STUDENT PROTECTION POLICY

Academic Year 2026 – 2027

1. Introduction

Every one of our young people at Belvedere British School (BBS) has the right to a safe learning environment full of opportunities to learn and develop themselves as learners for life. That environment therefore, must 'uphold, care for, respect, and protect their dignity'. This policy sets out the protection measures we have in place for students, which focus on the prevention of their maltreatment as well as the handling of any maltreatment concerns.

2. Purpose

- Protect students under our supervision from all acts and omissions constituting maltreatment.
- Identify and support students who are at risk of harm, as enforced by the UAE Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights, Federal Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties Law, Federal Law No. (5) of 1983 Concerning Nurseries, Federal Law No. (18) of 2020 Concerning Private Education, Executive Council Chairman Decision No. (26) of 2013 Regarding the Regulation of Private Schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, and other relevant UAE laws.
- Emphasise that all staff and volunteers of educational institutions are mandated reporters of cases of alleged and/or suspected maltreatment of students inside and outside the educational institution.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of principals, staff, and parents of students in educational institutions for responding to alleged and/or suspected cases of student maltreatment.
- Ensure that the community at Belvedere British School is responsible for the care and protection of all students enrolled with the school, and coordinate actions to safeguard them.

ADEK/Adapted Definitions used in this document:

Child	Any resident of the UAE under 18 years of age.

Child Protection Coordinator	A **Child Protection Coordinator (CPC)** is an appointed staff member at BBS who is professionally trained and equipped with skills to act upon child protection concerns that arise within the institution and is the key contact for staff and authorities where a concern is identified within the institution. They are also the point of contact at BBS who respond to emergencies, report to the **CPU** and other authorities involved, liaise with parents, and provide ongoing support to the child.
Child Protection Unit	A **Child Protection Unit (CPU)** is the organisational unit at ADEK aimed at developing and implementing student protection mechanisms and measures for educational institutions under its regulatory jurisdiction, in line with Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights and Bylaws. It is responsible for receiving and assessing student maltreatment concerns, in line with the procedures detailed in this document.
Child Protection Specialist	A **Child Protection Specialist (CPS)** is the ADEK-appointed person authorised and charged by the Abu Dhabi Judicial Department/Ministry of Community Development and ADEK to preserve the rights of the child and protect the child within the limits of the CPS's powers, in accordance with Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights and Bylaws.
Educational Institution	For the purposes of this policy, any learning, care, and/or educational entity (nurseries, private schools, specialist provision institutions, charter schools) that is under the regulatory jurisdiction of ADEK. Here, the institution is BBS and its community.
Mandated Reporter	A person who is required by law (under Article 42 of Federal Law No. 3) to report student maltreatment concerns related to students to the **Child Protection Specialist**. This includes the educators at BBS, or any adult on our premises or outside the premises of BBS, from whom the student requests assistance in notifying the authorities (e.g., Family Care Authority, the Police, MoI-CPC, and ADEK) about their suffering or any other student's suffering.
Parent	The person legally liable for a child or entrusted with their care, defined as the **custodian of the child,** as per the Federal Decree Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights (Wadeema's Law).
Safeguarding	Protecting **students** from all risks of harm, including maltreatment and other types of risks that impact their overall health and development, well-being, and safety.
School day	The operating hours at BBS **include** time spent by the student in school buses to and from the school and in extracurricular school activities.
Staff	An individual employed by BBS on a remunerated contractual basis,

	regardless of employment mode (internal, external/third-party, etc.).

ACRONYMS

ADEK	Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge
BBS	Belvedere British School
CPC	Child Protection Coordinator
CPS	Child Protection Specialist
CPT	Child Protection Team
CPU	Child Protection Unit
FCA	Family Care Authority
MoE	UAE Ministry of Education
MoI-CPC	UAE Ministry of Interior – Child Protection Centre

Types of Student Maltreatment (As Defined By ADEK)

Physical Abuse	An intentional physical act which results in, has a high likelihood of resulting in, or poses a threat of resulting in immediate and/or long-term physical injury or harm to the student's health, survival, and development.
Emotional Abuse	An act, whether consistent or inconsistent, used to make a student feel unloved, worthless, and of no value and integrity, interfering with the student's positive mental and emotional development.
Sexual Abuse	Involvement of a student in sexual activity that they may or may not fully comprehend, or that violates the laws or social taboos of society. Student sexual abuse is evidenced by the activity between an adult and a student, or between a student and another student, who by age or development, is in a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power. The intent of the activity is to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person.
Neglect	Failure of a parent or any adult supervising a student to provide for the basic needs and rights of a student towards their physical safety, development, and well-being, which may lead to a failure to thrive in the context of the resources reasonably available to the parent and causes or has a high probability of causing significant harm to the student's health and/or physical, social, educational, mental, spiritual, or moral integrity. At BBS, we also include self-neglect.

Exploitation	Use of the student in work or other activities for the benefit of others. This includes, but is not limited to, student labour and exploitation of students in prostitution or involvement of the student in gangs, militia or military. These activities are to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social development. • **Sexual exploitation** is a form of sexual abuse where there is an abuse of power by a youth, adult, or group who may coerce, manipulate, or deceive a student into sexual activity by physical contact and/or use of technology for monetary, social, or political profits. • **Economic exploitation** is the use of a student who is below the minimum age of labour in the workplace or related activities for the benefit of others through the production, distribution, and consumption of goods or of a particular service delivered by the student.
Bullying	Repeated physical, social, or verbal aggression exercised by students who feel they are in a position of power against other students who are perceived as weaker or powerless, to achieve specific gains or draw attention, in a way that hurts the student physically and/or emotionally. Bullying can be committed by groups or individuals, in online (cyberbullying) or offline settings. • **Cyberbullying** is bullying that takes place online. Online bullying can follow the bullied student wherever they go via social networks and mobile phones and has a wider reach than bullying in the real world.

The guide on *Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions* (ECA, 2024) provides a full list of signs for identifying all types of maltreatment. The *National Policy for the Prevention of Bullying in Educational Institutions* (MoE, n.d.) provides a complete framework for bullying and cyberbullying.

3. Principles of Student Protection at BBS (in line with ADEK policy)

1. The community at BBS hold the best interests and safety of all enrolled students at the school as a primary consideration in all actions taken to safeguard their wellbeing.
2. It is our responsibility of the educational community at BBS – the principal and all staff – to recognise, respond to, and manage student protection risk and impact to the best of our ability.
3. All mandated reporters and BBS staff, and volunteers are responsible and accountable for ensuring student protection measures are in place and applied and upheld.
4. All mandated reporters and BBS staff and volunteers will be protected and shall not be hindered or penalised in any manner for carrying out their responsibilities to report and safeguard students from all forms of maltreatment.
5. All BBS students have the right to be:
    a. Heard and to express their voice/opinion and participate in select decision-making processes at BBS (these are determined by BBS staff).
    b. Treated with dignity and respect.
    c. Treated with fairness and justice.

d. Supported by an advocate and provided with necessary support when required.

e. Safe, protected from harm, and aware of what constitutes risk and harm.

6. Zero tolerance of all forms of maltreatment is to be implemented and upheld in all actions and environments pertaining to our students.

4. Policy

4.1. Legal Obligations and Rights

4.1.1 This policy was developed in line with federal student protection and related regulations and policies (see "References" section).

4.1.2 BBS complies with the provisions of this policy. Every educational institution shall develop and publish a student protection policy to protect students from any maltreatment, provided it meets the minimum standards of what is included in this policy and does not contradict any of its provisions. Institutions may equally adopt the current policy as their own and publish it on their website.

4.1.3 BBS complies with the guide on Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions (ECA, 2024) for the management of abuse-related offences that are reported within and/or occurring within the school.

4.1.4 BBS ensures that our student protection policy has been communicated, understood, and agreed to by all institutional stakeholders (board members, staff and volunteers, parents, and students). Students at BBS receive a **student-friendly version** of the student protection policy, and their assent is obtained when any student protection concerns are raised.

4.1.5 BBS and its principal are guardians of the rights of students not to be exposed to maltreatment. The principal acts as the guardian of all students while they are under the supervision of BBS and shall take responsibilities that fall under this role.

4.1.6 All students have equal rights for care, protection, and safety at BBS. The BBS community is fully responsible for the care, protection, and safety of students while under our supervision.

4.2. Reporting of Concerns of Maltreatment with Educational Institutions

4.2.1 BBS Staff – including any person who, in the performance of their duties, has regular or temporary contact with students and who provides services to students or to BBS – are mandated by Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights to report all cases of alleged and/or suspected maltreatment (conducted by any alleged/suspected perpetrator inside or outside of the educational institution) directly to the ADEK Child Protection Unit (CPU) within 24 hours upon suspicion. BBS Staff should follow the procedures outlined in Figure 1. Safety Concern Referrals in Abu Dhabi Educational Institutions and the Guide on Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions (ECA, 2024).

4.2.2 All concerns of student maltreatment disclosed at BBS, whether the maltreatment took

place inside or outside of the institution, should be notified to the CPC or any other person representing him/her.

4.2.3 The MoE has put in place the National Policy for the Prevention of Bullying in Educational Institutions (n.d.) for handling bullying cases. Therefore, all cases of bullying should be handled in accordance with the procedures defined in that framework. Exceptions related to bullying cases include severe bullying (cases of bullying that have or risk having a significant physical and emotional impact on the student would be considered as maltreatment), which should be handled according to the procedures defined in this policy.

4.2.4 BBS community shall appoint a Child Protection Coordinator (CPC) and a Child Protection Team (CPT), and these appointments shall be reported to ADEK annually.

1. The CPC shall undergo ADEK-mandated CPC training and would preferably be a senior member of staff or any other member of staff who has experience working with students at educational risk.
2. The CPT shall undergo any ADEK-mandated training as announced and would typically include 3-5 members consisting of the counsellor and/or social worker as well as relevant members of the senior leadership team, any of whom may or may not take on the role of the CPC. In educational institutions where such a team cannot be formed, the CPC would be responsible for case management within the educational institution, and a delegate should always be nominated in case the CPC is unavailable/unable to perform their duties.

4.2.5 If any BBS staff member, including volunteers, receives an allegation or has a concern that a student may have been maltreated, is being maltreated, or is at risk of maltreatment as defined in the Definitions (Types of Maltreatment) section, they shall report the matter to the CPC, or any other person representing him/her or any other member of the CPT immediately. This includes concerns of maltreatment taking place inside or outside of the premises of BBS.

4.2.6 In case the reporter is unable to reach the CPC, or any other person representing him/her, or other members of the CPT, or it is not in the best interest of the student to inform the CPC or the team, then they should inform the CPU at ADEK and/or the FCA directly by filling out the Safety Concern Form online on the digital safety concern portal.

4.2.7 Emergency cases, where the student is in imminent danger, should be reported without delay by the CPC to the Police (999) and the principal, with a copy of the Safety Concern Form online on the digital safety concern portal.

4.2.8 Emergency cases are detailed in the guide on Handling Student Maltreatment Concerns within Educational Institutions (ECA, 2024).

How should maltreatment concerns identified be handled at BBS?

Below are the procedures for identifying and reporting student maltreatment concerns.

Once a concern of student maltreatment (incl. severe bullying) is raised at BBS, it should be

reported directly to the CPC, or any other person representing him/her (all staff at BBS will be trained on identifying maltreatment within their probationary period and refreshed each year thereafter – in line with the operational definitions of the different types of maltreatment included in this document).

Emergency concerns, where the student is in imminent danger, should be reported immediately to the Police and the Principal (see Sections 2.7 and 2.8).

For maltreatment concerns which occurred outside of the supervision of the institution, the CPC, or any other person representing him/her, if the CPC is not present, should then fill out the Safety Concern Form online on the digital safety concern portal.

The Safety Concern Form will automatically be shared with the ADEK CPU, the FCA and the MoI CPC. FCA will review the case and follow the required procedures for case management.

Maltreatment concerns occur under the supervision of the educational institution, the staff should inform the CPC or any other person representing him/her if the CPC is not present. The CPC should then complete the Safety Concern Form on the digital safety concern portal. Once submitted, a copy of the Safety Concern Form will then be automatically shared with the FCA, the ADEK CPU and the MoI CPC. The ADEK CPU will review the information first before referring to the FCA for case management, who will take the necessary procedures for follow-up on the cases after receiving the report.

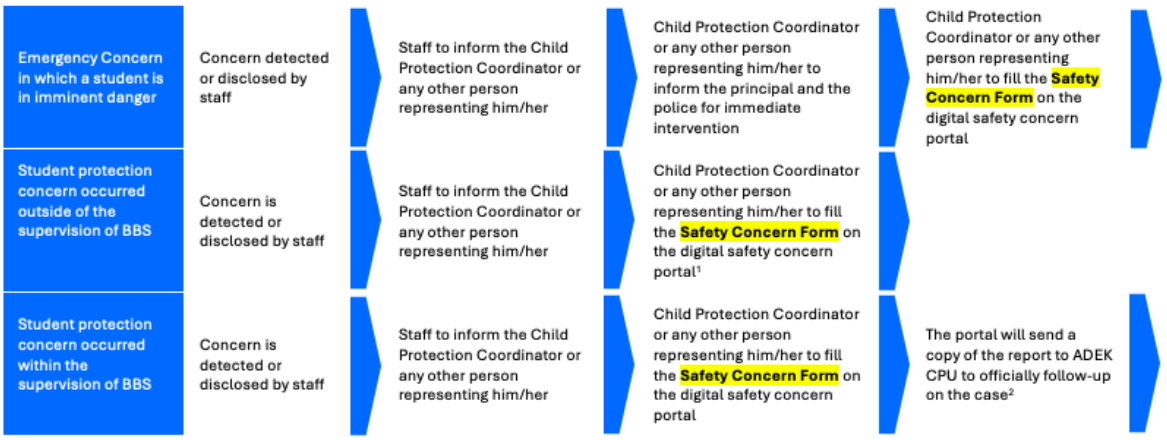
It is important to note that the ADEK CPU reserves the right to conduct or to designate qualified institutional personnel to conduct the initial safety and risk assessment before reporting the concern to the FCA.

If the ADEK CPU refers the concern to the FCA, the concern would then be managed by the CPS at the FCA. The ADEK CPU should still provide administrative support (e.g., sharing relevant information) to enable the FCA to conduct the needed assessments and other activities related to case management.

If the ADEK CPU does not report the case to the FCA, the concern is returned to BBS with the justification, and BBS is asked to collect additional information before submitting another Safety Concern Form.

In all situations, the ADEK CPU would ensure that the concern gets logged and responded to.

Figure 1. Safety Concern Referrals in Abu Dhabi Educational Institutions summarizes how maltreatment concerns should be handled in cases where the alleged maltreatment occurred both inside and outside of the supervision of the educational institution.



[1]After submitting the **Safety Concern Form** on the digital safety concern portal, a copy of the report is automatically shared with FCA, ADEK CPU, and MoI CPC

[2]For cases occurring within the supervision of BBS, the ADEK CPU will review the information first before referring to the FCA for case management. Note: the ADEK CPU will take the necessary procedures to follow up on the cases after receiving he report.

Relevant contact details are as follows:

- Abu Dhabi Police: 999
- Family Care Authority (FCA): 800444 icm@adfca.gov.ae
- MoE Child Protection Unit (CPU)*: 80085 cpu@moe.gov.ae
- Safety Concern Portal: https://daasafetyconcern.abudhabi/

*Educational institutions should contact the MoE CPU, which is the hotline for all reporting from where the request will be redirected to the ADEK CPU.

Safety Concern Form

5. Data Confidentiality

5.1 Case reports and student data are strictly confidential. The identities of the student subject to alleged and/or suspected maltreatment, the alleged/suspected perpetrator, and the person reporting the alleged/suspected case must be kept confidential by all parties involved in the case.

5.2 The data should be shared only with authorised individuals from the ADEK CPU and the FCA, within investigative teams, and the Abu Dhabi Judicial Department.

5.3 Authorised individuals are strictly prohibited from discussing active or closed cases with the media, any third parties or other staff, and/or unauthorised ADEK staff, with the exception of investigative and judicial authorities and within the legal responsibilities.

6. Training

6.1 The CPC and CPT shall complete all student protection policy and safeguarding training as mandated by ADEK, including an affidavit attesting to upholding the highest ethical standards and code of conduct in the management of cases.

6.2 All staff at BBS shall complete any ADEK-mandated student protection policy and safeguarding training sessions and sign off that they have received training and understand their responsibilities.

6.3 Volunteers shall receive proper induction and training on the student protection policy and safeguarding measures. All invited visitors to BBS shall also be required to attest to having read and understood the school's student protection policy.

6.4 Any staff providing counselling, support, advocacy, or being in close personal contact with students shall receive continuous training in student protection and safeguarding and be

properly supervised by the principal.

6.5 Any CPS working in the ADEK CPU shall receive the Ministry of Community Development certification.

7. Vetting, Hiring, and Monitoring of BBS Staff, Volunteers, and Invited Visitors

7.1 Staff, volunteers, and invited visitors shall be properly vetted and screened prior to working in or accessing any locations where students are present. This includes criminal record checks from countries from which the applicant is being hired.

7.2 The principal takes full responsibility and accountability for all persons working at BBS and ensures their suitability and compliance with all student protection and safeguarding requirements. This includes preventing any person from working with students if they pose a risk to students' safety and well-being.

7.3 The principal at BBS ensures continuous monitoring of all staff and will immediately report alleged inappropriate conduct or suspected actions that may result in harm or risk of harm to a student.

8. Acceptable Adult Behaviours

8.1 Staff and volunteers at BBS shall respect and protect the rights of all students and take no actions that may put the student at risk of maltreatment.

8.2 Staff and volunteers at BBS shall not undertake any inappropriate behaviours towards the student and/or in the presence of the student.

8.3 Staff and volunteers at BBS are required to report any incidents of inappropriate behaviour against students.

8.4 Serious allegations of sexual misconduct by BBS staff, volunteers, and/or invited visitors will be directly reported to the Police and FCA, and the concerned staff/volunteers/invited visitors will be immediately removed from the premises of BBS.

9. Student Protection Learning Resources

9.1 Age-appropriate student protection learning resources are developed/procured and distributed to students to support their knowledge and ability to understand personal safety and well-being, and what actions they can take to report any violations and seek help.

9.2 Student protection learning resources are taught in the classroom and in counselling sessions and include any media (story books, activity books, illustrations, posters, reading content, etc.) that can be discussed either individually or within a group setting.

9.3 Student protection is taught by trained staff at BBS who are skilled in understanding student protection and student development.

9.4 At BBS we strive to ensure that all content identifies easy-to-use references on where to seek assistance if needed.

10. Policy Dissemination and Review

10.1 The student protection policy is available publicly and on the BBS website and

disseminated annually to parents, institutional board members, staff, and volunteers, along with a student-friendly version.

10.2 All student protection policies, guidelines, safeguarding measures, and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated annually.

11. Roles and Responsibilities

Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) will:

11.1 Develop, monitor and enforce student protection policies and safeguarding measures.

11.2 Support educational institutions in developing their student protection policies where needed.

11.3 Introduce a broad range of student protection standards to the inspection framework and monitor and work with educational institutions falling below expectations by providing the necessary support.

11.4 Collaborate with relevant entities on the design and implementation of safeguarding programs.

11.5 Receive and filter reports of concern of student maltreatment (neglect, physical, and emotional abuse) and notifications (sexual abuse and exploitation) happening within educational institutions and take necessary actions.

11.6 Refer concerns involving a maltreatment suspicion of a staff member of BBS towards a student to the relevant entities.

11.7 Activate procedures related to bullying in alignment with relevant entities.

11.8 Cooperate with and facilitate the sharing of education-related information for student maltreatment comprehensive assessments and/or investigations being conducted by the relevant entities.

11.9 Follow up, if needed, with the relevant entities on the referrals made to them for cases in educational institutions.

11.10 Document all notifications and/or reports received in confidential records that can be accessed only by the CPS or any other concerned agency(ies), where needed, based on established information sharing protocol.

12. **The BBS Principal will:**

12.1 Comply with the provisions of this policy.

12.2 Ensure that this policy is published and posted to protect students from maltreatment.

12.3 Ensure that procedures to prevent situations that could lead to the maltreatment of students are in place and understood by all BBS staff and the principal.

12.4 Ensure the oversight of students at all times while under the supervision of the BBS staff.

12.5 Ensure that there is priority emphasis within BBS on the protection of the students and for taking immediate actions when there is suspicion of cases of student maltreatment.

12.6 Ensure that students know how, where, and to whom to safely report their concerns

about alleged and/or suspected maltreatment without fear of retribution or punishment.

12.7 Ensure that staff, volunteers, and students are aware of how, where, and to whom they can safely report their concerns about the potential exposure of any student to alleged and/or suspected maltreatment without fear of retribution or punishment.

12.8 Include the views and recommendations from students and parents regarding safety and protection reporting at BBS.

12.9 Immediately report any case of alleged and/or suspected maltreatment of students as stated by this policy.

12.10 Ensure that all staff and volunteers targeted for student protection training fully attend and participate in all training sessions and sign off on safeguarding training and student protection training.

12.11 Conduct orientation sessions for parents upon student registration or enrolment and at the start of every school year to promote this policy and to inform them of their roles and responsibilities, and their rights and duties.

12.12 Maintain the records of students in compliance with Policy 35 (Records) and ensure confidentiality of open and closed cases in accordance with the guidelines.

12.13 Immediately suspend any staff who is suspected of an offence involving student maltreatment on a temporary basis until the suspicion is adjudicated.

12.14 Ensure that students have a safe and confidential opportunity to report any concerns they may have regarding their rights to safety and well-being.

12.15 Ensure the vetting, hiring, and monitoring of all staff, volunteers, and invited visitors according to this policy and relevant safeguarding measures.

13. All Staff and Volunteers at BBS will:

13.1 Report immediately an alleged and/or suspected case of maltreatment upon discovery.

13.2 Care for students at all times while under supervision at BBS.

13.3 Understand this policy to address alleged and/or suspected student maltreatment cases.

13.4 Attend and participate in mandated student protection and safeguarding training.

14. Parents at BBS will:

14.1 Cooperate with the principal and staff of BBS, answer all inquiries related to the student's behaviour and academic performance, and respond to their feedback and guidance.

14.2 Attend all scheduled parent meetings at BBS.

14.3 Communicate any concerns, observations, or changes in the student's behaviour to the principal, board members, and/or the concerned institutional staff of BBS.

14.4 Support the BBS in ensuring safe online practices during distance learning and homework.

15. Compliance

15.1 This policy shall be effective as of the start of the Academic Year 2024/2025 (Fall term). Schools are expected to be fully compliant with this policy by the start of the Academic Year 2025/2026 (Fall term).

15.2 ADEK will actively and rigorously monitor school compliance with this policy. Failure

to comply with this policy is subject to legal accountability and administrative penalties stipulated in accordance with ADEK's regulations, policies, and requirements, in addition to the UAE Federal Law No. (3) of 2016 Concerning Child Rights, Federal Law No. (31) of 2021, Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties Law, Federal Law No. (18) of 2020 Concerning Private Education, Executive Council Chairman Decision No. (26) of 2013 Regarding the Regulation of Private Schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, and any other relevant local or federal laws effective at the time of the incident.

Phone: 02-5090000/01

Review and Approval

Review Date: June 2026 **Next Review Date:** June 2027

Approved by:

Mr Robert Charles Thorn — Principal

Dr. Eman Atitallah/Dr. Rawaa Al Jumeily — BBS Board of Governors

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School Stamp