SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Introduced on: April, 2022	**Next Review:** April 2027
Revised: April 2026	**Implemented by:** Principal

CONTENTS

Legal Framework and Policy Statement	2
Scope and Application	3
Definitions	3
Aims of the Policy	3
Types of Abuse and Harm	3
Harmful Physical Behaviours	4
Vaping, Smoking, and Substance-Related Safeguarding	4
Suicide Prevention and Self harm	6
No Touch Policy	6
Eating Disorders among Students	6
Online Safety and Digital Safeguarding	7
Roles and Responsibilities	8

Reporting and Recording Concerns 9

Student Voice and Wellbeing 9

Safer Recruitment and Staff Conduct 9

Training and Awareness 9

Partnership with Parents and External Agencies 9

Confidentiality and Information Sharing 9

Monitoring, Review, and Evaluation 9

Policy Addendum Contextualized for Current Regional Situation 10

Conclusion 12

1. Legal Framework (UAE Child Protection – Wadeema's Law)

We, at JSSIS, operate in accordance with Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 (Wadeema's Law), which safeguards the rights of children in the UAE.

- The school recognises its legal obligation to protect children from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and harm.
- All staff are required to report any suspicion or disclosure of abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.
- The school ensures that appropriate action is taken in line with UAE legal requirements and child protection authorities.

1.1. Policy Statement

- At JSS International School, we are fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people. We recognise that all children have the right to feel safe, be protected from harm, and have their wellbeing prioritised at all times. Safeguarding and child protection are the responsibility of everyone within the school community.
- This policy reflects our school's duty of care and aligns with national and local safeguarding expectations, including updated guidance on vaping, substance misuse, and harmful physical behaviours.

2. Scope and Application

This policy applies to:

- All students enrolled in the school
- All staff (teaching and non-teaching), LSAs, counsellors, leadership
- Volunteers, interns, contractors, and visitors, parents and carers where relevant.
- Safeguarding concerns may arise in school, online, during transport, school trips, extracurricular activities, or any school-related context.

3. Definitions

- Safeguarding: Action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.
- Child Protection: Part of safeguarding focused on protecting children from abuse or neglect.
- Child: Any student under the age of 18.

4. Aims of the Policy

The school aims to;

- Provide a safe, secure, and supportive learning environment
- Prevent abuse, neglect, exploitation, and radicalization
- Promote student wellbeing, resilience, and voice
- Ensure early identification and timely intervention
- Educate students on personal safety, health, and responsible choices

5. Types of Abuse and Harm

The school recognises the following forms of abuse and harm:

- Physical Abuse: Deliberate physical injury or harm
- Emotional Abuse: Persistent emotional maltreatment
- Sexual Abuse: Involving a child in sexual activities
- Neglect: Failure to meet basic physical or emotional needs
- Peer-On-Peer Abuse: Including bullying, violence, and harmful behaviours
- Online Abuse: Cyberbullying, exposure to harmful content

6. Harmful Physical Behaviours

Harmful physical behaviours include, but are not limited to:

- Fighting, hitting, kicking, biting, or choking
- Carrying or using sharp or dangerous objects (except for safety/ blunt tip scissors)
- Self-harm or risky behaviours causing physical injury
- Encouraging others to engage in dangerous acts

6.1. School Response to Harmful Physical Behaviors to Ensure Safety of all Students

- First aid and medical attention where required
- Incident recording and reporting to safeguarding leads
- Behavioural risk assessment and support planning

- Parent notification and involvement
- Referral to external agencies where necessary

7. Vaping, Smoking, and Substance-Related Safeguarding

JSSIS adopts a zero-tolerance approach to vaping, smoking, and possession or use of tobacco, e-cigarettes, or related devices on school premises or during school activities.

7.1. Safeguarding Rationale

Vaping poses significant health risks and may:

- Lead to nicotine addiction
- Impact physical and mental health
- Increase risk-taking behaviour
- Act as a gateway to substance misuse

7.2. Preventive Measures

- School conducts age-appropriate awareness sessions for students
- Curriculum integration on health education and wellbeing
- Clear signage indicating vape-free and smoke-free campus
- Staff training on identification and response

7.3. Response to Vaping Incidents

- Confiscation of prohibited items
- Recording of the incident as a safeguarding concern
- Parent notification and meeting
- Counselling and educational intervention - Graduated consequences aligned with behavior policy
- Referral to external health services if required

8. Suicide Prevention and Self-Harm

- The school is committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for all students.
- Any disclosure, concern, indication, or suspicion of self-harm, suicidal ideation, suicidal intent, or suicide risk is treated as a safeguarding matter and reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Staff never promise confidentiality to a student who discloses thoughts of self-harm or suicide.
- Appropriate risk assessments is conducted, and parents/carers are informed unless doing so places the child at further risk.
- The school works collaboratively with parents, healthcare professionals, and external agencies to ensure timely support and intervention.
- Students identified as vulnerable receive ongoing monitoring, wellbeing support, and appropriate referrals to specialist services when required.
- Suicide prevention awareness and mental health education is incorporated into the school's wellbeing and personal development programmes.

9. No-Touch Policy

- The school promotes a respectful, safe, and professional environment where physical contact is kept to a minimum.
- Staff members avoid initiating physical contact with students unless it is necessary for safety, wellbeing, first aid, personal care, educational support, or to prevent harm.
- Any physical contact is age-appropriate, culturally sensitive, and in the best interests of the student.
- Physical intervention is only used as a last resort to prevent injury to the student or others, significant damage to property, or serious disruption, and must be recorded and reported in accordance with school procedures.
- Staff members never use physical contact as a form of punishment, intimidation, or discipline.
- Students are expected to respect the personal boundaries of others and refrain from unwanted physical contact.
- Any concerns regarding inappropriate physical contact between students, staff, or visitors is reported immediately through the school's safeguarding procedures.

10. Eating Disorders among students

- The school recognises that eating disorders and disordered eating behaviours affect children and young people and can significantly impact their physical health, emotional wellbeing, learning, and social development.

- The school promotes healthy attitudes towards food, nutrition, body image, physical activity, and self-esteem through its curriculum and wellbeing programmes.
- Staff remain alert to signs and indicators of eating disorders and disordered eating, including noticeable weight changes, food restriction, skipping meals, obsessive calorie counting, excessive exercise, body image concerns, fatigue, withdrawal from peers, and changes in mood or behaviour.
- The school works in partnership with parents, healthcare professionals, counsellors, and external agencies to provide appropriate support for students who may be at risk.
- Students identified as vulnerable receive ongoing monitoring, pastoral support, and appropriate referrals to specialist services where required.
- Staff avoid making comments about students' weight, appearance, eating habits, or body shape that may negatively affect self-esteem or wellbeing.

11. Online Safety and Digital Safeguarding

- The school is committed to protecting students from online risks, including cyberbullying, online grooming, exploitation, radicalisation, and exposure to inappropriate content.
- Students receive age-appropriate education on safe and responsible use of technology and social media.
- School IT systems are monitored to ensure safety and wellbeing of students to protect them from harmful, inappropriate and illegal content.
- Any online safety concern is treated as a safeguarding matter and is reported in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

12. Roles and Responsibilities

12.1. Governing Body / School Leadership

- Ensures effective safeguarding policies and procedures
- Allocates resources for training and support
- Monitors safeguarding effectiveness

12.2. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Leads safeguarding practice across the school
- Manages and records concerns confidentially
- Liaises with external agencies
- Provides guidance and support to staff

12.3. All Staff

- Maintains vigilance and act on concerns
- Follows reporting procedures promptly
- Builds safe, trusting relationships with students
- Model appropriate behaviour

13. Reporting and Recording of all Safeguarding Concerns

- Reported immediately to the DSL. The Designated Safeguarding Lead for our school is our Vice Principal Dr. Siddhalinga Swamy.
- Recorded accurately and confidentially. Staff do not promise confidentiality to students.
- Treated with sensitivity and professionalism

14. Student Voice and Wellbeing

We promote student wellbeing through:

- Access to counselling and pastoral support
- Safe reporting mechanisms
- Wellbeing programmes and assemblies
- Social-emotional learning initiatives

Students are encouraged to speak up and are assured they will be listened to and supported.

15. Safer Recruitment and Staff Conduct

- All staff undergo appropriate background checks
- Signed Code of conduct which clearly outlines professional boundaries
- Allegations against staff are managed according to statutory guidance

16. Training and Awareness

- Annual safeguarding training for all staff
- Regular updates on emerging risks (including vaping and harmful physical harm trends)
  - Induction training is given for new staff

17. Partnership with Parents and External Agencies

The school works collaboratively with parents, carers and health care professionals. Parents are informed of safeguarding expectations through orientation programs.

18. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information is shared on a need-to-know basis, in line with safeguarding principles and legal requirements.

19. Monitoring, Review, and Evaluation

This policy is reviewed annually or as required by new guidance. It is monitored through safeguarding audits and reports and updated in response to emerging safeguarding risks.

20. Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy Addendum (Contextualised for Current Regional Situation – Dubai)

20.1. Purpose

This addendum strengthens existing safeguarding procedures at JSS International School to address increased risks during periods of regional uncertainty, disruption, or distance learning. The school remains committed to ensuring the safety, wellbeing, and protection of all students at all times.

20.2. Contextual Safeguarding Risks

The school acknowledges that changing regional circumstances heighten safeguarding risks, including emotional distress, anxiety, neglect, online vulnerabilities, and exposure to distressing information. These risks are proactively identified and addressed.

20.2.1. Safeguarding in Remote and Hybrid Learning

All safeguarding expectations apply equally across onsite, remote, and hybrid learning environments.

- Teaching and communication take place only through approved school platforms.
- One-to-one online interactions are avoided unless formally scheduled, recorded, and approved.
- Staff and students maintain appropriate professional conduct, dress, and learning environments during virtual sessions.

20.2.2. Safeguarding during On-site Learning

In line with “No Child Left Behind Policy”

20.3. Monitoring, Attendance and Engagement

The school actively monitors student attendance, participation, and engagement.

- Unexplained absence or sudden disengagement triggers immediate follow-up.
- Additional check-ins are conducted for students identified as vulnerable or at risk.

20.4. Student Wellbeing and Emotional Safety

The school prioritises emotional wellbeing as a core safeguarding responsibility.

- Regular wellbeing check-ins and access to counselling support are provided.

- Safe opportunities are created for students to express concerns.

20.5. Roles and Responsibilities of Staff

All staff share responsibility for safeguarding and remain vigilant.

- Staff are trained to recognise signs of distress or harm, including in virtual settings.
- Professional boundaries are maintained at all times.
- Any concern or disclosure is reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

20.6. Parent Partnership and Guidance

The school works closely with parents to support safeguarding at home.

- Parents are guided on online safety, supervision, and recognizing signs of distress.
- Clear communication channels are maintained for reporting concerns or seeking support.

20.7. Safeguarding of Vulnerable Students

Students identified as vulnerable, including Students of Determination and those with prior safeguarding concerns, receive enhanced monitoring and support.

- Regular and proactive contact is maintained.
- External agencies are engaged where necessary.

20.8. Online Safety and Acceptable Use

- The school reinforces safe and responsible use of technology.
- All students and staff adhere to the Acceptable Use Policy.
- Risks such as cyberbullying, online exploitation, and inappropriate content are actively monitored and addressed.

20.9. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

- Safeguarding records are maintained securely and confidentially.
- Information is shared strictly on a need-to-know basis.
- Data protection protocols are followed in all circumstances.

20.10. Emergency Response and Escalation

Clear procedures are in place for responding to safeguarding concerns during disruption.

- Immediate action is taken in response to disclosures or risks.
- Relevant authorities and emergency services in the UAE are contacted where required.
- Up-to-date emergency contact information for all students is maintained.

20.11. Policy Review and Responsiveness

This addendum is reviewed regularly to ensure responsiveness to the evolving situation and alignment with local regulatory expectations.

21. Conclusion Statement

Safeguarding is central to JSSIS's ethos and daily practice. Through clear procedures, proactive education, and a strong culture of care, the school ensures that every child is protected, supported, and enabled to thrive in a safe learning environment.

Page