

**TOWARDS A BETTER TOMORROW**

**AT-TAMIMI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**



**CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

**[ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION]**

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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Title	Document Number
<b>Child Protection Policy</b>	

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Department responsible for this document: HR & BD	April, 2020	Administrative Division Head	Executive Management Team	Executive Chairman

### APPROVALS:

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### 1. **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY:**

At-Tamimi International School believes that every learner has the right to develop themselves emotionally, intellectually and physically. All children have equal rights to protection from any form of violence, abuse or neglect. Child abuse and neglect are violations of a child's human rights and are obstacles to the child's education as well as to their physical, emotional and spiritual development. At-Tamimi International School endorses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and seeks to be a safe community for learners who may be experiencing abuse or neglect in their lives.

#### **Procedures for reporting suspected cases of Child Abuse or Neglect:**

Where there is cause to suspect an incident of child abuse or neglect, or a pattern of behavior that indicates a child may be subject to abuse or neglect, it is the responsibility of the staff member to report this suspected incident to the Child Protection Officer. It is the responsibility of the Child Protection Officer to inform the Head of School of the suspected case of child abuse and neglect.

The Child Protection Officer will form a child abuse response team to include the referring teacher, school nurse, Coordinator & counselor and will take initial steps to gather information regarding the matter. In all cases, follow up activities will be conducted in a manner to insure information is documented concisely and factually and that strict confidentiality is maintained.

#### **Procedures for addressing Sexual and Physical Abuse:**

Based on the information we have acquired, a plan of action is developed to assist the child.

1. Interviews between the child and Child Protection Officer to attempt to gain more information. Depending upon the age of the child these interview may include drawing pictures, play with toys and conversation with the child in an attempt to elicit more information as to what may or may not have occurred. Need to be careful here. If abuse is clear then it should be a direct call to police/child services.
2. Ongoing in-class observations of the child by the teacher, counselor or Coordinator. (if unsure)
3. Referral of the student and family to external professional counseling services.
4. Referral to legal agencies/local authorities (School consultation with lawyers where required)
5. Consultation with the embassy or consulate of the country of the involved family.

#### **Ethical Mandate for Reporting:**

A report of child abuse to authorities must be submitted within 48 hours after there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse. Any report or other action must be kept confidential.

Reports can be made to the Child Protection Officer who will form a child abuse response team to develop a plan of action that will include:

Notification of other staff will be made on a need-to-know basis emphasizing the need to support the child and maintain confidentiality.

### **Reporting to Outside Authorities:**

When making a report to authorities, the staff member/abuse team must include as much of the following information as is available or can be gathered through interviews with teachers and other relevant adults close to the child. (Selection of who to interview dependent on abuser)

### **Follow up and continuing support:**

In the incidence of a reported or substantiated case of child abuse or neglect:

- The Child Protection Officer/Coordinator and counselor will maintain follow up contact with the child and family to provide support and guidance as appropriate.
- The school counselor will meet with the child's teachers and the school Principal to provide in-service training regarding the needs of abused or neglected children and the important role teachers play in assisting the child's recovery and future development.
- The Child Protection Officer/Coordinator/counselor will provide resource materials and strategies for teacher use.
- The Child Protection Officer/Coordinator/counselor will maintain contact with outside therapists and investigators to update the situation of the child in school.
- All documentation of the investigation will be marked confidential and kept in the child's school records file and may be a part of information sent to schools to which the student may transfer.

## **2. WHAT CONSTITUTES CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT?**

### **Definitions of abuse:**

- Infliction of physical injury on a child by other than accidental means, causing death, disfigurement, skin bruising, impairment of physical or emotional health or loss or impairment of any bodily function, and/or
- Creating a substantial risk of physical harm to a child's bodily functioning, and/or
- Committing or allowing to be committed any sexual offense against a child, or intentionally touching for other than hygiene or child care purposes, and/or
- Committing acts that are cruel or inhumane regardless of observable injury. Such acts may include, but are not limited to, instances of extreme discipline demonstrating a disregard of a child's pain and/or mental suffering, and/or
- Assaulting or criminally mistreating a child, and/or
- Engaging in actions or omissions resulting in injury to, or creating a substantial risk to the physical or mental health or development of a child
- Failing to take reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of all the above

The following outlines indicators of abuse and neglect and should be used by the educator as a guideline for reporting. It is not necessary to know the details of the possible abuse or to be certain whether or not an indicator means abuse has taken place in order to report. The reporting law specifies reporting when you have "reasonable

cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse or neglect.” Reasonable cause/suspicion exists when it is objectively reasonable for a person to entertain a suspicion based upon facts that could cause a reasonable person in a like position, drawing when appropriate on his or her training and experience, to suspect child abuse.

The severity of an indicator or statements by the child as to the non-accidental nature of the injury may indicate possible abuse.

**Indicators of Physical Abuse: \***

- Unexplained bruises and welts on any part of the body
- Bruises of different ages (various colors)
- Injuries reflecting shape of article used (electric cord, belt, buckle)
- Injuries that regularly appear after absence or vacation
- Unexplained burns, especially to soles, palms
- Burns with a pattern from an electric burner, iron
- Rope burns on arms, legs, neck
- Injuries inconsistent with information offered by the child
- Immersion burns with a distinct boundary line
- Unexplained lacerations, abrasions or fractures

**\*Behavioral indicators in and of themselves do not constitute abuse. Together with other indicators they may warrant a referral.**

**3. SERVICES PROVIDED BY AT-TAMIMI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**

School counseling professionals will define annually the range of services to be provided by the school and the range of services to be referred to outside resources.

Typically handled by (school) counseling professionals:

- Student relationships with peers
  - Parenting skills related
  - Child- relationships
  - Mental health issues such as depression, low self-esteem, grieving typically referred to outside resources
  - Severe and ongoing physical abuse or neglect
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