

EDGBASTON ARABIC SCHOOL

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Policy date: September 2026

Review date: September 2027

Policy owner: School Director / Designated Safeguarding Lead

Approved by: School Management

Statutory guidance: *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* (KCSIE 2026), *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026* and other relevant statutory guidance

1. Purpose and Commitment

Edgbaston Arabic School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child who attends the school.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The school will maintain a child-centred approach and will always consider what is in the best interests of the child.

The school recognises that children may experience harm:

- at home;
- within the school or other educational settings;
- in the wider community;
- online;
- through other children;
- through adults working or volunteering with children; or
- through a combination of these circumstances.

The school will act promptly whenever there is a concern about a child's welfare or safety.

This policy is informed by the September 2026 edition of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE 2026), which is now in force.

2. Designated Safeguarding Lead

The school has appointed:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

Mrs Mouna Alrawi, Headteacher

Email: alrawi.muna@gmail.com

Mobile: 07729850013

The DSL has overall responsibility for the day-to-day oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems.

This includes:

- taking lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection;
- overseeing the school's safeguarding procedures;
- overseeing online safety and understanding the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements where applicable;
- ensuring safeguarding concerns are appropriately recorded, referred and followed up;
- providing advice and support to staff and volunteers;
- coordinating action concerning individual children;
- liaising with external agencies where appropriate;
- ensuring safeguarding policies and procedures remain up to date;
- ensuring the school maintains appropriate records;
- promoting a culture in which concerns about children and adults are taken seriously; and
- ensuring safeguarding contributes to children's educational and welfare outcomes.

The ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL and cannot be delegated, although specific activities may be delegated to appropriately trained deputies.

3. Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

The school has appointed the following Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads:

Mr Marwan Ghannam – School Director

Mrs Entisar Rasheed – Deputy Headteacher

Deputy DSLs will act on behalf of the DSL when required and have the knowledge to respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns.

The DSL and Deputy DSLs will ensure that there is appropriate safeguarding cover whenever the school is operating.

4. Responsibilities of the DSL and Deputy DSLs

Responsibilities include:

- taking lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection;
 - acting as a central point of contact for safeguarding concerns;
 - ensuring concerns are responded to promptly;
 - maintaining a confidential safeguarding recording system;
 - coordinating safeguarding action for individual children;
 - making referrals to children's social care, the police or other relevant agencies where appropriate;
 - seeking advice from relevant safeguarding professionals where necessary;
 - ensuring staff understand the school's safeguarding procedures;
 - promoting early identification of children who may need additional support;
 - considering the educational impact of safeguarding concerns;
 - ensuring appropriate information is shared with relevant staff on a need-to-know basis;
 - maintaining professional curiosity when concerns are unclear or information is incomplete;
 - ensuring safeguarding records are securely maintained and appropriately transferred when necessary; and
 - ensuring the child's voice and best interests are considered when decisions are made.
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5. Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility

All staff, teachers, volunteers and contractors working with children have a responsibility to safeguard children.

All staff must:

- provide a safe environment in which children can learn;
- know and follow this safeguarding and child protection policy;
- know who the DSL and Deputy DSLs are;
- recognise indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- understand that safeguarding concerns can occur online as well as face-to-face;
- understand the potential impact of abuse and neglect on children;
- recognise children who may require early help;
- maintain professional curiosity;
- respond appropriately if a child makes a disclosure;
- report concerns to the DSL or Deputy DSL without delay;
- maintain appropriate confidentiality;
- record safeguarding concerns accurately and factually;
- challenge inappropriate or unsafe behaviour;
- understand the safeguarding risks associated with technology and online activity; and

6. Volunteers

Volunteers have an important safeguarding responsibility.

Volunteers must:

- follow the school's safeguarding procedures;
- report concerns immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL;
- respond appropriately to a child's disclosure;
- never promise a child confidentiality;
- avoid investigating or attempting to establish whether an allegation is true;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
- never use physical punishment;
- never humiliate, threaten or intimidate a child;
- avoid being alone with children unnecessarily;
- follow the school's code of conduct and behaviour expectations; and
- cooperate with safeguarding procedures and any subsequent investigation.

Volunteers are not responsible for deciding whether an allegation is true. Their responsibility is to report concerns promptly.

The school will undertake appropriate safer recruitment and safeguarding checks for staff and volunteers in accordance with current requirements.

7. Types of Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

Staff and volunteers must understand that abuse, neglect and exploitation can take many forms and may overlap.

The main categories include:

Physical abuse

- Physical abuse includes deliberately causing physical harm to a child, including hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, drowning or otherwise causing physical injury.

Emotional or psychological abuse

- Emotional abuse involves persistent emotional maltreatment that may cause serious and adverse effects on a child's emotional development.
- Examples include persistent criticism, humiliation, threats, intimidation, rejection, isolation or exposing a child to inappropriate or frightening experiences.

Sexual abuse

- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
- It includes contact and non-contact activity and may occur online.

Neglect

- Neglect involves the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs and may result in serious impairment of health or development.

Exploitation

- Children may be vulnerable to different forms of exploitation, including criminal exploitation and sexual exploitation.

Staff should remain alert to risks occurring outside the family environment as well as within it.

8. Other Safeguarding Risks

Safeguarding concerns may also include:

- domestic abuse;
- child-on-child abuse;
- bullying and cyberbullying;
- discriminatory or prejudice-based abuse;

- sexual harassment and sexual violence;
- serious violence;
- criminal exploitation and county lines;
- radicalisation and extremism;
- online abuse;
- self-generated intimate images and/or videos, including those generated using artificial intelligence;
- grooming;
- trafficking and modern slavery;
- children missing from education or persistent unexplained absence;
- mental health concerns where there is a safeguarding element;
- substance misuse;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- domestic abuse within young people's own relationships;
- misogyny and gender-based harassment; and
- violence against women and girls (VAWG).

Staff should understand that safeguarding concerns may occur in combination and should not necessarily be treated as isolated incidents.

9. Child-on-Child Abuse

Edgbaston Arabic School recognises that children can abuse other children.

Child-on-child abuse can occur in person or online and may include:

- bullying and cyberbullying;
- discriminatory or prejudice-based behaviour;
- racism or faith-targeted abuse;
- physical abuse;
- serious physical assault;
- threats involving weapons;
- sexual violence;
- sexual harassment;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- coercing another child into sexual activity;
- sharing or requesting intimate images;
- making or sharing nudes or semi-nudes;
- AI-generated intimate images or deepfakes;
- upskirting;
- abuse within young people's intimate relationships;
- misogynistic or misandrist behaviour; and
- other abusive, threatening or degrading behaviour.

The school will not dismiss harmful behaviour as "banter", "just a joke" or "boys being boys".

All concerns about child-on-child abuse must be reported to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

The school will consider the needs and safety of both the child who has experienced harm and the child alleged to have caused harm.

10. Online Safety

The school recognises that children may face safeguarding risks through technology and online activity.

Staff should be alert to:

- cyberbullying;
- online grooming;
- inappropriate or harmful content;
- sexual harassment;
- sexual exploitation;

- self-generated intimate images;
- AI-generated or manipulated images;
- threats and intimidation;
- radicalisation and extremist content;
- misogynistic content;
- criminal exploitation; and
- harmful communication through social media, messaging services, gaming platforms or other online environments.

Where the school uses filtering or monitoring systems, the DSL will understand the systems and processes in place and will act upon safeguarding concerns identified through them.

Children will be encouraged to report online concerns and will be supported where online activity presents a safeguarding risk.

11. Recognising Signs of Abuse or Neglect

Recognising abuse is not always straightforward.

Possible indicators may include:

- unexplained injuries;
- injuries with inconsistent explanations;
- sudden changes in behaviour;
- withdrawal or unusual aggression;
- fear of particular people;
- significant changes in attendance or punctuality;
- deterioration in appearance or hygiene;
- changes in eating or sleeping patterns;
- age-inappropriate sexualised behaviour;
- sexualised language or behaviour;
- unexplained emotional distress;
- self-harm or suicidal thoughts;
- anxiety or extreme changes in mood;
- fear of going home;
- unexplained gifts, money or possessions;
- concerning online behaviour;
- disclosure by the child;
- disclosure by another person; or
- information received from another agency.

These indicators do not necessarily mean abuse has occurred. However, they should be taken seriously and reported to the DSL where appropriate.

Staff should maintain professional curiosity and avoid assuming that there is an innocent explanation where concerns persist.

12. Responding to a Concern

If a member of staff or volunteer has a concern about a child:

1. **Act promptly.**
2. Report the concern to the DSL or Deputy DSL without delay.
3. Record the concern accurately and factually.
4. Include relevant information about what was observed, said or disclosed.
5. Do not investigate the matter yourself.
6. Do not promise confidentiality.

7. Do not contact parents/carers about a safeguarding concern unless instructed to do so by the DSL or appropriate safeguarding professional.

If the DSL or Deputy DSL is unavailable, staff should seek appropriate safeguarding advice or contact the relevant children's social care service or police where the circumstances require immediate action.

If a child is in immediate danger, the police should be contacted by calling **999**.

13. Responding to a Child Who Discloses Abuse

If a child makes a disclosure:

- remain calm;
- listen carefully;
- allow the child to speak at their own pace;
- take the child seriously;
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking to an adult;
- explain that the information cannot be kept secret because adults may need to help keep them safe;
- use open and non-leading questions only where necessary to clarify what the child has said;
- do not investigate;
- do not confront an alleged perpetrator;
- do not ask the child to repeat the disclosure unnecessarily;
- record the child's words as accurately as possible; and
- report the concern to the DSL or Deputy DSL without delay.

Staff should not promise the child a particular outcome.

The child's immediate safety and welfare should remain the priority.

14. Recording Safeguarding Concerns

Safeguarding concerns must be recorded promptly and securely.

Records should include, where relevant:

- the date and time;
- the name of the child;
- the nature of the concern;
- factual observations;
- the child's own words where possible;
- action taken;
- advice received;
- decisions made;
- the rationale for decisions; and
- any outcome or follow-up action.

Records must distinguish between fact, observation, information received from another person and professional opinion.

Safeguarding records must be kept confidential and accessible only to those who need the information to safeguard the child.

Information must not be withheld where sharing it is necessary to protect a child.

15. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

The school recognises that effective information sharing is an important part of safeguarding.

Data protection legislation should not be treated as a barrier to appropriate information sharing where this is necessary to protect a child.

Information will be shared:

- lawfully;
- proportionately;
- securely;
- on a need-to-know basis; and
- in the best interests of the child.

Staff should speak to the DSL if they are uncertain whether information should be shared.

The school will comply with applicable information-sharing requirements and safeguarding guidance.

16. Contact with Parents and Carers

Parents and carers will normally be informed when there is a safeguarding concern about their child.

However, the school will not automatically inform parents or carers where doing so may:

- place the child at greater risk of harm;
- prejudice a police investigation;
- prejudice a children's social care investigation; or
- otherwise compromise the child's welfare or a safeguarding process.

The DSL will seek appropriate safeguarding advice where necessary before contacting parents or carers.

17. Early Help

The school recognises that some children may benefit from support before their needs escalate to a statutory safeguarding threshold.

Staff should be alert to children who may benefit from early help.

Early help may be appropriate where a child is experiencing difficulties relating to:

- family circumstances;
- mental health;
- behaviour;
- attendance;
- bullying;
- domestic abuse;
- exploitation;
- social or emotional difficulties; or
- other circumstances affecting their welfare.

The DSL will consider whether early help, Family Help, children's social care or another service is appropriate.

18. Safeguarding Concerns About Adults

The school takes concerns about adults working with children seriously.

A concern may relate to:

- a member of staff;
- a teacher;
- a volunteer;
- a contractor;

- a visitor; or
- any other adult working with children.

Concerns may include allegations that an adult:

- behaved in a way that harmed or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm.

All such concerns must be reported immediately through the school's safeguarding procedures.

Where appropriate, the school will seek advice from the relevant Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and/or other safeguarding agencies.

The school will follow relevant local safeguarding procedures when managing allegations against adults.

19. Low-Level Concerns About Adults

The school recognises the importance of identifying and addressing low-level concerns about the behaviour of adults working with children.

A low-level concern may involve behaviour that is inconsistent with the school's expectations of professional conduct or which causes concern about an adult's boundaries, even where the behaviour does not meet the threshold for an allegation.

Examples may include:

- inappropriate language;
- unnecessary physical contact;
- excessive or inappropriate communication with children;
- favouritism;
- poor professional boundaries; or
- being alone with a child unnecessarily.

Staff and volunteers should report low-level concerns to the DSL.

The DSL will determine the appropriate response and maintain an appropriate record.

20. Safer Recruitment

The school is committed to safer recruitment.

Appropriate checks will be undertaken before staff and volunteers work with children, in accordance with applicable legal and safeguarding requirements.

The school will maintain appropriate records of safeguarding and recruitment checks.

Where required, the school will undertake appropriate checks concerning:

- identity;
- employment history;
- references;
- qualifications;
- criminal records/DBS;
- barred-list status;
- right to work; and

- other relevant safeguarding matters.

The school will ensure that appropriate recruitment procedures are followed for staff, volunteers and contractors.

21. Behaviour and Professional Boundaries

All adults working with children are expected to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

Staff and volunteers should:

- treat children with dignity and respect;
- use appropriate language;
- avoid humiliating, threatening or intimidating children;
- avoid unnecessary physical contact;
- never use physical punishment;
- avoid being alone with children unnecessarily;
- communicate with children through appropriate channels;
- avoid inappropriate private messaging or social-media relationships with children;
- avoid favouritism;
- maintain appropriate confidentiality; and
- report concerns about inappropriate behaviour.

Adults must never use their position of authority to exploit, manipulate or otherwise harm a child.

22. Physical Contact

Physical contact should always be appropriate, proportionate and necessary.

Staff must never use physical punishment.

Any physical intervention must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary to prevent harm or protect a child or another person.

Where a physical intervention occurs, it should be reported to the DSL and appropriately recorded.

23. Whistleblowing

Purpose

Edgbaston Arabic School aims to promote honesty, accountability and a safe environment for children, staff and volunteers.

The school encourages staff and volunteers to raise genuine concerns about wrongdoing or unsafe practice.

Concerns may relate to:

- safeguarding or child welfare;
- criminal or illegal conduct;
- health and safety;
- misuse of school funds or property;
- discrimination;
- bullying or harassment;
- unsafe practices; or
- attempts to conceal wrongdoing.

Raising a Concern

Concerns should normally be raised with:

1. The Headteacher/DSL; or

2. A Deputy DSL.

If the concern relates to the DSL or another senior member of staff, it should be raised with the School Director or another appropriate senior person.

If a concern cannot appropriately be raised internally, external safeguarding advice may be sought.

This may include the relevant Local Authority Designated Officer, children's social care, the police or other appropriate regulatory or safeguarding body.

The **NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line** may also be used where appropriate.

Protection

The school will seek to protect individuals who raise genuine safeguarding concerns in good faith. A concern does not need to be proven for it to be raised.

Deliberately malicious or knowingly false allegations may be dealt with under the school's disciplinary procedures.

24. Prevent, Radicalisation and Extremism

The school recognises its responsibility to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.

Staff should be alert to signs that a child may be being exposed to extremist material or may be vulnerable to radicalisation.

Concerns should be reported to the DSL.

The DSL will seek appropriate advice and, where necessary, make a referral through the appropriate safeguarding or Prevent arrangements.

The school recognises that online activity can play a significant role in radicalisation.

25. Mental Health and Safeguarding

The school recognises that mental health difficulties can sometimes be associated with safeguarding concerns.

Staff should be alert to significant changes in a child's behaviour, emotional state or wellbeing.

Concerns may include:

- self-harm;
- suicidal thoughts or behaviour;
- severe emotional distress;
- significant withdrawal;
- eating difficulties;
- unexplained behavioural changes; or
- other indications that a child may be at risk of harm.

Where there is a safeguarding element, concerns must be reported to the DSL.

26. Attendance and Children Missing from Education

The school will monitor attendance and will remain alert to unexplained or concerning absences. Repeated or unexplained absence may be an indicator of safeguarding concerns.

Where attendance patterns raise safeguarding concerns, the DSL will consider whether further action or referral is necessary.

27. Monitoring and Review

The school will regularly review its safeguarding arrangements. This policy will be formally reviewed at least annually and sooner where:

- legislation changes;
- statutory guidance changes;
- local safeguarding procedures change;
- an incident identifies a need for improvement; or
- the school identifies a safeguarding risk requiring a policy amendment.

The school will ensure that safeguarding remains a standing priority and that staff are aware of any significant changes to safeguarding procedures.

28. Key Safeguarding Principle

Every member of staff and every volunteer should remember:

It could happen here.

A concern does not need to be proven before it is reported.

If something does not feel right, staff should report it to the DSL or Deputy DSL without delay.

29. Safeguarding Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Mrs Mouna Alrawi – Headteacher

Email: alrawi.muna@gmail.com

Mobile: 07729850013

Deputy DSL

Mr Marwan Ghannam – School Director

Deputy DSL

Mrs Entisar Rasheed – Deputy Headteacher

Emergency: 999 where a child is in immediate danger.

Declaration

This policy has been reviewed and updated to reflect the September 2026 safeguarding requirements and the principles contained within *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*.

Signed:  _____

Name: Marwan Ghannam

Position: School Director

Date: 8 September 2026

Next review: September 2027