminal behaviour, or unsuitability to work with children) against any staff must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead(DSL)
- Allegations involving the DSL must be reported to the Principal.
- Serious cases will be referred to the relevant authority in line with safeguarding requirements.

Reporting Concerns About Senior Staff or Anonymous Reporting
Concerns about senior leaders, or any wish to report anonymously, may be raised through the complaint box. All concerns will be taken seriously and investigated appropriately. (Reference: Appendix 3)

12. Child-on-Child Abuse

HHES takes child-on-child abuse seriously and has a zero-tolerance approach. All staff must recognise that children can abuse other children at any age, both inside and outside of school, including online.

Reporting Responsibility
Any concern about child-on-child abuse must be reported immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL and recorded in the log. Failure to report may result in disciplinary action.

Types of Child-on-Child Abuse

This may include but is not limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying and discrimination)
- Physical abuse (hitting, kicking, or other harm)
- Sexual violence or sexual harassment
- Sharing indecent images or videos
- Racially aggravated/ verbal abuse

Staff Vigilance

The absence of reports does not mean abuse is not happening. Staff must remain vigilant and report any concerns immediately.

Response and Support

- All cases will be taken seriously and investigated appropriately, with safeguarding decisions based on individual risk and needs. Victims will be supported, protected, and offered appropriate interventions such as counselling and safety measures. Where necessary, the school may separate students to ensure safety. The safety of the victim is always the priority.

Prevention

Child-on-child abuse is minimised through the Behaviour Policy, Code of Conduct, and clear expectations of behaviour both in and out of school.

13. E-Safety

HHES is committed to the safe and responsible use of technology for all students, staff, and the wider school community.

Staff Use of Personal Devices

- Personal devices may be used for professional purposes only during appropriate times and in line with safeguarding expectations.
- Staff must never use personal devices to take or store images of students unless required for approved school purposes and must ensure secure storage.

Guidance, Education, and Filtering

- Clear guidance on ICT, mobile devices, and online platforms is provided to all stakeholders.
- Students, staff, and parents receive education on online safety and responsible digital behaviour.
- Robust filtering and monitoring systems protect students from harmful online content.

Reporting and Risks

- Any online safety concern must be reported immediately to the DSL through safeguarding procedures.
- The school addresses risks including: harmful content, online grooming, cyber bullying, sharing inappropriate content, scams, gambling, misinformation, and harmful narratives.

Review and Compliance

- HHES reviews digital safety regularly and promotes a whole-school approach in line with UAE cyber safety and SPEA expectations.

14. Supporting Children

HHES recognises that children who have experienced abuse, neglect, or trauma may struggle with self-worth, fear, shame, or helplessness. For some children, the school may provide the only stability and security in their lives.

How the School Supports Students

- Promoting self-esteem, resilience, and self-confidence, while making clear that aggression, bullying, or harmful behaviour is not condoned.
- Providing a safe, caring, and positive environment where children feel valued, listened to, and respected.
- Training staff to recognise early indicators of distress or abuse and respond sensitively.
- Notifying external agencies immediately when a child is at risk of significant harm.
- Ensuring safeguarding information is transferred securely and promptly when a child moves to another school.
- Providing access to counselling, pastoral care, and targeted support services where appropriate.

Support for Vulnerable Groups

Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) / People of Determination may face additional barriers and greater risk of exploitation or abuse. Factors that increase vulnerability include:

- Social isolation and difficulty expressing concerns
- Behaviours being misinterpreted as SEN-related
- Specific indicators that must not be dismissed (e.g., communication difficulties, toileting issues, challenges understanding right and wrong, unusual attachments to staff or peers)

Mental Health and Wellbeing

- Mental health problems may indicate past or current abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- Staff are well placed to observe day-to-day behaviours that may signal emerging difficulties or risk.
- HHES promotes emotional wellbeing and resilience for all students and staff.
- The school works closely with parents to support student wellbeing and encourages parents to share concerns.
- Referrals to specialist mental health services will be made where necessary, with parental involvement and consent.

15. Wider Staff Safeguarding Awareness

"See it. Say it. Record it. Report it – immediately."

This means **every single person who works** – cleaners, drivers, teachers, admin, managers, everyone – has a job to keep students safe- Not just the safeguarding person. Not just the leaders.

Why does this matter?

Because others see things the safeguarding lead doesn't.

- The cleaner sees who is hanging around outside.
- The driver sees how someone looks when they get picked up.
- The admin hears how people talk on the phone.

You might be the only one who notices something isn't right.

How to report

Three Simple Steps

1. **Notice** – If something feels wrong or unusual, trust that feeling. Staff do not need proof or certainty. A reasonable concern is enough to take action.
2. **Tell someone** – Report the concern immediately to:
   The designated safeguarding lead, or
   Any member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
   Staff must not delay, investigate further, or discuss the concern with others.
3. **Write it down** – Make a brief, factual record containing only:
   What was seen or heard, the date and time and the location.
   Staff must not add opinions, assumptions, or interpretations. The written record must be signed, dated, and given to the safeguarding lead as soon as possible.

What Staff Should Look Out For

Staff should report anything that does not seem normal. Examples include but are not limited to:

- A child who is frequently left alone or unsupervised
- Bruises, marks, or injuries that appear repeatedly or have no clear explanation
- A person whose behaviour, mood, or appearance changes noticeably from usual
- A colleague who says or does things that feel inappropriate, odd, or concerning

Guiding principle

If a situation or behaviour makes a staff member think, "that seems wrong" or "that feels off," they must report it. Staff do not need to prove anything. They only need to pass on what they have seen or heard.

Never promise someone you won't tell. You can say "I'm listening" but not "I'll keep this secret." Because if someone is in danger, you have to speak up.

16.Confidentiality

HHES recognises that safeguarding information is sensitive and must be handled with care. Confidentiality is respected at all times, but it must never compromise the safety of a child.

Key Principles

- Safeguarding concerns are shared only with those who need to know in order to protect the child.
- Staff must never promise a child complete confidentiality if they disclose abuse. Staff must explain that they may need to share the information to keep the child safe.
- All safeguarding information is stored securely and in line with data protection regulations.
- Information may be shared with relevant authorities (e.g., SPEA, child protection services) when required by law or when a child is at risk of harm.

What Staff Must Do

- Report all concerns to the DSL without delay.

- Do not discuss safeguarding concerns with colleagues, parents, or others unless authorised by the DSL.
- Do not keep any safeguarding concern secret.

What Staff Must Not Do

- Promise a child that they will not tell anyone.
- Share safeguarding information informally or through unsecured channels.
- Attempt to investigate concerns independently.

17. Monitoring and Review

Monitoring

- The school will monitor the effectiveness of this policy by:
- Maintaining a confidential log of all safeguarding concerns raised
- Reviewing this log termly to identify patterns, recurring issues, or gaps in staff awareness
- Tracking mandatory safeguarding training completion rates for all staff
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will present a termly monitoring report to the Governing Body.

Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- **Annually** as a minimum, or
- **Immediately** following:
- Changes to safeguarding legislation or statutory guidance
- A serious safeguarding incident
- An identified failing in policy or practice

Each review will consider:

- Whether staff are reporting concerns appropriately and in a timely manner
- Whether any barriers to reporting remain
- Whether training content or frequency needs updating
- Whether the policy remains consistent with current law and guidance
- All staff will be informed of any changes to this policy. Updated versions will be circulated and made available on the school's internal system.

Responsibility

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has overall responsibility for:

- Ensuring this policy is monitored and reviewed on time
- Implementing any recommended changes following review
- Reporting outcomes of the review to the Principal and Governing Body

18. Non-Compliance

Definition

Non-compliance means any failure by a staff member to follow this policy. This includes:

- Knowingly failing to report a safeguarding concern
- Delaying a report without good reason
- Failing to make a written record
- Promising confidentiality to a child or colleague regarding a safeguarding matter
- Investigating or confronting someone without authorization

Consequences

The school treats non-compliance seriously. Consequences depend on the severity of the failure.

Type of breach	Possible consequence
Minor (e.g., late recording)	Verbal reminder or additional training
Serious (e.g., knowingly not reporting)	Formal disciplinary action, written warning, or dismissal
Criminal (e.g., concealing abuse)	Police referral, SPEA referral, and dismissal

Malicious Allegations

Any staff member who makes a deliberately false or malicious allegation may face disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Staff who raise concerns in good faith remain protected, even if those concerns are later unsubstantiated.

Reporting Non-Compliance

Any staff member who witnesses another staff member failing to comply must report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or any SLT member immediately

19.Appendix 1: Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

Staff should be aware that these indicators may suggest a safeguarding concern. The presence of one or more signs does not necessarily confirm abuse but should be taken seriously and reported in line with school procedures.

1. Physical Abuse (Key Signs)

- Unexplained or frequent injuries (bruises, burns, cuts, bite marks)
- Injuries in unusual areas (e.g., behind ears, neck, groin)
- Inconsistent or unlikely explanations for injuries
- Fear of going home or of parents being contacted
- Withdrawal from physical contact or fear of adults
- Aggressive, overly passive, or unusually compliant behaviour
- Covering body parts inappropriately (e.g., long sleeves in hot weather)
- Running away or self-destructive behaviour

2. Emotional Abuse (Key Signs)

- Delayed emotional, mental, or speech development
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Extreme behaviour (withdrawn, aggressive, or overly passive)
- Anxiety, fear of adults, or specific individuals
- Sudden changes in mood or behaviour
- Poor concentration or decline in academic performance
- Difficulty forming relationships or lack of attachment
- Signs of depression, self-harm, or panic

3. Sexual Abuse (Key Signs)

- Age-inappropriate sexualised behaviour or knowledge
- Sexual language, drawings, or play beyond developmental level
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour towards others
- Physical signs of discomfort or injury in the genital area
- Hints, disclosures, or indirect references to sexual activity

4. Neglect (Key Signs)

- Frequent hunger or lack of proper nutrition
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness or fatigue
- Inappropriate or inadequate clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance
- Untreated medical needs
- Lack of supervision
- Low self-esteem and poor social relationships

Important Note:

All concerns must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

20. Appendix 2:
Guidance on Responding to a Student Disclosure
Listen → Reassure → Record → Report
Student Disclosure – Quick Reference for Teachers

Stage	What It Looks Like	Teacher Response
Hesitation	Child seems unsure, anxious, or scared to speak	Be patient, give time, create a safe space
Initial Hint	Child may give small clues or partial information	Listen carefully, do not interrupt or probe
Disclosure	Child shares information about harm/concern	Stay calm, accept, reassure, do not question deeply
Emotional Reaction	Child may cry, withdraw, or become distressed	Offer reassurance, remain calm and supportive

After Disclosure	Child may feel relief, fear, or confusion	Explain next steps clearly and gently
Follow-Up	Child may need ongoing reassurance	Continue to be supportive but refer to DSL

What Teachers Should Do / Not Do

What TO DO	What NOT to DO
Stay calm and composed	Show shock or disbelief ("I can't believe it!")
Listen carefully and give full attention	Interrupt or rush the child
Accept what the child says`	Question truth ("Are you sure this is true?")
Maintain eye contact and show empathy	Appear distracted or dismissive
Be honest about next steps	Promise to keep secrets or full confidentiality
Explain confidentiality (share only with those who can help)	Say "Don't tell anyone else"
Reassure the child they did the right thing	Blame the child in any way
Say "It's not your fault"	Ask "Why didn't you tell earlier?"
Use supportive phrases ("Thank you for telling me")	Ask leading or investigative questions
Allow the child to speak at their own pace	Push for more details or force disclosure
Record exact words (verbatim)	Add your own opinions or assumptions
Be aware child may feel scared or threatened	Ignore emotional state

21. Appendix 3:

Allegations of Abuse Made Against Staff

When This Applies

This section applies when an allegation is made that a current member of staff has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they would pose a risk of harm to children
- Behaved in a way (inside or outside school) that suggests they may not be suitable to work with children

Key Principles

- All allegations will be dealt with quickly, fairly, and consistently
- The individual who is the subject of the allegation will be supported throughout
- A **Case Manager** will lead any investigation (Principal, or Chair of Governors if the Principal is the subject)
- This applies regardless of where the alleged abuse took place
- Allegations against a teacher no longer teaching, and historical allegations, will be referred to the police
- Procedures will be applied with common sense and judgement

Suspension

Suspension is **not** the default position. It will only be considered if:

- A child is or may be at risk of harm, or
- The case is so serious it could lead to dismissal
- Suspension will only happen if no reasonable alternative exists

Definitions for Investigation Outcomes

Outcome	Meaning
Substantiated	Enough evidence to prove the allegation
Malicious	Allegation is false and deliberately invented to deceive
False	Enough evidence to disprove the allegation
Unsubstantiated	Not enough evidence to prove or disprove (does not imply guilt or innocence)
Unfounded	No evidence or proper basis to support the allegation

Procedure for Dealing with Allegations

The Principal will:

- Immediately discuss the serious allegations with the Sharjah Private Education Authority (SPEA)
- Agree a course of action, including whether to involve police or children's social care
- Inform the accused individual as soon as possible
- If suspension is needed, agree and record the rationale with the SPEA
- Provide written confirmation of suspension within 1 working day
- If no further action is needed, record the decision and justification
- If further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the SPEA
- Inform parents of the child involved as soon as possible
- Keep parents informed of progress and outcomes

Timescales

- **Within 1 week:** Cases that are clearly unsubstantiated or malicious
- **Within 3 working days:** Allegations that do not require formal disciplinary action
- **Within 12 working days:** Disciplinary hearings that can be held without further investigation

After a Criminal Investigation or Prosecution

- The Principal will discuss with the SPEA whether any further action (including disciplinary action) is appropriate

If Allegation is Substantiated

- If the staff member is dismissed or resigns, the school will discuss and refer to SPEA about it.

If Allegation is Malicious or Deliberately Invented

- The Principal will consider disciplinary action against the pupil who made it

Confidentiality

The school will maintain confidentiality by agreeing:

- Who needs to know and what information can be shared
- How to manage gossip and speculation
- What information can be given to the wider community
- How to manage press interest

Record-Keeping

Clear records will be kept on the individual's confidential personnel file. Records will include:

- Summary of the allegation
- How it was followed up and resolved
- Notes of actions taken and decisions made

Records of malicious allegations will be deleted

- Records of non-malicious allegations will be retained

Section 2: Low-Level Concerns (Do Not Meet Harm Threshold)

What Are Low-Level Concerns?

Any concern – no matter how small – that a staff member may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct (including outside of work)
- Does not meet the allegations threshold for referral to the SPEA

Sharing Low-Level Concerns

Staff are encouraged to share low-level concerns by:

- Being clear about expected vs. inappropriate behaviour
- Feeling empowered to report concerns
- Feeling able to self-refer
- Trusting that concerns will be handled sensitively and proportionately

Responding to Low-Level Concerns

The Principal will:

- Speak to the person who raised the concern (unless anonymous)
- Speak to the individual involved and any witnesses
- Inform the DSL of every low-level concern
- Categorise the behaviour and determine any further action

Low-level concerns about supply staff or contractors will be escalated to their employer.

Record-Keeping for Low-Level Concerns

- All concerns will be recorded in writing
- Records will include: the concern, context, action taken, and rationale
- Records will be kept confidential and held securely on the school's safeguarding system

- Records will be reviewed regularly to identify patterns
- Records will be retained until the individual leaves the school

References
Low-level concerns will **not** be included in references unless:

- The concern has met the threshold for referral to the SPEA and is substantiated, or
- The concern relates to misconduct or poor performance that would normally be included in a reference

22. Important Contacts

Role	Name	Contact Details
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Ms Malathi	0528341993 / safeguarding@happyhomeenglishsch.com
Deputy DSL/ Councilor	Ms.Athira T Babu	0561381553 / safeguarding@happyhomeenglishsch.com
Deputy DSL/ Pastoral lead	Ms Shahanaz A W	054 4398654/ safeguarding@happyhomeenglishsch.com
HASO	Ms.Sara Wafa	0589497837 safeguarding@happyhomeenglishsch.com
Principal	Dr.Shermeen S	065661903 safeguarding@happyhomeenglishsch.com

External Contacts

Organisation	Contact Details
Child Helpline	800700
Police (emergency)	999
Ambulance	998

22.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Name: Ms Malti

Designation: Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
School Contact Number: 0544398654
Email: safeguarding@happyhomeenglishsch.com

The DSL is the school's first point of contact for safeguarding and child protection concerns and is responsible for ensuring that concerns are appropriately recorded, assessed, followed up and, where necessary, referred to the relevant external authorities.

22.2 Sharjah Private Education Authority (SPEA)

Authority: Sharjah Private Education Authority (SPEA)
Telephone: +971 6 804 1444
Email: info@spea.shj.ae

SPEA is the relevant education authority for private schools in Sharjah. Safeguarding and child protection concerns shall be reported to SPEA in accordance with applicable requirements and school procedures.

22.3 Sharjah Social Services Department – Child Protection / Child Help

Child Help / Child Protection Hotline: 800700

The Sharjah Social Services Department operates the **Child Help** service for reports concerning children exposed to abuse, violence, neglect, exploitation or other risks to their safety and wellbeing.

Sharjah Social Services Department – General Contact:
Telephone: +971 6 507 8777
Email: Khadamat@sssd.ae
Website: www.sssd.shj.ae

22.4 External Reporting and Mandatory Referral

The school recognises that safeguarding and child protection are legal responsibilities. Under **Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 on Child Rights (Wadeema's Law)**, reporting is mandatory for educators and persons entrusted with the protection, care or education of children where there is a threat to a child's safety or physical, psychological, moral or mental wellbeing.

Accordingly:

- All safeguarding concerns must be reported promptly to the DSL and recorded in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.
- **Serious, urgent or suspected cases of child abuse, neglect, exploitation, violence or significant risk of harm shall be referred to the appropriate UAE child protection authorities without undue delay.**
- Where appropriate, referrals shall be made to **SPEA and/or the Sharjah Social Services Department Child Protection/Child Help service (800700)**, in accordance with the nature and seriousness of the concern.
- Where a case may constitute a criminal offence or presents an immediate threat to the child, the matter shall also be referred to the relevant competent authorities, including the police or other emergency services, as required by law.
- The school shall not delay an external referral solely because an internal investigation or parental discussion has not been completed.

- Information shall be shared only with the relevant authorities and personnel on a need-to-know basis, while maintaining confidentiality and protecting the child's best interests.

The school's safeguarding procedures shall therefore operate in conjunction with, and not in place of, the UAE's statutory child protection and mandatory reporting requirements. The Executive Regulation of Wadeema's Law also requires educational institutions to report suspected abuse or violence and provides for referral to competent authorities where cases constitute offences.