

## DAKMIL SECONDARY SCHOOL

### Child Protection Policy

#### **Vision**

The Dakmil Secondary School works for:

- A world which respects and values each child
- A world which listens to children and learns
- A world where all children have hope and opportunity

#### **Mission statement**

Dakmil Secondary School provides education opportunities for young people which respects to all their rights including the right to education and protection (reference UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989).

We deliver immediate and lasting improvements in young people's lives through the acquisition of a holistic education that envelope all aspects of their humanity.

#### **Introduction**

Parties involved in the activities of the Lasallian partners shall protect the child from all forms of physical or sexual abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation.

There is a shared common commitment to the prevention of child abuse and the protection of children.

This policy sets out common values, principles and beliefs and describes the steps that will be taken in meeting our commitment to protect children

#### **Our commitment to protect children is seen in our values, principles and beliefs**

- All child abuse involves the abuse of children's rights
- All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation
- The situation of all children must be improved through promotion of their rights as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This includes the right to freedom from abuse and exploitation
- Child abuse is never acceptable
- We have a commitment to protecting children with/for whom we work
- When we work through partners, they have a responsibility to meet minimum standards of protection for children in their programs

#### **What we will do**

- *Awareness:* we will ensure that all staff and others are aware of the problem of child abuse and the risks to children
- *Prevention:* we will ensure, through awareness and good practice, that staff and others minimise the risks to children
- *Reporting:* we will ensure that staff and others are clear what steps to take when concerns arise regarding the safety of children
- *Responding:* we will ensure that action is taken to support and protect children where concerns arise regarding possible abuse.

In order that the above standards of reporting and responding are met, members of **Dakmil Secondary School** will also ensure that they:

- Take seriously any concerns raised
- Take positive steps to ensure the protection of children who are the subject of any concerns
- Support children, staff or other adults who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns
- Act appropriately and effectively in instigating or cooperating with any subsequent process of initiating
- Are guided through the child protection process by the principle of 'best interests of the child'
- Listen to and take seriously the views and wishes of children
- Work in partnership with parents/care-givers and/or other professionals to ensure the protection of children

#### **How we will ensure our commitments above are met?**

- Persons connected with Dakmil Secondary School will abide by the attached code of conduct that is reviewed with all stakeholders
- All staff and volunteers will have access to a copy of the Child Protection Policy
- Recruitment procedures will include checks on suitability for working with young people where possible
- Induction to the School will include briefing on child protection issues to the staff
- Every workplace will display contact details for reporting possible child abuse and every member of staff will have contact details for reporting
- Systems will be established to investigate possible abuse once reported to deal with it
- Training. Learning opportunities and support will be provided by qualified practitioners in child protection matters

#### **Code of Conduct**

**At the beginning of each school year a male and female Child Protection Officer will be appointed and proclaimed so staff and children know to whom they should go if they have any case to believe there are infringements or risks associated with child abuse.**

All staff, Board of Management accepts and undertakes to abide by the following Code of Conduct.

#### ***Staff and others must never:***

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children
- Develop physical/sexual relationships with children
- Develop relationships with children which could in any way be deemed exploitive or abusive
- Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is unwelcome, inappropriate and offensive or abusive
- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate for sexually provocative
- Have a child/children with whom they are working 'to say overnight' at their home unsupervised
- Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves
- Condone or participate in behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive
- Act in ways intended to shame humiliate, belittle or degrade children or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse
- Discriminate against or show differential treatment or favour particular children to the exclusion of others

Whilst this is not an exhaustive or exclusive list fundamental tenet is that staff should avoid actions or behaviour which may constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour.

*It is important for all staff and others in contact with children to:*

- Be aware of situations which may present risks and manage such situations
- Plan and organise the work and the workplace so as to minimise risks
- As far as possible, be visible in working with children
- Ensure that a culture of openness exists to enable any issues or concerns to be raised and discussed
- Ensure that a sense of accountability exists between staff so that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unchallenged
- Talk to children about their contact with staff or others and encourage them to raise any concerns
- Empower children – discuss with them their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable and what they can do if there is a problem

*In general it is inappropriate to:*

- Spend excessive time alone with children away from others
- Take children to your home, especially where they will be alone with you

## **RESPONDING TO ALLEGATION OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS**

### **A. MANDATORY REPORTING**

Persons related to Dakmil Secondary School are required to report to the Principal any information / allegations of behaviour violating acceptable practice.

In turn, that officer will follow the requirements for reporting specified in accordance to laws of the land pertaining to child abuse.

### **B. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **1. Treatment of those who come forward**

Sexual misconduct frequently takes place in private and secret circumstances. Pressures are frequently exerted to prevent the making of any disclosures. This is particularly true when one of the participants occupies a position of trust, power or authority with respect to the other. The persons in the subordinate positions who do come forward with such information should be heard in a careful and non-threatening manner.

#### **2 Nature of reports**

In the interest of justice and the protection of the rights of all concerned, the person making the report shall give the factual information as objectively and completely as possible. Reports of the misconduct may be verbal or written and shall include as much of the following information as is available.

- a. The name, position and any other information identifying the person or persons involved in or subject to the alleged misconduct
- b. A description of the nature of the conduct involved and any other information that might serve to corroborate or disprove the allegation
- c. The name and means of contacting the person providing the information
- d. The name(s) of any witnesses and the means of contacting those witnesses

**All staff and Dakmil Secondary School will sign acknowledging their agreement to abide by the above Code of Conduct.**