Safeguarding Policy

Ref. NECC-AD/CLN/POL/2026/004

Version 2.0

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1. Overview

MRC-NECC's Safeguarding Policy sets out mandatory requirements to protect students from harm and promote their welfare, safety, and wellbeing. It establishes expectations for supervision, security, reporting, training, curriculum integration, visitor management, and emergency procedures. Safeguarding is a legal duty of care under UAE law, particularly the Child Rights Law (Wadeema), and the school acts *in loco parentis* while students are under its supervision.

2. Purpose

The policy aims to:
- Set out MRC-NECC's safeguarding and student welfare requirements.
- Define clear accountability within the Center.
- Establish school security and supervision expectations.
- Regulate the use of CCTV systems in accordance with applicable requirements.
- Define safeguarding training requirements for staff.
- Ensure a safe, well-supervised, and legally compliant operational environment that protects students from harm.

3. Objective

The key objectives of the policy include:
- Ensuring a safe and caring learning environment.
- Enforcing a zero-tolerance approach to maltreatment.
- Monitoring students at risk.
- Ensuring staff know how to identify, respond to, and report safeguarding concerns.
- Protecting students' physical, emotional, and digital safety.
- Integrating safeguarding into the curriculum, where possible.
- Maintaining strong school security systems, including CCTV and visitor controls.
- Ensuring preparedness for emergencies and security breaches.

4. Scope

The policy applies to:
- All students
- All staff, including third-party staff
- Volunteers and invited visitors
- Parents and guardians
- Security personnel
- Authorized government personnel

The policy covers safeguarding across:
- On-site and off-site school activities
- Physical and digital environments
- Student supervision and handover
- Security breaches
- Visitor access
- CCTV usage
- Emergency response and Training
- Whistleblowing

5. Glossary	
MRC-NECC	Mohammed bin Rashid Center for Special Education Operated by The New England Center for Children – Abu Dhabi
ADEK	Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge.
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
ACE®	Autism Curriculum Encyclopedia ABA Software is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum for learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder, developed by The New England Center for Children (NECC).
CCTV	Closed-Circuit Television is a video surveillance system that uses cameras to monitor and record activity in specific areas for safety, security, and safeguarding purposes.

6 Applicable Laws and Regulations

- This policy is applicable with UAE Federal and local laws and regulations.
- ADEK Safeguarding Policy – Version 1.2 (January 2025).

7 Responsibilities

All members of the school community share responsibility for maintaining a safe and secure environment.

7.1 Executive Director

- Holds *in loco parentis* responsibility for students while under school supervision.
- Approves visitor access procedures and authorizes access to CCTV footage in line with this policy.
- Oversees safeguarding and school security procedures.
- Ensures safeguarding concerns are reported and escalated to ADEK within the mandated reporting timelines.
- Ensures parents have access to the school's Safeguarding Policy and related information.

7.2 Staff

- Maintain duty of care toward students.
- Identify, record and report safeguarding concerns promptly.
- Follow safeguarding and security procedures.
- Maintain confidentiality on a need-to-know basis.
- Support student wellbeing and safety.

7.3 Security Guards
- Control and monitor access to school premises.
- Verify identification of visitors.
- Remain vigilant and compliant with school procedures

7.4 Parents
- Ensure regular child attendance.
- Inform school of authorized pickup and drop off arrangements.
- Cooperate with safeguarding procedures.

7.5 Visitors / Volunteers
- Sign in/out upon entry and exit.
- Wear access passes visibly at all times.
- Remain supervised while on school premises.
- Comply with the center's safeguarding requirements.

7.6 Safeguarding Committee
- Implement safeguarding policies and practices.
- Oversee safeguarding induction and ongoing training.
- Ensure safeguarding records are maintained securely and in line with regulatory requirements.
- Ensure whistleblowing concerns are handled confidentially and without retaliation.

8 Safeguarding Supervision

Duty of Care and In Loco Parentis:
- All staff at MRC-NECC have the duty of care towards their students and are responsible for their wellbeing, safety, and protection whilst they are under the school's supervision.
- The Executive Director shall accept in loco parentis responsibility for all students whilst under the school's supervision.

9 Safeguarding Awareness

Safeguarding awareness at MRC-NECC includes:
- Maintaining a safe and respectful environment that prioritizes students' best interests and wellbeing.
- Enforcing a zero-tolerance approach to student maltreatment and ensure safeguarding concerns are reported in accordance with the ADEK School Student Protection Policy.
- Monitoring students known or thought to be at risk from harm, recognizing that students with ASD may experience heightened vulnerability.

- Ensuring staff understand how to respond to safeguarding incidents and appropriately support students who make a disclosure.
- Providing clear and accessible routes for staff, students, and visitors to raise safeguarding concerns without fear of retaliation, in line with the MRC-NECC Whistleblowing Policy.
- Promoting student safety in online and digital environments, in line with applicable ADEK digital requirements.
- Ensuring that school policies and practices do not adversely impact student health, dignity, or wellbeing.
- Ensure every parent understands that they are obligated to enroll their child in school and any suspicious incidents shall be reported as a maltreatment concern to relevant authorities, as per the ADEK School Student Protection Policy.

10   Safeguarding and the Curriculum

The Safeguarding principles are embedded within the ACE® curriculum and each student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), in a manner that is developmentally appropriate and responsive to the needs of students within an ASD population.

Safeguarding within the curriculum is supported through:

- **Speech and language skills** (e.g., requesting, accepting and rejecting, asking for help, gaining attention, making choices, self-identification), supporting communication, consent, and help-seeking.
- **Toleration skills** (e.g., waiting, tolerating denied access), supporting self-regulation and emotional control.
- **Self-help skills** (e.g., maintaining privacy, hygiene routines, respecting personal space), supporting self-protection and personal responsibility.
- **Social skills** (e.g., peer interaction, conversation skills, pro-social behavior, distinguishing between safe and unsafe situations), supporting risk awareness and appropriate responses to peer pressure.
- **Leisure skills** (e.g., digital skills, independent leisure activities), supporting self-esteem and awareness of online risks.

11   Safeguarding and the School's Security

11.1   School Security Systems

MRC-NECC maintains integrated physical and digital security systems to safeguard students, staff, visitors, and school assets. These include controlled access systems and CCTV monitoring in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements.

11.2 CCTV Systems

CCTV systems are installed and operated in compliance with applicable regulatory standards.

CCTV requirements include:

- Coverage of key access points and common areas.
- Exclusion of areas where privacy is reasonably expected (e.g., toilets, changing rooms).
- Visible signage indicating CCTV surveillance.
- Restricted access to live feeds and recordings, authorized by the Executive Director.
- Provision of access to authorized ADEK personnel upon request.
- Regular monitoring and maintenance to confirm functionality and adequate coverage.
- Prohibition of copying or distribution of recordings except as required by law.
- Retention of recordings for a minimum of **90 days**.

11.3 Security Guards

MRC-NECC shall ensure that licensed security personnel are present all the time during operating hours to control access and maintain site security.

Security personnel responsibilities include:

- Access control at all entry points.
- Verification of visitor identity.
- Maintaining visitor access records.

11.4 School Visitors Access

MRC-NECC controls visitor access to regulate entry to school premises.

Visitor controls includes:

- All visitors shall sign in at the security gate, present valid identification, and be issued a visitor access pass.
- Visitor access passes shall be visibly worn at all times.
- Visitors shall not enter classrooms unless authorized.
- Invited visitors shall remain under staff supervision unless classified as authorized personnel.
- Visitors shall sign out and return access passes upon leaving the premises.

11.5 Student Departure and Supervision

- Student departure occurs only through authorized arrangements approved by parents or guardians, including identity verification at the point of handover.

11.6 Drop-Off and Pick-Up Timings

- The school communicates approved drop-off and pick-up times to parents.

- The school's duty of care applies strictly within designated supervision periods and approved school transportation arrangements.

11.7 Special Events and External Providers
- MRC-NECC applies enhanced security measures during special events and activities to ensure the safety of students, staff, and visitors.
- External service providers are subject to approval and compliance with school safeguarding requirements.

11.8 Safeguarding the Privacy of the School Community
MRC-NECC implements measures to safeguard the privacy and identities of members of the school community, in accordance with applicable laws and ADEK policies. At a minimum, the school shall:
- Avoid displaying individually identifiable information in public areas, including timetables, class schedules, photographs, or names.
- Restrict the sharing of personal contact details of students, parents, or staff unless consent is obtained or disclosure is required by law or ADEK policy.

11.9 Security Breach Management
MRC-NECC maintains procedures to prevent, respond to, and report security breaches that may pose a risk to students, staff, school premises, or information in accordance with applicable laws and ADEK requirements.

12 Training and Continuous Professional Development
MRC-NECC ensures that safeguarding training is provided to management, staff, and volunteers at induction and refreshed periodically thereafter. At a minimum, safeguarding training shall address:
- Identifying safeguarding concerns including signs of student maltreatment and appropriate response and reporting actions.
- Awareness of the heightened safeguarding risks for students at risk of harm, including those with additional learning needs.
- Maintaining professional conduct and preventing behaviors that may contribute to unsafe environments.
- Accurate and confidential recording of safeguarding concerns.
- Understanding required actions in emergency situations to prevent harm or danger.
- Sharing safeguarding information strictly on a need-to-know basis.
- Understanding the school's security systems and security breach procedures.
- Guidance on reporting safeguarding concerns and whistleblowing, including protections for individuals who raise concerns in good faith.

Invited visitors are not required to complete safeguarding training; however, they must acknowledge and comply with the school's Safeguarding Policy.

13 Whistleblowing

MRC-NECC maintains a formal whistleblowing mechanism in accordance with the approved internal Whistleblowing Policy.

MRC-NECC ensures that:

- Concerns raised in good faith are addressed without retaliation.
- Confidentiality is maintained to the extent reasonably practicable.
- All concerns are reviewed fairly, impartially, and in a timely manner.
- Appropriate corrective action is taken where allegations are substantiated.

All safeguarding related concerns may be raised through the established whistleblowing channels.

14 Policy Compliance & Review

- Adherence to this policy is mandatory.
- Non-Compliance with this policy shall be may result in corrective action in accordance with ADEK regulations and applicable UAE laws
- The policy will be reviewed and updated annually or as necessary within shorter intervals to ensure continued compliance with UAE regulations.

15 Final Approval

- This policy is approved by the Management and is effective as of 18 February 2026.

End of Policy