

IQRA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL POLICY

Child Protection Policy

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Author	School Manager - Eram Sheikh
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Child Protection Policy

Our school:

Iqra Independent School is concerned about the welfare and safety of all its pupils and attempts to create an environment in which the children feel 'safe, secure and happy'.

This policy has been devised in order to induce in all staff of Iqra Independent School the awareness of Child Protection and the procedures which must be strictly adhered to if and when the need arises. Staff are reminded that we as Muslims, are accountable to Allah first and foremost and thereafter we are accountable to fulfil the trust upon us as teachers, to protect our precious children as best as we can. This document is self explanatory and a working document in which procedures are laid out for the purpose of being followed in all reasonable circumstances. This document is to be used in conjunction with the Child Protection training.

Our Guiding Principles:

We consider that the welfare of the child is paramount (*The Children Act 1989*)

Children and young people have the right to protection from neglect and abuse

Everyone has a responsibility for the protection of children and young people and for reporting concerns

Professionals working in the education sector have a duty to ensure that Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) procedures are followed

In any conflict between the needs of the child or young person and those of parents/carers or professionals, the needs of the young person must come first

Statutory framework:

DfEE Circular 10/95 (Protecting Children from Abuse: The role of the education service) places the following responsibilities on all schools.

- Staff should be alert to signs of abuse and know to whom they should report any concerns or suspicions.
- A designated teacher should have responsibility for co-ordinating action within the school and liaising with other agencies.
- Staff with designated responsibility for Child Protection should receive appropriate training.
- Schools should be aware of and follow the procedures established by the Area Child Protection Committee.
- Schools should have procedures (of which all staff are aware of) for handling suspected cases of abuse of pupils, including procedures to be followed if a member of staff is accused of abuse, or suspected of abuse.

Circular 10/95 also states that 'parents should be made aware of the school Child's Protection Policy and the fact that this may require cases to be referred to the investigation agencies in the best interest of the child'.

Iqra School will inform its parents through the school's prospectus and website.



Designated member of staff for Child Protection

Our school will ensure a senior member of staff is appropriately trained and charged with responsibility for coordinating child protection matters within the school. Our designated members of staff is the Head Teacher who will go through child protection training on a two year cycle to ensure our school is updated with current procedures and practice.

The designated person will:

- provide the point of contact for staff who have concerns or information that a child or young person may be suffering abuse presently, or has done in the past or is likely to do so in the future
- make any necessary referrals to social services and police
- ensure the school contributes fully to the child protection process

School Procedures:

- If any member of staff is concerned about a child he or she must inform the Head Teacher.
- Information regarding the concerns must be recorded by the member of staff on the same day. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations.
- The Head Teacher will decide whether the concerns should be referred to the social services department. If it is decided to make a referral to social services this will be done without prior discussion with the parents.
- If a referral is made to Social Services, the Head Teacher will ensure that a written report of the concerns is sent to the social worker dealing with the case within 48 hours.
- Particular attention will be paid to the attendance and development of any child who has been identified as being at risk or who has been placed on the Child Protection Register.
- If a pupil who is known to be on the Child Protection Register changes school, the Head Teacher will inform the social worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the receiving school.

When to be concerned:

Staff should be concerned about a pupil if he or she:

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



Dealing with a disclosure:

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

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is being said.
- Allow the child to talk freely.
- Reassure the child but not make promises which might not be possible to keep.
- Not promise confidentiality - it might be necessary to refer to Social Services.
- Reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault.
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell.
- Listen, rather than ask direct questions.
- Not criticize the alleged perpetrator.
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.

Record keeping:

When a pupil has made a disclosure the member of staff should:

- Make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation.
- Not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court.
- Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child.
- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury.
- Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions.

Support:

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and a Child Protection case in general, is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff should, therefore, consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the Head Teacher.

Allegations involving school staff

If a child, parent, makes a complaint of abuse against a member of staff, the person receiving the complaint must take it seriously and immediately inform the Head Teacher.

Any member of staff who has reason to suspect that a pupil may have been abused by another member of staff, either at school or elsewhere, must immediately inform the Head Teacher. He or she should also make a record of the concerns including a note of anyone else who witnessed the incident or allegation.

(If the concerns are about the Head Teacher, the chair of Trustee must be contacted).

The Head Teacher will investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but he/she will assess whether it is necessary to refer to the local Social services team in accordance with the Child Protection Education Welfare Officer, Head of the Education Welfare Service or a Senior Officer from the Social Services.



If the Head Teacher decides that the allegation warrants further action through Child Protection Procedures he/she must make a referral direct to the Social Services team. If the allegation constitutes a serious criminal offence it will be necessary to contact Social Services before informing the member of staff.

If it is decided that it is not necessary to refer to Social Services the Head Teacher will consider whether there needs to be an internal investigation.

For further information see:

DfEE Document 10/95 Section 44-52

Confidentiality:

DfEE circular 10/95

The above circular advises that all staff in the school both teaching and non-teaching staff, have a 'responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies (Social Services and the Police). If a child confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the child sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies for the child's sake. Within that context, the child should however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it. Staff who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts. Child Protection records should be kept securely locked'.

Policy Ownership and Responsibilities

The policy will be updated and reviewed annually.

Ultimate responsibility for its introduction and implementation will rest with the Trustees and the Head Teacher. However, it is important to remember that all staff, pupils and parents have an active part to play in the maintenance and development of this policy.



Code of Behaviour - for Staff and Volunteers - Appendix 1

- Staff and volunteers should not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children, away from others. Meetings with individual children should be avoided or take place within sight of others. If privacy is needed, the door should remain open and other staff or volunteers should be aware of the meeting.
- Staff and volunteers are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with children.
- However, there may be occasions when physical contact is unavoidable, such as providing comfort at times of distress, or physical support in contact sports or similar. In all such cases contact should only take place with the consent of the child and in line with Islamic etiquettes.
- It is not good practice to take children alone in a car, however short the journey. Where this is unavoidable, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the parents (or guardians) and the person in charge of the event.
- Staff and volunteers should not meet children outside of organised activities, unless it is with the knowledge and consent of the parents and the person in charge of the event.
- Staff and volunteers should not start an investigation or question anyone after an allegation or concern has been raised. This is the job of the authorities. You should just record the facts and report these to the designated person.
- Staff and volunteers should never :
 - a. Initiate or engage in sexually provocative conversations or activity.
 - b. Allow the use of inappropriate language to go unchallenged.
 - c. Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves.
 - d. Allow any allegations made by a child go without being reported and addressed, or either trivialise or exaggerate child abuse issues.
 - Make promises to keep any disclosure confidential from relevant authorities.
- Staff or volunteers should not show favouritism to any one child, nor should they issue or threaten any form of physical punishment.
- Staff and volunteers must respect children's rights to privacy and encourage children and adults to feel comfortable enough to report attitudes or behaviour they do not like.
- All staff and volunteers should be aware of the procedures for reporting concerns or incidents, and should familiarise themselves with the contact details of the child protection officer.
- If a member of staff or volunteer finds himself or herself the subject of inappropriate affection or attention from a child, they should make others aware of this.
- If a member of staff or volunteer has any concerns relating to the welfare of a child in their care, be it concerns about actions/behaviours of another staff member or volunteer or concerns based on any conversation with the child; particularly where the child makes an allegation, they should report this to the child protection officer.