

AL SADIQ ISLAMIC ENGLISH SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY

2026–27

Stakeholders	All staff, students, parents, volunteers, visitors, contractors and ILSAs
Policy Lead	Principal / Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
Deputy DSLs	Appointed from Senior Leadership and Inclusion/Wellbeing; current names displayed on school safeguarding posters
Approval Status	Approved
Monitoring Cycle	Ongoing monitoring; formal annual review
Next Review	August 2027 or earlier following regulatory change

1. Purpose

- Clearly state ASIES child-protection and safeguarding expectations.
- Establish consistent procedures for prevention, identification, reporting, referral, recording and follow-up.
- Maintain an inclusive culture in which every child feels safe, valued, heard and protected.
- Ensure staff understand their duty to act promptly and never investigate safeguarding concerns themselves.
- Meet applicable UAE child-protection law and Dubai/KHDA safeguarding expectations.

2. Scope

This policy applies across all phases and school activities to employees, leaders, students, parents, volunteers, visitors, contractors, transport personnel and ILSAs. Safeguarding duties apply on site, on buses, on trips, during extracurricular activities and in school-authorised online learning.

3. Policy Statement and Principles

Every child has the right to protection from abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying, harassment and avoidable harm. ASIES recognises its duty of care to safeguard and promote students' welfare and to provide a safe, secure and nurturing environment supporting wellbeing, learning and personal development.

- Wellbeing first: physical, emotional and social safety are fundamental.
- Listening to children: students must know that concerns will be heard and taken seriously.
- Best interests of the child: safeguarding decisions prioritise safety and welfare.
- Fairness and non-discrimination: protection applies to every child.
- Prevention and early intervention: staff remain alert and respond to emerging risk.
- Confidentiality with a duty to report: information is restricted to those who need it, but safeguarding concerns cannot be kept secret.
- Professional curiosity: staff notice changes, patterns and inconsistencies and report concerns rather than making assumptions.

4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

- Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 concerning Child Rights (Wadeema's Law).
- Applicable UAE legislation concerning crimes, cyber safety, privacy, data protection and child protection.

- Executive Council Resolution No. (2) of 2017 regulating private schools in Dubai, where applicable.
- Current KHDA safeguarding, wellbeing and private-school requirements.
- Community Development Authority and Dubai Police child-protection requirements, where applicable.
- International safeguarding guidance may be used for professional benchmarking where consistent with UAE law and KHDA requirements.

Where legislation, regulatory contacts or reporting routes change, the current official UAE/KHDA requirement takes precedence.

5. Safeguarding Leadership

The Principal is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) are appointed from Senior Leadership and Inclusion/Wellbeing. Current names, photographs and contact routes are maintained separately on safeguarding posters and internal communications so that they can be updated immediately without waiting for a policy revision.

- The DSL/DDSL leads safeguarding practice, referrals, records, staff guidance and training.
- The DSL/DDSL liaises with parents and external authorities where appropriate and safe.
- The Principal ensures adequate resources, implementation, accountability and a strong safeguarding culture.
- All staff remain individually responsible for reporting concerns immediately; responsibility cannot be delegated to another colleague.

6. Categories and Forms of Harm

- Physical abuse: deliberate physical harm including hitting, shaking, burning, poisoning, suffocating or other injury.
- Sexual abuse/exploitation: involving a child in sexual activity, grooming, exploitation, sexualised images/content or other sexual harm.
- Emotional abuse: persistent humiliation, intimidation, rejection, threats, isolation, coercion or other treatment causing emotional harm.
- Neglect: persistent failure to meet basic physical, medical, supervisory, educational or emotional needs.
- Peer-on-peer abuse: bullying, hazing, physical or sexual harassment, coercion, harmful sexual behaviour or other abuse between students.
- Cyber/digital abuse: cyberbullying, online grooming, harmful content, threats, exploitation, unauthorised sharing or other technology-enabled harm.
- Exploitation and other safeguarding risks: any conduct or circumstances placing a child at risk of abuse, exploitation or serious harm.

7. Indicators and Early Warning Signs

- Physical: unexplained or repeated injuries, frequent unexplained absence, poor hygiene or concerning explanations.
- Emotional/behavioural: withdrawal, anxiety, low self-esteem, aggression, sudden changes in behaviour, fearfulness or distress.
- Sexual: sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate to age, unexplained secrecy, distress, avoidance or other concerning changes.
- Neglect: persistent hunger, untreated medical need, poor hygiene, inadequate supervision or persistent absence.
- Digital: unusual secrecy around devices, distress following online activity, threats, grooming indicators or harmful sharing.

Indicators do not prove abuse. Staff record and report concerns; they do not diagnose or investigate.

8. Safeguarding in School

- Build positive, respectful and appropriately boundaried relationships with students.
- Remain vigilant for signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, peer abuse and online harm.
- Create classrooms where students know how and to whom they can report concerns.
- Respond promptly to changes in attendance, behaviour, presentation, wellbeing or attainment where these may indicate risk.
- Give additional safeguarding attention to children who may be more vulnerable, including young children, Students of Determination and students with communication barriers.
- Integrate age-appropriate safety, respectful relationships, anti-bullying, wellbeing and digital-safety education into school programmes.

9. Responding to a Disclosure or Concern

- Stay calm and listen carefully.
- Take the child seriously and reassure them that they were right to speak.
- Do not promise secrecy. Explain that information must be shared with people who can help keep them safe.
- Do not ask leading or investigative questions. Use only minimal clarification needed to understand immediate safety.
- Do not confront the alleged person responsible.
- Record what was seen/heard as soon as possible, using the child's exact words where relevant and distinguishing fact from opinion.
- Sign/date the record and report immediately to the DSL/DDSL. A written form must never delay an urgent verbal report.
- If there is immediate danger or a medical emergency, secure immediate assistance and follow the applicable emergency/external reporting route.
- Maintain confidentiality and do not discuss the concern with colleagues who are not involved in safeguarding the child.

10. Reporting and Escalation

All safeguarding concerns and disclosures must be reported immediately to the DSL/DDSL. The DSL/DDSL assesses immediate risk, creates or updates the confidential safeguarding record, determines protective action and liaises with the Principal and external agencies as required.

Parents are informed where appropriate and safe. Parents must not be contacted before referral where doing so could increase risk, compromise evidence, place a child or another person in danger, or conflict with instructions from authorities.

Where a child is at immediate risk, emergency services/appropriate child-protection authorities must be contacted without delay. Staff must not wait for routine school processes where urgent action is necessary.

11. Allegations or Concerns About Adults Working With Children

Any allegation or safeguarding concern involving a member of staff, volunteer, contractor, ILSA or other adult working with students must be reported immediately to the DSL/Principal. Where the concern relates to the Principal/DSL, it must be escalated directly to the authorised Athena Education governance/management safeguarding contact and relevant external authority as required.

The school will protect the child, preserve confidentiality, avoid prejudging the allegation and follow applicable regulatory, employment and child-protection procedures. Suspension, where used, is a neutral protective measure and not a finding of guilt. Alternatives such as changed duties or enhanced supervision may be considered where safe and appropriate.

12. Whistleblowing

Staff have a duty to report unsafe practice, misconduct, safeguarding failures or suspected abuse by colleagues. Concerns should be raised with the DSL/Principal or, where the concern involves the Principal, through the authorised Athena Education escalation route. No employee should suffer retaliation for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

13. Staff Code of Conduct and Professional Boundaries

- Physical punishment, degrading treatment, intimidation, humiliation and threatening behaviour are prohibited.
- Maintain professional boundaries and avoid conduct that could be misinterpreted.
- Avoid unapproved one-to-one isolated contact; use visible/authorised spaces and follow school procedures.
- Use only approved school systems to communicate with students and parents; do not exchange personal social-media accounts or use private channels for student communication.
- Do not photograph, film, record or share student information/images except through authorised school processes.
- Discipline must protect dignity and self-esteem and comply with the Behaviour for Learning Policy.
- Staff online and social-media conduct must remain professional and must not compromise students, colleagues or the school.

14. Safe Touch and Positive Handling

Physical contact must be appropriate, necessary, proportionate and in the child's best interests. Comforting touch must be respectful, minimal and responsive to the child's age, needs and wishes.

Physical intervention/restraint may be used only when permitted by school procedure and where necessary to prevent immediate harm. Only the minimum reasonable intervention may be used. Any significant physical intervention must be recorded and reported to the DSL and reviewed under the school's positive-handling procedures.

15. Safeguarding in EYFS

- Recognise young children's greater dependency and possible inability to articulate concerns.
- Maintain required supervision and adult-child ratios.
- Use safe, dignified toileting, changing and hygiene practices.
- Monitor developmental, behavioural and physical indicators carefully.
- Ensure handover/collection arrangements identify authorised adults and protect children from unauthorised collection.
- Escalate concerns promptly; age or limited speech must never be a reason to dismiss an indicator.

16. Students of Determination and Other Vulnerable Students

Students with disabilities, communication differences, additional needs or dependency on adults may face increased safeguarding vulnerability. Staff must ensure accessible reporting routes, listen carefully to non-verbal or alternative communication, avoid attributing signs of harm automatically to disability, and coordinate with the Inclusion Team without delaying safeguarding referral.

17. Peer-on-Peer Abuse and Bullying

Peer abuse is never dismissed as banter, normal conflict or part of growing up. The school responds to bullying, harassment, coercion, harmful sexual behaviour, physical aggression and online abuse through safeguarding and behaviour procedures according to the nature and level of risk.

Support is provided to the student harmed and appropriate risk management, education, intervention and consequences are applied to the student displaying harmful behaviour. Where conduct may constitute a crime or serious safeguarding risk, external referral is made as required.

18. Online Safety and Distance Learning

- Only school-approved learning and communication platforms may be used for school-authorised student interaction.
- No private/personal digital communication between staff and students.
- One-to-one online sessions require the safeguarding arrangements and parent awareness/consent required by school procedure.
- Online lessons/sessions are supervised or recorded where required by school procedure, with recordings stored securely.
- Students receive age-appropriate education about cyber safety, digital citizenship, harmful content, grooming, cyberbullying and responsible technology use.
- Unauthorised applications, security bypassing or prohibited technology use on school systems/devices is addressed promptly.
- Suspected cyberbullying, online threats, grooming or digital exploitation is reported as a safeguarding concern.

19. Recruitment, Vetting and Induction

- Identity and right-to-work/residency documentation checked as applicable.
- Police clearance/Good Conduct Certificate and other safeguarding clearance as required.
- References obtained and checked.
- Qualifications verified for the role.
- Applicable MOHRE/KHDA registration/approval completed.
- Safeguarding expectations considered during recruitment and interview.
- All adults working regularly with students, including approved ILSAs and relevant contractors, are subject to appropriate safeguarding checks.
- New staff complete safeguarding induction before unsupervised work with students and sign required safeguarding/confidentiality declarations.

20. Premises, Visitors and Contractors

- Controlled entry and exit, security personnel and CCTV are used as part of site safeguarding.
- Visitors sign in, display identification/visitor credentials and follow school supervision/access requirements.
- Contractors working around students are appropriately vetted/supervised according to risk.
- Unsafe or restricted areas are secured from student access.
- Staff challenge or report unidentified or unauthorised adults in student areas.

21. Transport Safeguarding

- School transport uses appropriately licensed/approved vehicles, drivers and supervisors/bus nannies as required.
- Students are supervised during boarding, travel and handover.
- Attendance/route checks and safe handover arrangements are followed.
- Concerns arising on transport are reported through school safeguarding procedures.
- No child should be knowingly left unsupervised on a school vehicle; required end-of-route vehicle checks must be completed.
- Transport safeguarding incidents are recorded and escalated according to seriousness.

22. Trips, Activities and Off-Site Safeguarding

- Risk assessments are completed before trips and relevant controls communicated to staff.
- Appropriate staffing and supervision are maintained.
- Medical, inclusion, emergency-contact and safeguarding information is available to authorised trip leaders.
- Students are counted/registered at required transition points.
- Any safeguarding concern arising off-site is reported immediately using the same safeguarding principles as on site.

23. Missing or Unaccounted-for Student

Any student unexpectedly missing from an expected location is treated seriously. Staff immediately alert the relevant leader/security, verify registers and known movements, search in accordance with school emergency procedures, contact parents and external authorities where required, and record/review the incident. A missing child must never be treated simply as an attendance issue where safety is uncertain.

24. Health, Medical and Personal Care

The school clinic and authorised staff follow health, medication, emergency and medical-record procedures. Where a medical presentation or injury raises a safeguarding concern, the nurse/medical professional informs the DSL immediately.

Personal/intimate care is provided only by authorised/trained adults in accordance with the student's needs, dignity, privacy and safeguarding procedures. Care arrangements for Students of Determination are documented where required.

25. Body Maps

Where there is concern about a physical injury, a body map may be completed by the school nurse or appropriate medical professional as a factual record. Staff must not ask a child to remove clothing unnecessarily, take unauthorised photographs or conduct an examination outside their professional role. The body map forms part of the confidential safeguarding record and is countersigned/reviewed by the DSL.

26. Concerns Reported by External Persons

Information received from a parent, agency, caller, visitor or other external person is recorded with the date/time received, method of communication, provider's identity/contact details where available, relationship to the child, information received, recommended action and outcome. The record is passed immediately to the DSL/DDSL.

27. Safeguarding Records and Confidentiality

- Safeguarding files are secure, access-controlled and stored separately from routine academic records.
- Access is restricted to authorised safeguarding leaders and others with a legitimate safeguarding need.
- Records show the concern, source, date/time, action, advice sought, referrals, parent contact decisions, outcomes and follow-up.
- Staff record facts and exact words where relevant and avoid unsupported opinion.
- Records are retained and securely disposed of in accordance with applicable UAE/KHDA requirements.
- Safeguarding information transfers securely to another school/provider where required for continuity of protection.
- Confidentiality never prevents necessary information-sharing to protect a child.

28. Training

- All staff receive safeguarding induction before working independently with students.
- Annual safeguarding refresher training is mandatory for all staff.
- DSL/DDSLs undertake appropriate role-specific refresher/professional development.
- Training includes disclosure response, abuse indicators, reporting, professional boundaries, online safety and relevant emerging risks.
- Training attendance and follow-up actions are recorded.

29. Student and Parent Education

The school promotes safeguarding awareness through age-appropriate curriculum, assemblies, wellbeing programmes, anti-bullying education, digital-safety teaching and other initiatives. Parents are provided with relevant safeguarding information and may be invited to workshops on child safety, wellbeing and online safety.

30. Monitoring, Audit and Governance

- Safeguarding practice is monitored through audits, site checks, record reviews, training evaluation, student/parent feedback and relevant learning walks.
- DSL contact information is visible and current.
- Referral records and actions are quality assured.
- Trip risk assessments and safer-recruitment evidence are maintained.

- Training records are current.
- School leadership/governance receives appropriate safeguarding assurance while individual case confidentiality is protected.
- This policy is reviewed annually and after significant incidents or regulatory change.

31. Key External Contacts

The school maintains a separately controlled and regularly verified safeguarding contact sheet. In an immediate emergency, Dubai Police is contacted through the official emergency route.

The contact sheet includes, as applicable, Dubai Police/Child Protection, Community Development Authority, relevant health/child-welfare services, Al Ameen and KHDA safeguarding contacts. The DSL verifies these contacts at least annually and whenever notified of a change.

32. Related School Policies

- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- ILSA Policy
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Online Safety / ICT Acceptable Use procedures
- Positive Handling / Safe Touch procedures
- Health and Safety / Medical procedures
- Emergency Response Plan
- Transport procedures
- Educational Trips procedures
- Staff Code of Conduct / Employee Handbook
- Complaints and Whistleblowing procedures

APPENDIX A – SAFEGUARDING CONCERN REPORTING FLOW

Concern observed / disclosure received / risk identified → ensure immediate safety → record facts and exact words where relevant → report immediately to DSL/DDSL → DSL/DDSL assesses risk and records action → Principal informed as appropriate → internal protection/support and/or external referral → follow-up, outcome and review recorded.

Staff do not investigate. A form must never delay an urgent verbal report.

APPENDIX H – APPROVAL

Approved by	Principal / School Management
Approval Date	To be inserted following final approval
Effective From	Academic Year 2026–27
Review Date	August 2027 or earlier if required