

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Aims

At Park House English School we consider safeguarding as minimising the risk to the students, staff and school and promoting a happy and safe environment for all children to grow and flourish and staff to develop professionally. We are committed to safeguarding our students, staff and school name. We have this policy as children have a right to be safe, adults have a responsibility to safeguard and protect children and abuse is damaging and can affect the rest of a child's life.

Context

This policy has been developed in line with UK guidance and best practice, however, it must be stressed that the policy is very much in the context of Qatar and recognizes the limitations in addressing child protection issues whilst subject to Qatari law, custom and support systems.

Guiding Principles

The issue of safeguarding is intrinsic to our values and beliefs as educators and it is embedded in our ethos. Safeguarding encompasses all aspects of ensuring a safe environment and the general well being of the student in school and includes things like behaviour management, anti bullying and digital safety to child protection (see separate policies).

All of those in direct contact with children must ensure that they:

- are able to identify Safeguarding and Child Protection concerns; and
- know the correct process to escalate those concerns;
- are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned (rather than it could not happen here);
- are expected, when concerned about the mental or physical welfare of a child/young person/ staff members, to always act in the interest of the child.

Every child, without exception, has the right to protection from abuse, maltreatment and neglect.

Safeguarding and Child Protection is everyone's responsibility.

The mental and physical welfare of the child is paramount.

Protecting the child and acting in their best interests is the priority.

Involve and engage with the child, wherever possible.

Seek advice and support from appropriate colleagues and share information appropriately.

Engage appropriately but objectively and co-operate fully with any child protection procedures/processes.

Taking action will be justified, even if it transpires that the child is not at risk, as long as

concerns are honestly held as reasonable and are escalated through the appropriate channels. A list of Risk factors and Indicators of Abuse are contained in Appendix A. Everybody in contact with children should be aware of these.

Training

Training will be given to staff at the beginning of every academic year during the Induction Week. In addition, online training will also be available through Educare UK (see Appendix B)

1. Safeguarding of Students

Park House believes that all members of staff have a duty of care to students and are pastoralists supporting the emotional, social and moral well being of the students and not just being responsible for the academic. We want our students to have a positive and caring environment, where they understand that all members of staff and support staff are there to support them and care for them so that they can develop in a happy and safe environment.

Policies and Procedures

Staff must make themselves familiar with all policies and procedures as laid out in the staff handbook. If a member of staff has a concern about a weakness within a policy they should discuss this concern with their Head of School.

Safe school environment

Maintenance

Any concerns about the fabric of the school should be reported to the following:
Minor maintenance issue to maintenance: maintenance@parkhouseschool.com
Maintenance issue with immediate safeguarding concern report to maintenance and to SMT

Visitors

All visitors need to provide ID to security at the main gate and receive a visitor's pass and will then be directed to the Reception by Security. Reception will contact the relevant member of staff so that visitors are supervised appropriately. Any visiting speakers must be vetted by SMT for suitability and appropriately supervised during their visit.

Also, see separate guidelines 'Collection of Students' and 'Health and Safety Policy' from the Staff Handbook.

Student issues

At Park House we believe that our open channels of communication and shared responsibility enhance the care we provide. Staff must understand the systems and processes which support the welfare and safeguarding of children in the school, and seek clarification if anything is not clear to them.

Above the normal channels of communication, outlined in the Staff Handbook, if a member of staff has an immediate safeguarding or child protection issue that is of concern to them then they should report it immediately (See Appendix C).

If a member of staff is told something by a child in confidence and they are not comfortable with that knowledge as they deem it to be a serious safeguarding concern or a child protection issue then they should inform the relevant person, with the confidence that they will be supported. Child protection supersedes confidentiality (see Appendix D).

The designated Child Protection Officers (CPO) within the school are:

Primary - Head of Primary

Secondary - Head of Secondary

Dealing with a disclosure – see Appendix G Action Flow Chart:

With the absence of outside agency support the SLT will work together as a team and deal with the situation as best they can. If necessary they will seek the support of the relevant Embassy or the police or the Ministry of Education.

2. Safeguarding of Staff

At Park House we want all staff to work in a positive and caring environment where they feel supported and valued. Any concern a staff member has about their well being or about safe practice should feel confident in sharing this with their Year Leader, Key Stage Leader or the SLT to gain support and guidance.

Staff should support each other fully in safe practice. If unsure about a safe practice situation staff should consult the following:

Primary staff	Head of Year or Head of School
Secondary staff	Head of Department, a Key Stage Leader or Head of School.

Staff should be aware of the importance of privacy settings and the content of their social media sites as they are working in a Muslim country and that inappropriate pictures may be against the laws of the country and this may cause difficulty for the staff member (see separate Acceptable Use of ICT Policy).

Reporting Concerns (Whistleblowing)

Recruitment

Staff are carefully selected and screened. Professional and character references are scrutinised, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or country appropriate checks are made before starting work, checks to ensure that qualifications are genuine and previous employment history will be examined and any gaps accounted for (see Appendix E). However if a member of staff has a concern about a colleague they should:

Minor Concerns

Any minor safe practice concerns can be discussed with the staff member directly but should be mentioned to the Head of School, so that the member of staff can be supported in understanding how their actions put them in a vulnerable position.

Child protection concerns

Adults working in the school will usually be the first to know when someone inside or connected with it is doing something illegal or improper, but often they feel apprehensive about voicing their concerns. Park House does not believe that it is in anyone's interest for those with knowledge of wrongdoing to remain silent.

If a staff member has a serious concern about a member of staff that creates a child protection situation or if a member of staff has previous knowledge of a newly appointed member of staff who has had concerns about their behaviour raised in the past, then they must speak to the Headmaster or Head of School immediately and confidentially.

3. Safeguarding the School

All staff members are expected to refrain from talking about school issues in the community.

At all times, staff should conduct themselves in a manner that will not bring the school into disrepute or damage the good name of the school.

Staff should also read 'Notes for Staff – General Guidelines' from the Staff Handbook.