COGNITA

Summary of the International Safeguarding Policy

Including required processes
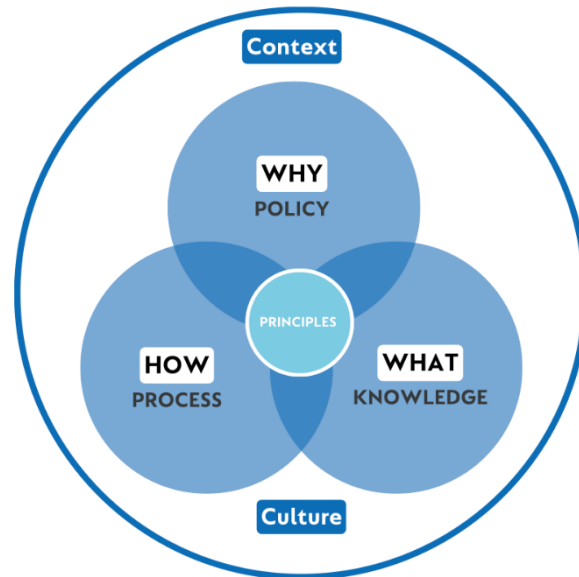## and knowledge base

Middle East

United Arab Emirates

July 2023

Contents

Introduction

Establishing a strong culture of care for our children is our number one priority. This safeguarding policy provides the framework for this to be lived and is divided into three main parts (see visual).

WHY – Policy

Our commitment and guiding principles to safeguarding.

WHAT – Knowledge

The knowledge we need to know to effectively engage with our safeguarding processes.

HOW – Process

The processes required to ensure effective safeguarding in our schools.

Whilst these areas provide the basis for our work, there are two other essential elements to consider: context and culture.

Context

Each school serves a distinctive community. Whilst there are universal principles and processes in safeguarding, an individual school community may also have specific contextual features that impact the safeguarding risks and considerations for children. These will in turn influence a school's approach to the implementation of policy.

Culture

School culture is the collection of values, expectations and practices that guide and inform the work of all members of a school community. Language, actions and behaviours tell you about the culture in a school. The safeguarding policy is important, but only when actively lived every day in the culture of the school. Safeguarding is a shared responsibility for every member of the school community. Creating a strong safeguarding culture is essential to providing the most effective environment for children to thrive in all aspects of their development.

Document contents and navigation

The structure of this document is outlined below. The intention is to allow for swift and easy access to the information you might need.

Part 1: Safeguarding Policy

1.1 Safeguarding commitment and principles

Safeguarding commitment

We are committed to promoting the welfare of each child. It is our responsibility to ensure that all children have equal rights to be protected from harm and abuse and the right to feel safe. We create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive environment where each child may thrive and develop physically, socially, emotionally and academically.

Safeguarding principles

Our principles of safeguarding are universal and apply to all Cognita schools. They have been developed by the Cognita Safeguarding Specialist Team and take account of the International Taskforce for Child Protection, the United Nations Rights of the Child and globally leading practice.

1. Everyone has a responsibility to support the protection of children.

2. Educate all staff in understanding the categories of abuse and the consequent duty of care they hold to notice any potential harm to children.

3. Empower all staff to act in the best interests of the child to protect them from harm or abuse and take appropriate actions if any concerns arise.

4. Know our children well and offer timely support to those who have experienced, or are at risk of experiencing, an adverse childhood experience.

5. Empower all children to be able to voice their opinion and to share their thoughts and beliefs within the safe environment of the school.

6. Educate and raise awareness in children of how to manage risk, identify harmful behaviours and seek help when needed.

7. Ensure that every adult who works with or for the school is safe to do so.

1.2 Scope – who the policy applies to

This policy and the processes within apply to all children and adults in the school, including those in the Early Years.

This policy applies to all teaching, non-teaching, residential, pastoral, support, peripatetic, contract staff and ancillary staff, agency/supply staff, volunteers, non-school based Cognita staff and any other adults working at the school.

Throughout the document, the term DSL is used for the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

This safeguarding policy applies to all children and adults in the school, including when being educated off-site and undertaking an educational visit. It also applies to children who are on an exchange and being hosted by the school.

1.3. Definitions

Definition of safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's physical and/or mental health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Definition of child protection

Child protection is defined as:

Protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. Each school will have child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child.

Definition of child and children

Children includes everyone 18 and under or those over the age of 18 who remain in full-time education.

1.4 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

In our school, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who encounters children and their families has a role to play. To fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, always, what is in the best interests of the child. No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who encounters them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

All staff have the following responsibilities:

- Contribute to providing a safe environment in which all children can learn and flourish.
- Know what constitutes abuse and what to do if a child tells you that he or she is being abused, harmed, or neglected.
- Know what to do if you are concerned about the behaviour or conduct of an adult in the school.
- Manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality.
- Refer any concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputy DSL (DDSL) or in their absence the Regional Safeguarding Lead (RSL)
- Refer any safeguarding concern about the Principal to the Regional Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
- Be aware of our child protection process and your role in it.
- Read and understand this policy including all knowledge base documents.

Information sharing

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Data protection does not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. School staff should, therefore, be proactive in sharing information with the DSL as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to have child protection concerns. This includes the sharing of information by the DSL and Principal without parental consent where there is good reason to do so, i.e., the risk of harm to the child will be increased.

Review

This policy is updated annually, drawing on feedback from staff, and is informed by the Group Policy Safeguarding Governance and Oversight. It is shared with all staff through the annual safeguarding declaration.

1.5 Governance

Governance is undertaken on behalf of the Cognita Board (Cognita Holdings Limited). Group-wide arrangements are in place and these are outlined in the separate document, 'Group Policy Safeguarding Governance and Oversight.' The Group Chief Education Officer holds responsibility for these arrangements. The above policy outlines clear lines of accountability and responsibility for all aspects of safeguarding. This is executed and reported in the following five ways:

School

- Reviews in individual schools by Independent Safeguarding Reviewer

Region

- Safeguarding reporting from each school to the regional team
- Regional Safeguarding Assurance Board Meetings

Group

- Regional Mid-Year safeguarding 'check-in' session
- Regional Annual Safeguarding Report and Annual Safeguarding Governance Meeting

1.6 Legal and contextual considerations

Our safeguarding and child protection policies, processes and knowledge base are built upon and support the 1989 international legal framework - the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Specific legal and local context

The policy is in line with Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 regarding the Child Rights Law (Wadeema's Law), Cabinet Resolution No 52 of 2018 regarding the implementing regulation of Wadeema's Law and the guidance provided in the Ministry Of Education (MOE) 'National Child Protection Policy in Educational Institutions in United Arab Emirates'

Related documentation

This policy should be read in relation to the most recent version of the following hyperlinks:

- MOE National Child Protection Policy in Educational Institutions in United Arab Emirates
- Cognita Group Policy: Safeguarding Governance and Oversight
- Cognita Whistleblowing Policy

Safeguarding key contacts

School contacts	
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Amanda Buckley (Foundation Stage and Primary) Nicola Peacock (Secondary)
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL)	Sharleen Whitney
Any other staff trained to DSL level	Darren Gale (Principal), Stephen Quinn (Vice Principal), Anne Clampett (Assistant Principal), Rebecca Cregan (Assistant Principal)
Mental Health Lead	Coral Leach
Principal	Darren Gale

Cognita contacts	
Regional Safeguarding Lead	Lizzie Varley lizzie.varley@cognita.com
Regional Director of Education	Ian Wallace Ian.wallace@cognita.com
Group Chief Education Officer	Dr Simon Camby simon.camby@cognita.com

Local Child Protection Services / Government contacts	
Our school follows the safeguarding protocols and procedures of:	The CHILD PROTECTION CENTRE, MINISTRY OF INTERIOR ; offering a child abuse reporting system, confidentiality and advice. http://www.moi-cpc.ae/en/default.aspx
Local child protection services referral team(s)	The CHILD PROTECTION CENTRE, MINISTRY OF INTERIOR HOTLINE: Phone: 116111 Website: www.moi-cpc.ae

Police	
Local police emergency	911
Local police non-emergency	Al Barsha Station 04609 6299

Location of safeguarding and child protection documents in school	
List the documents – from statutory/ external agencies and school documents	These are stored on Wellbeing Manager

Relevant safeguarding organisations

CHILD PROTECTION SECTION, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY; offering confidentiality and advice	800988 Website: www.cda.gov.ae
THE CHILD PROTECTION UNIT, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION offering a child abuse reporting system, confidentiality and advice	80085 Website:CPU@moe.gov.ae
AL AMEEN SERVICE ; offering confidential communication between the public and the State Security Service in Dubai	800-4-888
KDHA - Knowledge and Human Development Authority	Afra Al Qamzi +971 (4) 3643672 afra.alqamzi@khda.gov.ae
Latifa Hospital Child Welfare Unit	Tel: 04 219 3000 PO Box 4115 Dubai, UAE