

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Company/ Organisation:	Star International School, Mirdif
Address:	24B Street, Mirdif, Dubai, UAE
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Policy Information:	The health, safety and welfare of all our children is a high priority for all the adults who work in our school. Our children have the right to be safe in our school and to be protected, regardless of their age, gender, race, culture or disability. <i>At a glance, the key points for our school are: At a glance, the key principles of safeguarding at Star, Mirdif are:</i> <i>Safeguarding comes first</i>, it is the number one priority of every member of staff. Keeping children safe is at the heart of our culture and daily practice. <i>Children must be properly supervised at all times. Every member of staff takes personal responsibility to ensure this happens.</i> <i>Every adult in our school is valued as part of our safeguarding culture. We expect staff to be friendly, approachable, and smile with children while maintaining professional distance.</i>

In our school, we respect our children. The atmosphere within our school is one that encourages all children to do their best. We provide opportunities for children to take responsibility and make decisions safely, building their independence.

Our teaching of PSHE and moral, social and cultural studies, as part of the National Curriculum and the National Agenda, helps to develop appropriate attitudes in our children and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations and how to behave in response to them.

Children are reminded regularly: "We care, please share — Tell 5." Every child should know at least five trusted adults they can turn to at home or school if they feel unsafe, worried, or in need of support. This promotes resilience and strengthens student voice.

All staff, including contractors (security, maintenance, cleaning), receive annual in-school safeguarding training during induction week. New staff must complete safeguarding training before starting their role. This reflects our Go Beyond commitment to consistency and professional responsibility.

Staff must never be alone with a pupil. Classroom windows must not be fully covered, ensuring visibility at all times.

All adults on site must wear their school lanyard. Staff are expected to challenge and question anyone without identification, modelling our shared culture phrase: "See it, sort it."

At Star, Mirdif, safeguarding is not just about compliance. It is about living our STAR values every day, creating a culture of vigilance, kindness, and courage where every child can thrive.

At Star International, Jabeen Hayat jhayat@starmirdif.com , Sarah May Edwards findlater@starmirdif.com Nargis Uphadhey nupadhey@starmirdif.com are the Designated Safeguarding Leads. Reena Oates roates@starmirdif.com ,Adnan Mukhtar amukhtar@starmirdif.com , Channele Owens cowen@starmirdif.com, and Carlie Farish cfarish@starmirdif.com are the Deputy Safeguarding Leads.





Star International School, Mirdif

SAFE GUARDING TEAM



Ms. Sarah Findlater
Head of Secondary
Designated Safeguarding Lead



Ms. Jabeen Hayat
Vice Principal, Head of Primary
Designated Safeguarding Lead & Strategic Lead



Ms. Nargis Upadhey
Head of EYFS
Designated Safeguarding Lead



Ms. Reena Oates
Deputy Head of Secondary
Deputy Safeguarding Lead



Mr. Adnaan Mukhtar
Asst. Head of Secondary
Head of Pastoral & Sixth Form
Deputy Safeguarding Lead



Ms. Channelle Owens
Deputy Head of Primary
Deputy Safeguarding Lead



Ms. Carlie Farish
Head of Inclusion
Deputy Safeguarding Lead



Any safeguarding concern should be reported to Jabeen (Whole school SG Strategic Lead), Sarah (Secondary), Nargis (Foundation Stage) or in their absence any for the Deputy Designated safeguarding leads immediately.

Level 3 Trained Safeguarding Pastoral Leaders



Joy - Primary Key Stage 1 (Yr 1, 2 & 3)



Jen - Primary Key Stage 2 (Yr 4, 5 & 6)



Laura - Secondary Key Stage 3 Leader



Runa - Secondary Key Stage 4 Leader



Anthony - Secondary Key Stage 5 Leader

Our incredible Level 3 trained pastoral leaders across the school will support the DSL team in managing Level 3 and Level 4 safeguarding concerns arising from Smoothwall alerts, ensuring timely, appropriate and well-coordinated follow-up conversations.



Our Level 3-trained Pastoral Leaders across the school support the DSL team in responding to Level 3 and Level 4 safeguarding concerns identified through Smoothwall alerts. They help ensure that concerns are followed up promptly and appropriately, with clear coordination and timely conversations with relevant students and staff.



If a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff - they must follow the five Rs - receive, reassure, react, record and report.

The school has a clear channel for reporting concerns. Staff must log the concern on MyConcerns (academic & admin), or complete the child protection concern form (Appendix 2) and hand the completed form to the Safeguarding Team

Please be aware the Child Protection Hotline for Dubai is 800 998, under UAE law it is mandatory that anyone who is aware of child abuse and fails to report is liable for prosecution.

Please remember unless you are specifically asked to do so, never carry out an investigation about any suspected abuse. This can be highly specialist work and could interfere with a criminal investigation if this were required and appropriate under local law

Rationale

At ISP, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and we expect all our employees and volunteers and any contractors / consultants and partner agency staff in our schools to share this commitment. In line with this, we expect them to recognise where a student is at risk of, or is actually being harmed, and to do all they can to reduce further risk or harm.

Our schools are particularly important in protecting our students; our school colleagues are in the best position to identify concerns early and to provide or recommend support for students as well as helping to prevent these concerns from escalating.

At Star, Mirdif, we are committed to:

- Protecting every child from harm, neglect, abuse, and exploitation
- Ensuring students know how to seek help and that their voices are heard.
- Creating a culture of vigilance where safeguarding responsibilities are understood and shared by all.
- Embedding safeguarding into the fabric of daily life at Star, Mirdif.

Safeguarding is **everyone's responsibility** — staff, students, parents, and the wider community.

At ISP, we adhere to the following basic child protection and safeguarding principles:



- A child's welfare is paramount, and each student has the right to be protected from harm and exploitation and to have their welfare safeguarded irrespective of race, religion, ability, gender, or culture.
- All students need to be safe and feel safe in school.
- Every student is entitled to a rich and broad curriculum that helps to equip them to keep themselves safe.
- Every adult in school must have a demonstrable commitment to protecting the students with/for whom we work.
- We work in partnership with parents/carers and/or other professionals to ensure the protection of students.
- Our guiding principle throughout is 'the best interests of the students'.
- All students have the same equal rights to protection, but we recognise that we need to do more for some because of their special educational needs, disability, gender, religion, or sexual orientation.

Policy Aims and Objectives - The Star Mirdif Way

At Star International School, Mirdif, safeguarding comes first. Guided by ISP standards and lived through our STAR values; Self-Belief, Teamwork, Adventure, Respect — we aim to:

- **Provide a safe, happy, and inclusive environment** where students thrive, learn, and believe in themselves.
- **Protect all students through clear procedures, training, and preventative measures**, ensuring safeguarding is part of daily routines and the lived school culture.
- **Raise awareness among all staff and contractors** about safeguarding and child protection, defining their roles and responsibilities in recognising and reporting concerns.
- **Identify and respond swiftly to children who are suffering or at risk of harm**, ensuring intervention is timely, effective, and compassionate.
- **Promote student voice** by embedding initiatives such as the *Tell 5* programme, empowering every child to know and approach five trusted adults when they need help.
- **Strengthen digital safeguarding** through proactive systems like *Smoothwall Monitor*, ensuring children are protected in both physical and online spaces.
- **Ensure effective communication between all staff**, volunteers, and safeguarding leads, so concerns are addressed with clarity and accountability.
- **Set clear procedures for all adults in school**, including volunteers and third parties, ensuring safeguarding expectations are consistent across our community.
- **Be transparent with students, parents, and carers** by communicating our



- safeguarding and child protection approach clearly and consistently.
- **Align fully with ISP safeguarding frameworks and UAE statutory requirements**, while Going Beyond by embedding safeguarding into the unique culture of Star, Mirdif.

Safeguarding at Star, Mirdif is not just compliance, it is culture. It is **how we Go Beyond to protect, support, and empower every child, every day.**

Policy Scope

The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is endorsed by our Executive Committee and adopted by all levels throughout our group and school. The policy will also be applied to any partner agency with unsupervised access to children and young people and any contractors working on any ISP school site.

Definitions

Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the processes of protecting students from harm, preventing the impairment of their health and development, ensuring that we seek to improve the general health and well-being of all students in our care and enabling every student to have the optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.

Child Protection

Child Protection is the core element of safeguarding and is defined as the responsibility to protect children who are suffering or likely to suffer from harm as a result of abuse or neglect.

Principles

This policy sets out our principles and expectations, as well as the procedures and processes, which must be adopted by all our schools and across our group as a whole. The policy also describes the steps that must be taken in meeting our commitment to safeguarding students, at both school, regional and group level.

Given our international context, we recognise and accept our responsibility to safeguard all students under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). We recognise our obligation to protect our students from harm and in particular, the obligation on us and our regions and schools under the following Articles of the UN convention:



- Article 3: which states that the best interests of children must be the primary concern in decision making about them.
- Article 13: which states that children have the right to get and share information as long as it is not damaging to them or another child.
- Article 14: which states that children have the right to think and believe what they want and to practise their religion.
- Article 19: which states children have the right to be protected from hurt and mistreatment, physically and mentally.
- Article 34: which states that Governments should protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse.
- Article 35: which states that Governments should take all measures to ensure that children are not abducted, sold or trafficked.
- Article 36: which states that children should be protected from any activity that takes advantage of them or could harm their welfare and development.
- Article 37: which states that no one is allowed to punish children in a cruel or harmful way.

All member states of the UN have signed up to the 1989 convention (with the exception of the United States of America) and all the UN articles can be found at the following link: <https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention>.

Responsibilities

Principals / Heads of School and Senior Leadership Teams in Schools

The Principals / Heads of School and Senior Leadership Team in each school will:

- Ensure that the policy is implemented across their school and followed by all employees and volunteers.
- Allocate sufficient time and resources to enable the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and any deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead to carry out their role effectively.
- Ensure that the culture of the school facilitates concerns being raised and handled sensitively.
- Ensure that safeguarding is addressed through the curriculum ensuring that children throughout the school are taught about keeping themselves safe, including online safety.
- Ensure the school site is secure.
- Customise this policy for their particular school.
- Ensure that local mapping of legislation, guidance and supportive agencies is undertaken and added to the school's customised version of this policy.



- Only deploy employees who will have unsupervised contact with children, where safe recruitment procedures have been followed.
- Maintain a record of all training undertaken by employees in relation to safeguarding and child protection. This training record should be made available for inspection during any audit and should reflect the timescales for renewal identified in this policy.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) in a school

Every school will identify a named person designated as the Safeguarding Lead (DSL), to support the Principal / Head of School on each site. This means that schools with split sites may have Deputy Designated Leads on each site for safeguarding with the DSL having an overview. This person/people will: receive appropriate safeguarding training to equip them to undertake their role; be given sufficient time in the working day to undertake the role; and be able to prioritise safeguarding when necessary.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead may be the Principal if appropriate, but they will be subject to the same training and processes as every other Designated Safeguarding Lead. Schools are therefore advised to give careful consideration before choosing the Principal to act as the Designated Lead for Safeguarding.

The DSL role is guided by two principles:

- The welfare of the child is always paramount.
- Confidentiality should be respected as far as is reasonably possible.

Being guided by these principles the Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Play a key role in ensuring that the school takes action to support any student who may be at risk.
- With the Principal, make sure that all employees, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection.
- Have appropriate training in addition to the basic training that all other employees receive. This includes attending ISP Designated Safeguarding Lead training at least every two years and actively participating in their DSL Regional Networking meetings to ensure they stay updated on safeguarding issues.
- Collate and keep accurate and confidential records of any concerns about children, this should include ensuring robust action plans are implemented at the earliest opportunity which are captured in writing and are reviewed regularly.
- Have a clear understanding of the local expectations around safeguarding, who to contact, what agencies exist and how to contact them.
- Ensure that the entire school community knows who the DSL/ DSL Team is in their setting.



- Be familiar with local regulations, procedures and agencies who can offer support for safeguarding matters.

All employees have the responsibility to report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead any concern they have about the safety of any child in their care. The Designated Safeguarding Lead's responsibility is to make decisions about what to do next and then to take appropriate action.

All employees (including employees of partner organisations and contractors having unsupervised contact with children)

All employees will:

- Ensure they are familiar with and follow the policy and all other safeguarding related documents e.g., Codes of Conduct, guidance for safe working practice.
- Be subject to safer recruitment processes and checks prior to starting at the school/organisation (unless an action plan/risk assessment is in place to ensure the employee is supervised until all checks are completed, this must be authorised by the Group Health and Safety Director before employment begins).
- Be alert to signs and indicators of possible abuse.
- Listen to and take seriously the views and concerns of children, knowing what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected.
- Know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) and children's social care in their area. Employees should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.
- be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Record any concerns and report these to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) on the school's concern form.
- Be aware of who the Designated Safeguarding Lead is in the school they are working in and how they can be contacted. Schools should include this information in the Appendix at the end of this policy.
- Follow the procedures outlined in this document when/if concerned about any child.
- Support students, employees or other adults who have concerns, or who are the subject of concerns, to act appropriately and effectively in instigating or cooperating with any subsequent process of investigation.



- Undertake appropriate child protection/safeguarding and safe recruitment training (and refresher training as required by ISP).
- All employees and volunteers need to recognise that if their behaviour inside or outside the workplace breaches the ISP code of conduct and/or the guidance for safe working practice, this may be considered a disciplinary or even criminal matter.

All employees who have occasional or supervised contact with children (including employees from partner and contracted organisations) will:

- Undergo a safeguarding briefing/induction in relation to their role, understand what is required of them if they have concerns and to whom they should report.
- Provide written confirmation to demonstrate that where appropriate, all partner agency staff/contractors have been safely recruited with appropriate checks undertaken and that a safeguarding briefing has been provided to these employees, (appropriate to the role and contact they will have with children), before they commence their role in any ISP school. Where these employees or volunteers are constantly supervised, the recruitment checks may not need to be as rigorous, but it is for the Principal/ Designated Safeguarding Lead to assess this risk, not individual employees or partner organisations themselves.
- Where partners/contractors do not have their own safeguarding or child protection policy, the partners/contractors will be given the Safeguarding Leaflet and informed of reporting channels
- Follow the guidance laid down in this document at all times.
- Be provided with guidance on appropriate safe working practice.

Forms of abuse

There are a significant number of ways that students may be exposed to risk and danger. All require a response. Abuse is defined as any form of maltreatment of a child. This can manifest itself as direct harm to a child, or by a failure to take action to protect a child who is at risk of, or already suffering harm.

The more commonly referred to types of abuse are:

- **Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, or otherwise causing harm to a child.
- **Emotional abuse:** the persistent maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. This may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person.



- **Sexual Abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This form of abuse can involve direct contact activities but also non-contact activities over social media or the internet.
- **Neglect:** This is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

While the above are the broad four main areas of potential abuse, abuse itself can take many forms involving one or more of these areas. School employees need to be aware of what to look for and what actions to take when concerned about any of these issues (or any other concerns).

Specific Safeguarding Issues

There are specific safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm (listed below), all areas will be covered in ISP initial training courses and must be included in annual refresher training or during a safeguarding training programme delivered throughout the school year. This

helps to ensure all employees are aware of the signs and indicators of these specific issues to enable early intervention support to be put in place within schools or referrals made to specialist outside agencies.

Peer on Peer abuse

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Where an allegation is made that one child may have abused another, this will always be taken seriously and dealt with as a safeguarding matter. This type of peer-on-peer behaviour will not be tolerated. It can happen both inside and outside of school and online. Peer on Peer abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment;
- non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and/or videos (sexting);
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;



- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals, this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment

This can occur between two children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. All employees must maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'.

Any report of peer-on-peer abuse should be taken seriously, it is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

All employees should be aware of the importance of:

- challenging inappropriate behaviours;
- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"; and,
- challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

Sexting

Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked, or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others or sends sexually explicit messages.

Sexting may also be referred to by students as trading nudes, dirties or pic for pic. There are many reasons why a student may want to send a naked or semi-naked



picture, video, or message to someone else:

- They may find it difficult to say no if somebody asks them for an explicit image, especially if the person asking is persistent or has groomed the child to gain their trust. ▪ Joining in because they think that 'everyone is doing it'.
- Boosting their self-esteem.
- Flirting with others and testing their sexual identity.
- Exploring their sexual feelings.
- To get attention and connect with new people on social media.

Students often do not realise that in creating and sending these images they are potentially committing a criminal act. Ideally, we would not want to deal with these issues as criminal acts. Learning and support can be a more beneficial way of tackling sexting. Employees must report any incident of sexting to the DSL on the school concern form.

Mental Health

We are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. School employees, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that employees are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

If an employee has a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by capturing the concern on the school's concern form and speaking to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy.

Self-Harm

Self-harm can take a number of physical and/or emotional forms. There are many reasons why children and young people try to hurt themselves. Once they start, it can become a compulsion. This is why it is so important for schools to spot it as soon as possible and do everything possible to help. Self-harm is not usually a suicide attempt or a cry for attention. Instead, it is often a way for young people to release overwhelming emotions and a way of coping. So, whatever the reason, it should be taken seriously.

The exact reasons why children and young people decide to hurt themselves are not always easy to work out. In fact, they might not even know exactly why they do



it, but there are links between depression and self-harm. Quite often a child or young person who is self-harming is being bullied, under too much pressure, being emotionally abused, grieving, or having relationship problems with family or friends. The feelings that these issues bring up can include low self-esteem, low confidence, loneliness, sadness, anger, numbness, and lack of control in their lives. Young people will sometimes go to great lengths to cover self-harm scars or injuries and/or they will explain any indications of self-harm as accidents.

There are some common themes that may help employees identify concerns including:

- Physical indicators such as cuts, bruises, burns, bald patches (where hair has been pulled out).
- Emotional indicators such as depression, sudden weight loss, drinking or drug-taking, or unusual eating habits and isolation or withdrawal.

If an employee suspects that a student is self-harming this must be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will consider the next steps. It is likely that this will require discussion with the student involved and their Parents/Carer's to agree a course of action or referral to an organisation that may be able to support the student.

Radicalisation and Extremism

Children can be vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home). As with other safeguarding risks, employees should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls, and therefore should be dealt with through the procedures set out in this document i.e., concerns and signs of FGM must be reported to the DSL.

FGM is potentially damaging to children both emotionally and in terms of health issues and is in breach of a number of articles under the UN convention on the rights of the child. It is illegal in 26 countries across Africa and the Middle East, as well as in 33 other countries including the United States of America and the UK. We recognise that this is cultural practice in some countries and not always seen as abusive. While not condoning the practice, we need to be aware of the sensitivities surrounding it and always act in the student's best interests.



Forced marriages (FM)

A Forced marriage (FM) is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties, and where duress is a factor. Forced marriage is when someone faces physical pressure to marry (e.g., threats, physical violence, or sexual violence) or emotional and psychological pressure (e.g., if someone is made to feel like they're bringing shame on their family). This is very different to an arranged marriage where both parties give consent.

In 2013, the first United Nations Human Rights Council also adopted a resolution against child and forced marriages. This resolution recognises child, early, and forced marriage as involving violations of human rights which "prevents individuals from living their lives free from all forms of violence and has adverse consequences on the enjoyment of human rights, such as the right to education."

As with FGM and some other cultural practices, we need to be aware of the cultural sensitivities but always act in the students' best interests. However, the school procedures must be followed in the same way as for any other safeguarding or child protection matter.

Children missing from education

All employees should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Employees should be aware of their school's attendance policy and unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

Domestic Abuse

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.



Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of peer on peer abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'.

Modern Slavery

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

Fabricated and Induced illness

In fabricated illness the perpetrator (usually a parent or carer) does not directly harm the child but reports to doctors a clinical story which is eventually established to be fabricated. Whereas with induced illness the perpetrator inflicts direct (hands on) harm to the child. This can range from trivial injuries such as pricking the child to add blood to urine, through to suffocation. All schools must have a robust attendance policy to aid the monitoring of child illnesses. When a parent reports that a child has an illness which requires a health plan the school must work in collaboration with the medical practitioner treating the child.

Note:

The above is not an exhaustive list of all the potential forms of abuse which employees may have to deal with on occasions. For information, please see "Keeping Children Safe in Education" 2026. This is a UK publication, but the types of abuse discussed are valid and can apply to any country around the world. All employees are required to read and acknowledge receipt of Part 1 of the document found [HERE](#).

Preventative measures and linked policies for safeguarding children

E-safety

The growth in electronic media in everyday life and an ever-developing variety of devices create additional risks for children. Risks and dangers of being online include:

- Inappropriate content.
- Ignoring age restrictions and communicating with unknown adults or other children (which make children vulnerable to bullying and grooming).
- Grooming and sexual abuse.
- Sharing personal information.
- Gambling or running up debts.
- Cyber Bullying.



Cyber bullying is an increasingly common form of bullying behaviour and is most often related to social networks and mobile phones.

We believe the best way to protect our students is to teach awareness and understanding of risk, particularly through personal, social and health education, social & moral education or wellness programmes. Each school's curriculum includes appropriate and frequent opportunities to teach children how to recognise when they and others are at risk and equips them with the skills, strategies, and language they need to take appropriate action.

Mobile phone and Camera Images

It is our policy that practitioners, teachers, and visitors to our Early Years settings should not use personal mobile phones to take images of children. In our primary and secondary schools, if personal equipment is used to capture child images, these images should be uploaded to the schools' system as soon as possible and immediately deleted from personal equipment. This measures must be completed before an employee leaves the school premises at the end of a school day. Permission to capture images, videos or audio recordings should be sought from the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Principal for the school.

At the beginning of school events parents should be reminded of the restriction of taking photos and videos on school site and that they must not take images of any child other than their own.

Publication of school activities on digital platforms

We are aware that the use of digital platforms and social media in particular can make children particularly vulnerable to 'grooming'. Therefore, all ISP employees will ensure that when promoting school activity on these platforms they adhere to the following measures:

- always asking for written consent from a child and their parents or carers before taking and using a child's image
- always explaining what images will be used for and what potential risks are associated with sharing images of children
- making it clear that if a child or their family withdraw consent for an image to be shared, it may not be possible to delete images that have already been shared or published
- changing the names of children whose images are being used in school published material whenever possible (and only using first names if we do need to identify them)
- Never showing screenshots of video conferencing lessons or meetings that show children's faces and full names.
- only using images of children in appropriate clothing



- avoiding full face and body shots of children taking part in activities such as swimming
- never publishing personal information about individual children and disguising any identifying information.
- making sure children, their parents and carers understand how images of children will be securely stored and for how long (including how we will control access to the images and their associated information)
- reducing the risk of images being copied and used inappropriately by using correct settings on digital platforms.

Photographs for School publications and marketing

- Photographs of students being used by employees for marketing are only taken on school cameras/devices.
- Images should be saved on a secure server/database and printed copies only used within the school for purposes such as displays, records and learning journals. Images to be used for marketing need to be agreed with parents/carers before use.
- Visitors and parents/carers should be asked not to use mobile devices within the school and/or early years setting, except where permission has been granted to capture images of their own child or children. All parents/carers must give permission for photographs to be used for publicity purposes and to sign a disclaimer if they do not wish their child's image to be used externally. Failure of employees to adhere to the above measures to safeguard the children in our care will result in disciplinary action.

Anti-Bullying

Bullying is a safeguarding matter and if left unresolved can become a more serious child protection issue. Employees at every level will take seriously any concerns raised in relation to the bullying of any student. Action will always be taken to investigate the concerns and to prevent repeat incidents or behaviours. Bullying may involve either face-to-face or the misuse of social media or technology. Each school should have its own policy and approach to restorative practices and all our schools will demonstrate a commitment to help resolve specific issues. ISP has a separate Anti-Bullying Policy Statement which must be referred to and fully referenced in relation to the bullying of any student.

Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities

All employees should recognise that children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities can mean additional safeguarding challenges. Depending on the nature of a child's special need or disability, additional barriers can exist which make it more difficult to identify and recognise signs of abuse. For example, it is easy to assume that a child's mood, behaviour, or any injury relates to their disability rather than the fact they may be suffering abuse. It should also be recognised that children with disabilities may be disproportionately impacted on by behaviours such as bullying but they may not show any outward signs. Communication



difficulties can make it very difficult for a child to indicate what's happening and, therefore, may make it very difficult to overcome any such barrier. Employees should be extra vigilant and report all concerns, avoiding making assumptions about the causes of any injury or behaviour. ISP has a separate Special Needs Policy Statement.

Physical Intervention/restraint

There may be times when adults in schools, in the course of their school duties, have to intervene physically in order to restrain students and prevent them from coming to harm. Such intervention should always be both reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances and be the minimum necessary to resolve the situation. UK government guidance has been issued in relation to the use of reasonable force and can be used as best practice advice.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>.

The Principal / Head of School should require any adult involved in any such incident to report the matter to him/her as soon as possible. The employee is required to document the incident in full giving a description and full account of the incident. Witnesses to the incident should be identified where possible.

Where intervention has been required a senior employee should be asked to debrief the student and allow them to describe the incident from their point of view. Written notes of this conversation should be kept, and the student checked for any injuries.

Parents/carers should always be informed when an intervention has been necessary.

Safer Recruitment and Selection

We will do all we can to ensure that all those working with children in our regions and schools and across our whole group are suitable people. In order to do this, all employees who will work in an unsupervised capacity with children or young people will be recruited using safer recruitment procedures. (See ISP's safer recruitment policy and background checks policy).

Safer Recruitment involves scrutinising applicants through the interview process and application forms, verifying identity, qualifications and obtaining appropriate references, undertaking criminal background checks from all countries where the applicant has lived or worked in the last 10 years, as well as some additional recruitment checks.

At least one member of every interview panel at both the organisational and school level, who are interviewing for a post or posts that may have unsupervised contact with children, will have undertaken safer recruitment training. All schools will keep a central record of all the recruitment checks undertaken on all



employees. This record will include details for each employee or volunteer of:

- Police background checks are carried out ensuring the date completed, and the number of the check is recorded.
- The relevant references received with dates obtained and details of who has checked that they comply with ISP Safer Recruitment policy.
- Details of the safeguarding training carried out with the date of completion.

Where information is disclosed as part of the criminal records checking process, whether this is information about cautions, convictions or soft information, any disclosure will lead to a risk assessment being completed prior to appointment. This risk assessment will be signed off by the Principal, Group Health and Safety Director, Regional HR Manager and Regional managing Director.

Allegations against employees and volunteers

An allegation can be made against an employee or volunteer at any point. It is important that any such allegations are treated seriously, and appropriate procedures followed.

An allegation is different to a complaint and can be defined as follows:

- Where someone has behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child.
- Where someone has possibly committed a criminal offence against a child.
- Where someone has behaved in a way towards a child or children that would pose a risk to children.

In the event of an allegation being made against an employee (or a volunteer helper), it will always be investigated by the Principal / Head of School unless a criminal act has been committed, in which case the matter should be referred to the local authorities where appropriate. In all cases (criminal or not) the Principal and Group Head of Safeguarding must be informed as soon as possible and certainly within 48 hours. In the case of the allegation being against the Principal or school SLT, the Divisional CEO, Divisional CFO, Regional Managing Director, Group Director of Health & Safety, the Group Head of Safeguarding and the Group Head of People Operations should be informed.

No action to investigate the concern should be taken before consultation with the Group Head of Safeguarding, and agreement reached about how best to approach and investigate the concern. If it is felt, after these initial consultations, that further enquiries are needed, then the employee may be suspended. Suspension is a neutral act, and in no way implies that the person is guilty of any wrongdoing. It is acknowledged that this would be distressing for the person concerned, and the school will do all it can to balance the interests of any individual with that of the need to keep children safe. The school will seek advice from the Group Head of Safeguarding before acting and will comply with national and locally agreed



guidance on these matters. Each school is expected to have researched and mapped the local arrangements and guidance for dealing with allegations.

The Group Head of Safeguarding will update and keep the Group Director of Health & Safety informed of any developments. In cases of allegations against a Principal or school SLT member, it is expected that the Divisional CEO will also update the Group CEO, CFO and Chief Learning and Innovation Officer.

Employees will reduce the possibility of an allegation being made by ensuring that they are aware of the expectations within the code of conduct for employees and volunteers and the guidance for safe working practice, this includes school Intimate Care policies.

Whistleblowing

We recognise that we cannot expect children to raise concerns in an environment where adults fail to do so. All employees and volunteers should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the actions or attitude of colleagues. Appropriate concerns raised for the right reasons are considered to be a protected disclosure and, even if proven to be unfounded, no action will be taken against the whistle-blower.

Malicious whistleblowing, however, will be seen as a potential disciplinary matter. ISP has a separate Whistleblowing Policy which must be referred to and fully referenced in the event of such an incident.

Procedures

Adults concerned about a Student

If an employee suspects that any student in their care may be a victim of abuse or is at risk of abuse or other form of harm, they should not try to investigate, and instead should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) about their concerns as soon as possible.

Employees must disclose any concerns they have about the possibility of a student being abused or placing themselves at risk. It is better to share these concerns, which may later prove to be unfounded, than to hold onto information that may have helped protect a student from actual harm. In many cases a student will not make a direct disclosure, but employees will be concerned because of a physical or emotional indicator. In these circumstances employees should still use the record of concern form and the body map (if appropriate), to make a report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Where any student makes any form of direct disclosure, the guidelines under the heading 'Dealing with Disclosure' below should be followed.



Disclosure, Reporting and Further Action

If a child asks to speak to someone in confidence about a problem, no one should ever promise confidentiality if what the child discloses or is likely to disclose relates to abuse being suffered by them or another child. Employees should always give this as a health warning before meeting with the child.

The following guidance is based on five key practices for all employees:

Receive

Where possible, always stop and listen to a child who wishes to speak in confidence. We know that children will often find the most inconvenient time to do this, but it is important that you make time for the child, even if this is to say, "I can't stop now but come and see me in my office at....". Where possible during any disclosure try to listen, allow silences, and try not to show shock or disbelief.

Reassure

Try to stay calm, make no judgments and empathise with the child. Never make a promise you can't keep. Give as much reassurance as you can and tell the child what your actions are going to be. Reassure the child that they are doing the right thing by telling you.

React

React to what the child is saying only in as far as you need to for further information. Don't ask leading questions. Keep questions open such as... "is there anything else you need to tell me?".

Try not to criticise the alleged perpetrator as this may be a family member for whom the child may still have feelings.

Record

Make brief notes about what the child says during the conversation, but if this is not possible, make notes as soon after as you can and certainly within 24 hours. Make sure to record exactly what the child says and not your interpretation of what is said. Record the time, date, and place as well (see the record of concern form).

Report

Where a child makes any disclosure, or where you have concerns for any reason, it is very important that the procedures outlined in this document are followed. A full written/typed account of the concern (ideally using the record of concern form) should be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible and should include, where relevant, a completed body map.

Where a child has made a disclosure and alleges abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Principal / Head of School in the absence of the DSL), should



be informed as soon as possible. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will collate any available evidence by ensuring the notes taken from any witnesses are made available to any investigating body. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will then consider and where necessary, consult on the information available. It is the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to make decisions about what action to take next and to make the decision whether to take the matter further within the local legal framework. It is important that a full record of all the information and decisions made are recorded and stored confidentially.

ISP recognises the diverse and complex local contexts our schools operate in. Therefore, the following principles are taken into account when following the framework and procedure for disclosure, reporting and further action:

As International Schools we:

- often reside in cities and countries that offer little external support.
- recognise the limitations in the areas of child protection.
- need to assess the quality and skills of counsellors and other support staff in dealing with children who have suffered harm or self-harm, in order to determine the boundaries of their work.
- need to act in accordance with local legislation as well as the principles and practices outlined in this policy.

Local Safeguarding Agencies/Advice

You can report child abuse to MoI through the hotline number 116111 or through the MoI's [Child protection Child Centre's](#) website.

Other channels:

DUBAI CHILD PROTECTION CENTRE

Al Barsha

800 988

Email: child@CDA.gov.ae

THE SHARJAH CENTRE FOR CHILD PROTECTION

T: 800 700

THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

Child Protection Centre

T: +971 (0) 23 333 999

Email: child.protection@adpolice.gov.ae

Online reporting: www..moi-cpc.ae

DUBAI FOUNDATION FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN



T: 800 111 or 04 606 0300

Email: mailinfo@dfwac.ae

Record Keeping and Confidentiality

Record Keeping

All records of child protection concerns, disclosures or allegations should be treated as sensitive information and should be kept together securely and separately from the child's general school records. The information should be shared with all those who need to have it, whether to enable them to take appropriate steps to safeguard the child, or to enable them to carry out their own duties, but it should not be shared more widely than that.

- Child protection records should be stored in a secure (i.e., locked) filing cabinet or in a secure electronic system such as MyConcern (its use must be authorised by the Group Director of H&S). Safeguarding information must not be recorded on Engage. Files should be accessible through the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or their deputy) and other senior employees in larger schools to ensure reasonable access. (ISP are to enable the H&S system to securely hold these records)
- Records of any child disclosure should be clearly dated and filed without future amendment.
- Child protection records should be separate from the general education file, but the child's general school record file should be marked to indicate that a child protection file exists (e.g., red star or similar). All employees who may need to consult a child's school file should be made aware of what the symbol means and who to consult if they see this symbol.
- A child protection file (Electronic or otherwise) should be started for an individual child as soon as the school is aware of any child protection concerns about that child. This may arise in a number of ways e.g.:
 - o If an employee raises a concern about the welfare or well-being of a child – this should be recorded in writing (see below for guidance).
 - o If information is forwarded to the school by a previous school attended by the child.
 - o If the school is alerted by another agency of child protection concerns about that child.

At Star, Mirdif, **safeguarding comes first**. Every concern — no matter how small — must be taken seriously, recorded promptly, and shared responsibly.

- **Written Record:** Employees must make a written account of any concern they have regarding the welfare or well-being of a child. This should be completed using either **MyConcern** (for all internal academic and



administrative staff) or the school's **Safeguarding Proforma** (for third-party contractors, security, bus staff, maintenance, and visitors). Proformas are available in the **Staff Room** and at **Main Reception** - see appendix 2.

- **Submitting Concerns:** All records must be passed **as soon as possible** to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**. Concerns, even those that initially seem trivial, may later prove vital in building a full picture of risk.
- **Detail Matters:** Reports should include as much detail as possible. If there has not been a specific incident, describe clearly what is making you feel concerned or uneasy. Safeguarding is about vigilance, and even small observations can protect a child.
- **Possible Outcomes:** A concern raised may result in nothing more than a professional conversation with the DSL. However, it could also escalate to formal intervention and, in some cases, legal processes.
- If any information is removed from a file for any reason, a dated note should be placed in the file indicating who has taken it, why and when.
- The record pro forma should include (see Record of Concern Form):
 - o A record of the child's details: name, date of birth / age or year group,
 - o Date and time of the event/concern.
 - o The nature of the concern raised.
 - o The action taken and by whom: Name and position of the person making the record.

In the case of disclosure, remember the record you make should include:

- As full an account as possible of what the child said (in their own words).
- An account of the questions put to the child.
- Time and place of disclosure.
- Who was present at the time of the disclosure.
- The demeanour of the child, where the child was taken and where returned to at the end of the disclosure.

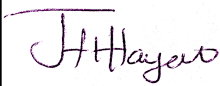
Confidentiality

Schools should regard all information relating to individual Safeguarding/child protection issues as confidential and should treat it accordingly. Information should be passed on to appropriate persons only at the discretion of the Principal/Designated Safeguarding Lead and this should always be based on the need to know.

All records relating to child protection should be secured appropriately.

Auditing, Reporting and Review



Elements of safeguarding practice in schools will be audited during the Group Safeguarding Teams visits; it will also be included in the annual safety audit and will also be reviewed when visited by Group Health and Safety. This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis and at least every 2 years by the Group Head of Safeguarding, Group Health and Safety Director, Group Head of People Operations and ExCo. Safeguarding comes first. Always. APPENDICES Appendix 1 Safeguarding Statement / Designated Child Protection Officer Appendix 2 Record of Child Protection Concern Appendix 3 Body Map for Recording of Injury Appendix 4 Contact Details of DCPO and Agencies				
Approved & Authorised By:	Jabeen Hayat		Date of Signature:	22/08/2026
Role	Head of Primary and Designated Child Protection Officer			
Prepared/Revised:	SLT	SLT	Date of Signature:	22/08/2026
Approved & Authorised By:	Mr. Neal Oates		Date of Signature:	22/08/2026
Role	Principal			

Appendix 1

CHILD PROTECTION



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN at STAR INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, MIRDIF

Star International School, Mirdif, is committed to Safe-guarding and promoting the welfare of pupils and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.

This means that we have a Child Protection Policy and procedures in place. All staff (including Supply Staff, Volunteers and Governors) must ensure that they are aware of these procedures. Parents and Carers are welcome to read the policy on request.

Sometimes we may need to share information, and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a pupil's welfare.

We will ensure that our concerns about our pupils are discussed with his/her parents/carers first unless we have reason to believe that such a move would be contrary to the pupil's welfare.

Our Designated Child Protection Officers:

Jabeen Hayat jhyat@starmirdif.com

Sarah May Edwards findlater@starmirdif.com

Nargis Uphadhey nupadhey@starmirdif.com

Deputy DCPO:

Reena Oates roates@starmirdif.com

Adnaan Mukhtar amukhtar@starmirdif.com

Channelle Owen cowen@starmirdif.com

Carlie Farish cfarish@starmirdif.com

Level 3 Trained Pastoral Leads

Jen Ambanpola jambanpola@starmirdif.com

Joy Sajunwa jsajuwa@starmirdif.com

Laura Kline lkline@starmirdif.com

Runa Sherazi rsherazi@starmirdif.com

Anthony Loxston-Baker aloxston-baker@starmirdif.com



Support Staff:

Videsh Jain (Operations Manager) operations@starmirdif.com

If you are concerned about a pupil's welfare please record your concern and report to the DCPO or member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) as soon as possible on the same day.

Do NOT conduct your own investigation.

If your concerns relate to the actions or behaviour of a member of staff (which could suggest that s/he is unsuitable to work with children) then you should report this to one of the DCPOs, or Member of the SLT who will consider what action to take.

Appendix 2

CONFIDENTIAL

Child Protection Concern

Pupil:		DOB:		Date:	
Is the child subject of a:		Child in Need Plan		☐	
		Child Protection Plan		☐	
		Looked After Child (LAC)		☐	
Disclosure made by:				Disclosure made to:	
Witnessed by:					



Concern:	
Concern raised by:	Signed:
Reported to:	Signed:

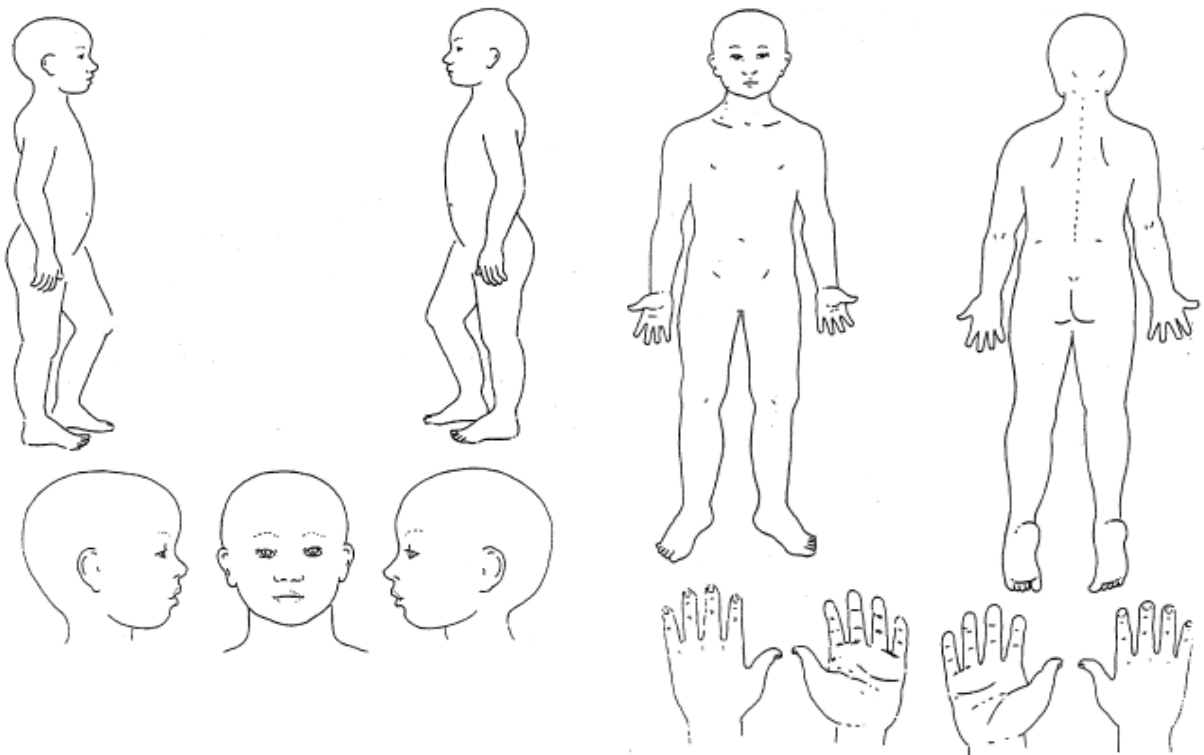
Appendix 3

BODY MAP FOR INJURY RECORDING

Name of injured child	
Date of birth of injured child	
Name of person witnessing injuries	
Date when injuries were witnessed	
Date when information recorded	



Time when information recorded	
Description of all injuries	
KEY	
B	Bruise
S	Scratch
C	Cut
F	Broken Bone or Fracture
W	Weal or Burn
X	Other Injury
Place appropriate letters at sites of injuries on diagrams below	



Appendix 4



CHILD PROTECTION
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
at
STAR INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, MIRDIF

CONTACT DETAILS

DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION OFFICERS (DCPO):

JABEEN HAYAT

T: 04 288 4644 M: 052 220 0839 E: jhayat@starmirdif.com

Sarah May Edwards findlater@starmirdif.com

Nargis Uphadhey nupadhey@starmirdif.com

Deputy DCPO:

Reena Oates roates@starmirdif.com

Adnaan Mukhtar amukhtar@starmirdif.com

Channelle Owen cowen@starmirdif.com

Carlie Farish cfarish@starmirdif.com

DUBAI CHILD PROTECTION CENTRE

Al Barsha 800 988

Email: child@CDA.gov.ae

THE SHARJAH CENTRE FOR CHILD PROTECTION

T: 800 700

THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

Child Protection Centre

T: +971 (0) 23 333 999

Email: child.protection@adpolice.gov.ae

Online reporting: www.moi-cpc.ae

DUBAI FOUNDATION FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

T: 800 111 or 04 606 0300



Email: mailinfo@dfwac.ae

