



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

DRAFT 27-02-2024



Policy Statement

Asian University for Women Laboratory School is committed to the prevention of child abuse and to the protection of children in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Decisions to report or act upon known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect will be based on the preliminary investigation which points to such an act having been committed as defined by the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act heeding to the prevailing laws of Bangladesh.

This commitment means that the interests and welfare of children are our primary consideration when any decision is made about known or suspected cases of abuse or neglect.

The procedures outlined in the policy are in line with country laws.

When required, we are committed to providing families with access to outside social services/psychological support agencies and/or individuals who can support families in resolving issues associated with child abuse.

We promote safe practice within the school community whereby all students will feel confident to bring their concerns forward and feel supported in those concerns.

This policy refers to the professional responsibility of any employee of the AUW Laboratory School relating to children as students in the school.



Definitions

Child: Any person below the age of 18 is considered a child.

AUW Laboratory School Faculty: Adults appointed, who primarily work with the educational programs.

Child Abuse: Child abuse is the term used to describe different types of maltreatment inflicted on a Child. It includes non-accidental physical injury, neglect, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse, including psychological harm of children and requires different and specialized responses. In its most serious forms, abuse can lead to death or long-term harm to the physical or emotional well-being of a child.

CPO: Child Protection Officer

DCPO: Deputy Child Protection Officer.

Areas of Abuse

There are four main areas of Child Abuse. It should be recognized that any signs of abuse may also be symptomatic of other problems.

1. Neglect

Neglect is the persistent or severe neglect of a child, which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development. It can occur where



parents/guardians fail to meet the basic and essential needs of their children such as food, clothing and medical care. Parents refusing or failing to give love and affection to their children is a case of emotional neglect.

Signs or symptoms which may possibly indicate neglect:

- a. Hunger
- b. Tiredness or listlessness
- c. Child dirty or unkempt
- d. Poor school attendance or often late for school
- e. Poor concentration
- f. Affection-demanding or attention-seeking behavior
- g. Stealing or scavenging compulsively.
- h. Failure to achieve developmental milestones.

2. Physical Abuse:

This is physical injury to a child with reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. It involves any non-accidental injury where someone physically hurts, injures, or kills a child. This can involve hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning, and biting. It also includes giving a child poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs, cigarettes, or alcohol.

Signs or symptoms which may indicate physical abuse:

- a. Unexplained burns, cuts, bruising, inconsistent account of how bruising or injuries occurred, bite marks.
- b. Bald patches.
- c. Fear of going home or parents being contacted.
- d. Depression or poor self-image.



- e. Fear of medical help.
- f. Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance.
- g. Violence or aggression towards others including bullying.

3. Sexual Abuse:

Sexual abuse includes children being involved in sexual activities that they do not fully comprehend or agree to. It occurs when a person uses his/her power over the child to involve the latter in sexual activity.

Signs or symptoms which may indicate sexual abuse:

- a. Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate behaviour.
- b. Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching.
- c. Persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains.
- d. Eating disorders.
- e. Attention-seeking behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation.
- f. Regressive behaviour.
- g. Enuresis, soiling.
- h. Frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately.
- i. Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming.
- j. Bruises and/or scratches in the genital area.
- k. Lack of trust of a familiar or particular adult.

4. Psychological/Emotional Abuse:

This type of abuse involves persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection.

This occurs where constant lack of love and affection, threats, verbal attacks,



taunting, shouting, can lead to a child's loss of self-esteem. It can also include harassment or indifference on the basis of race, caste, culture, gender or disability.

Aspects of psychological and emotional abuse include:

- a. Hostile rejecting/degrading (e.g. taunts).
- b. Terrorising (e.g. threats or acts that induce fear).
- c. Actively isolating (e.g. locking a child in a room for extended periods of time)
- d. Exploiting/corrupting (e.g. teaching a child to steal).
- e. Denying emotional responsiveness (e.g. denying affection and shows of love).

Signs or symptoms which may indicate psychological abuse:

- a. Rocking, banging head, regression.
- b. Self-mutilation, drug or solvent abuse.
- c. Fear of parents being contacted.
- d. Running away, compulsive stealing.
- e. Masturbation in public.
- f. Eating disorders.
- g. Soiling, smearing faces, enuresis.
- h. Sudden speech disorders, selective mutism.
- i. Over-reaction to mistakes, continual self-deprecation.
- j. Delayed physical/mental/emotional development

Responsibilities

Protecting the welfare of children is the role of every professional who comes into contact with children at the AUW Laboratory School. This includes all staff knowing how to respond to suspected cases of child abuse and neglect and the process for reporting the suspected cases to the relevant persons.



Procedures

Safe Recruitment:

The Asian University for Women Laboratory School is committed to safe recruitment. The Human Resources department follows rigorous procedures for the appointment of all members of staff in the school such as previous employer(s) checks, checking references, background checks, etc.

Faculty and Staff Training:

The Asian University for Women Laboratory School is committed to maintaining and increasing staff awareness of how to prevent, recognise and respond to child abuse and neglect. This school ensures that all staff is updated annually on procedures relating to child abuse and neglect. As part of their induction, all adults will familiarise themselves with the AUW Laboratory School Child Protection Policy and will be encouraged to read additional resource material.

The School is also committed to updating staff on policies and procedures on an annual basis at the beginning of each academic year so that all those working with children understand their responsibilities and are familiar with the expected practice.

A further commitment is training senior educational leadership, faculty and staff on a regular basis to ensure that they are up to date.

Reporting:

AUW Laboratory School staff must report concerns immediately to the Designated Child Protection Officer or the Deputy Child Protection Officer:



| Name | E-mail Id | Mobile Number |
|--|-----------|---------------|
| Child Protection Officer (CPO) | | |
| Deputy Child Protection Officer (DCPO) | | |

- There should be a minimum of two people meeting with the child who has a complaint or the alleged perpetrator. If both the CPO and DCPO need to first meet with the child, the counsellor should be brought in soon after, or the counsellor can meet with both children with either the CPO or DCPO.
- The Child Protection Officer will investigate and record information and observations using the Child Protection Initial Record of Concern (see Appendix 2), and will give a report to the Principal within 2 hours of the matter coming to his/her attention.
- If there are obvious signs of harm the student will be taken for medical treatment immediately.

Emergency

First aid is to be given as in any emergency. Follow-up care and counselling will commence as soon as practical.

When a AUW Laboratory School child discloses:

When a AUW Laboratory School child discloses any form of abuse, AUW Laboratory School staff must report concerns immediately to the Designated Child Protection Officer or the Deputy Child Protection Officer.



Whenever possible, AUW Laboratory School staff should refrain from asking questions or making inappropriate comments which could damage the child further.

- a. Remain calm, do not panic or express shock
 - b. Listen carefully - do not prompt responses.
 - c. Reassure the student - tell them they are doing the right thing and that you are glad they are confiding in an adult.
 - d. Do not project or assume anything, let the child express themselves; leave your own assumptions out.
 - e. Avoid asking questions, but if it is needed use open and general questions in a non-leading manner:
 - What happened to you?
 - Who did this to you?
 - Where did it happen?
 - When did this happen?
 - f. Use age-specific language. Ask for clarification for any meaning or words you don't understand.
 - g. Let the student know they are believed.
 - h. Let the student know that you will do your best to protect and support them.
 - i. Do not promise secrecy to the student. Explain that it is necessary that in order to help them, you will have to share it with the Child Protection Officer or the Deputy Child Protection Officer, but it will be as confidential as possible. Assure them that their issue will not be general knowledge within the school community.
 - j. Check that you have a full understanding of what the student has told you before the end of the discussion.
 - k. Make the student is safe and comfortable. Ensure that the student is not left in a situation where he/she may be pressured to change their story.
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- l. Report to the Child Protection Officer or the Deputy Child Protection Officer, or the Head of Akshara as soon as possible.
- m. In line with international guidelines, the College will not take any photographs or video of a child's injuries but instead records them by use of diagrams -see Appendix 2-.
- n. Maintain confidentiality. Do not discuss this with any other members of staff, children or people outside of school. It will be considered a breach of professional standards if you do this.

Risk Assessment:

Risk assessments will be carried out for all activities and programmes that the College judges to involve risk to students.

Partner Organisations: As part of the risk assessment of activities and projects, due attention will be paid to the child safeguarding arrangements that are in place at those activities and projects.

Implementation of this Policy: It will be the responsibility of all Faculty and Staff to make sure the policy is implemented.

A member of the Governing Board will be nominated to have oversight into the area of child protection, and they shall be informed of any child protection issues or concerns that arise at the School. This nominee will brief the UWC International Board and other UWC's of the trends of abuse or particular risks.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed and updated each year in June. The Principal will sign a copy of the revised policy and will share it with the Governing Board.



Appendix 1

What you should do if you are worried about a child's welfare, or what you should do if a child discloses any form of abuse:

AUW Laboratory School **staff must report concerns immediately to the Designated Child Protection Officer or the Deputy Child Protection Officer.** Do not keep your concerns to yourself.

Abuse can be:

- A. Neglect (for example: dirty, no lunch, inappropriately dressed for the weather)
- B. Physical (for example: bruising, burns, sores, bites).
- C. Emotional (for example withdrawn or disturbing behaviour).
- D. Sexual (for example inappropriate sexualised behaviour or comments). There are many other physical and behavioural indicators of abuse.



When the student/child discloses:

Whenever possible, MUWCI staff should refrain from asking questions or making inappropriate comments which could damage the child further.

- a. Remain calm, do not panic or express shock
- b. Listen carefully - do not prompt responses.
- c. Reassure the student - tell them they are doing the right thing and that you are glad they are confiding in an adult.
- d. Do not project or assume anything, let the child express themselves; leave your own assumptions out.
- e. Avoid asking questions, but if it is needed use open and general questions in a non-leading manner:
 - What happened to you?
 - Who did this to you?
 - Where did it happen?
 - When did this happen?
- f. Use age-specific language. Ask for clarification for any meaning or words you don't understand.
- g. Let the student know they are believed
- h. Let the student know that you will do your best to protect and support them.
- i. Do not promise secrecy to the student. Explain that it is necessary that in order to help them, you will have to share it with the Child Protection Officer or the Deputy Child Protection Officer, but it will be as confidential as possible. Assure them that their issue will not be general knowledge within the school community.
- j. Check that you have a full understanding of what the student has told you before the end of the discussion.
- k. Make the student safe and comfortable. Ensure that the student is not left in



a situation where he/she may be pressured to change their story.

- l. Report to the Child Protection Officer or the Deputy Child Protection Officer, or the Head of Akshara as soon as possible.
- m. In line with international guidelines, the College will not take any photographs or video of a child's injuries but instead records them by use of diagrams -see Appendix 2-.
- n. Maintain confidentiality. Do not discuss this with any other members of staff, children or people outside of school. It will be considered a breach of professional standards if you do this.

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AND LEGAL DUTY AS A MEMBER OF STAFF AT AUW Laboratory School TO PASS ON ANY CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD.

Appendix 2

INITIAL RECORD OF CONCERN

(To be completed by the Child Protection Officer / Deputy Child Protection Officer / Head of Akshara)

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Child's Name: | | | |
| Date of Birth: | | Child's School: | |
| Child's Grade: | | | |
| Context: AUW Laboratory School | | | |
| Male/ Female / Other: | Ethnic Origin: | Disability: | Religion: |



| | | |
|---|---|---------------------|
| Name of the alleged offender: | | |
| Date of Birth of the alleged offender: | Nationality of the alleged offender: | |
| Name of parents/guardian of the alleged offender: | | |
| Address of parents/guardian of the alleged offender: | | |
| Record of initial discussion: | Date of referral: | Reported by: |
| Who has the information been shared with? | | |
| Initial action points: | Agreed timeline: | Action by: |



Nature of the disclosure:

Please include here:

- Date, Time, Place of disclosure:
- What did you observe?
- Was someone else there when the child made the disclosure? Indicate name and position/relationship with the child.

Nature of the concern:

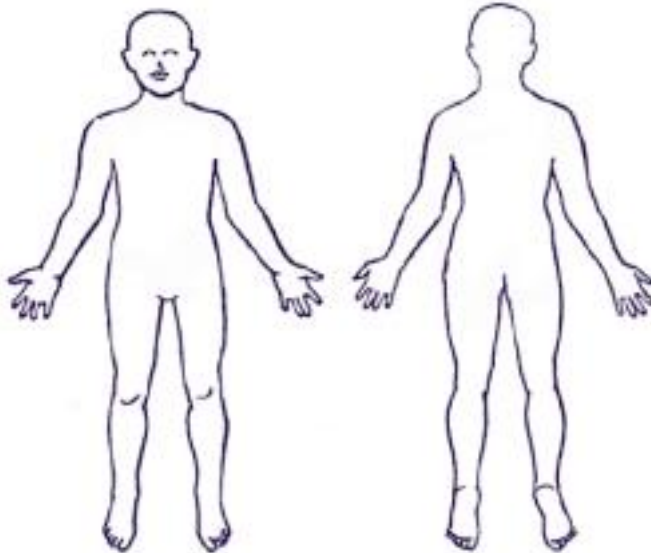
Please include here:

- Date, Time, Place of concern:
- What did the child say or do?
- Was there someone else with the child when the incident took place? Indicate name and position/relationship with the child.



Additional Information:

(Details of any reported and/or visible physical injuries)



Please indicate any markings on the body outline. Please, do not take any pictures, audio visual recordings, and do not ask the child to reveal any injury beneath any clothing.

| | | |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------|
| <p>Report on the action taken: <i>including professional agencies known to be involved with the family, the extent to which both the child and the family are aware of the steps already taken if parents have been informed then times and dates and a record of the meeting.</i></p> | <p>Date:</p> | <p>Action by:</p> |
| <p>Further action points:</p> | <p>Date:</p> | <p>Action by:</p> |
| <p>Reported by:</p> | | |



| |
|---|
| Your Role / Responsibility / Position: |
| Date and Time of this Recording: |
| Initial Form passed on to: Principal : Yes / No Head of Secondary: Yes / No Head of Campus Infrastructure Services: Yes / No |
| College contact details: |
| Your Signature: |

ANNEXURE A - CHILD PROTECTION - CODE OF CONDUCT

1. AUW Laboratory School is committed to the safety and protection of students. This Code of Conduct applies to all employees and volunteers who represent the College and who interact with students in both a direct and/or unsupervised capacity.
2. AUW Laboratory School is committed to the safety and protection of children in the local community with whom the college works through Akshara/ Triveni.
3. AUW Laboratory School is committed to provide education and awareness of child abuse for employees and volunteers.



4. The public and private conduct of those acting on behalf of MUWCI can inspire and motivate those with whom they interact or can cause great harm if inappropriate. We must, at all times, be aware of the responsibilities that accompany our work.
5. We should be aware of our own and other persons' vulnerability, especially when working alone with students, and be particularly aware that we are responsible for maintaining physical, emotional, and sexual boundaries in such interactions. We must avoid any covert or overt sexual behaviours with those for whom we have responsibility. This includes speech or gestures as well as physical contact that exploits, abuses, or harasses.
6. We must show prudent discretion before touching a student and be aware of how physical touch may be perceived or received, and whether it would be an appropriate expression of greeting, care, concern, or celebration. MUWCI staff and volunteers are prohibited at all times from physically disciplining a child.
7. Physical contact with students can be misconstrued both by the recipient and by those who observe it and should occur only when completely nonsexual and otherwise appropriate, and never in private. One-on-one meetings with a student are best held in a public area; in a room where the interaction can be (or is being) observed; or in a room with the door left open, and another staff member is notified about the meeting.
8. AUW Laboratory School staff should not travel in a car alone with a student and if this is unavoidable the relevant Deputy Head should be informed.
9. We must intervene when there is evidence of, or there is reasonable cause to suspect, that students are being abused in any way. Suspected abuse or neglect must be reported to the appropriate school and civil authorities as described in the Child Protection Policy.



10. Possession and consumption of alcohol, tobacco or cigarettes by Employees and volunteers is forbidden when working or interacting with students. Adults should never give students any alcohol, tobacco, cigarettes or share images or reading material that is inappropriate.
11. Employees and volunteers should not accept gifts from students of a value greater than Rs. 1000 without prior written permission from the Principal.

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Owner of the Document/Content | Principal |
| Date of review | |
| Legal review by | Legal Counsel |
| Date of legal review | |
| Approved by | Board of Directors |
| Approved date | |