



AL-TAQWA COLLEGE CHILD SAFETY POLICY

All children have a right to be treated fairly. This right was referred to by the Prophet (s.a.w) in the saheeh hadeeth:

**“Fear Allah and treat your children fairly”
(Narrated by Al-Bukhari, 2447; Muslim, 1623).**

RATIONALE

This policy demonstrates Al-Taqwa College’s strong commitment to child safety and is committed to fulfilling its duty to all students in relation to Ministerial order No. 870. This policy provides an outline of the policies and practices the College has developed to keep every child safe from any harm, including abuse.

AIMS

1. To embed an organisational culture of child safety, including, parents, volunteers, students, staff and visitors.
2. Commitment to child safety
3. Ensure there is a code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children.
4. Ensure there is appropriate screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduces the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.
5. Ensure there are processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.
6. Establish strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse.
7. Establish strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

TARGET AUDIENCE

All staff, students, parents, volunteers, contract workers, the school board and the school community.

IMPLEMENTATION

Commitment to child safety

All Al Taqwa College students have the right to feel and be safe at all times. The wellbeing and welfare of our students is our first priority and we have a zero tolerance to child abuse. At Al-Taqwa College, our goal is to create a child safe and friendly environment where our students feel safe, have fun and reach their potential.

This commitment applies to all staff, volunteers, parents, our students and individuals involved in our college community.

Our students' rights to safety and participation

At Al-Taqwa College we encourage our students to express their views, listen to their suggestions, particularly on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all our students to 'have a say' about things that are important to them.

We teach our students about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns reported by our students or detected by our staff, parents, peers and volunteers.

Valuing diversity

At Al-Taqwa College, we value diversity and have a zero tolerance to any discriminatory practices.

To achieve this we:

- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of all our students regardless of their cultural and linguistic background
- Welcome students with disabilities and their families and act to promote their participation
- Seek appropriate staff from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Recruiting staff and volunteers

Al-Taqwa College applies the best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers. We interview and conduct referee checks on all staff and volunteers and require, Working with Children Check and Statutory Declaration that declares no criminal offences have been committed. Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in all advertisements.

Supporting staff, volunteers and governing body

Al-Taqwa College Child Safety Code of Conduct provides guidance to our staff and volunteers on their obligations to child safety, all of whom receive training on the requirements of the Code during induction and biannually.

Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

All concerns and complaints from parents, students and staff members need to be reported to the Child safety committee. Communication can be made via a number of avenues such as, but not limited to, me@wicv (for students), csc@wicv (adults), parent portal and staff portal. The Child Safety Committee (CSC) responsibility includes responding to any complaints made by staff, volunteers, parents or our students (see Appendix 1). This does not absolve the responsibilities of staff and volunteers of their mandatory reporting obligation (for mandatory reporting procedures please refer to the Mandatory Reporting Policy). Where possible, staff must use all necessary measures to protect any child connected to the alleged child abuse until the investigation process is resolved. The counsellors will follow up with students connected with the alleged incident of child abuse.

Staff are obligated to report any form of child abuse as per the Education Training and Reform Act.

Child abuse

- includes any act committed against a child involving—
 - a sexual offence or
 - an offence under section 49B(2) of the *Crimes Act 1958* (grooming)

- the infliction, on a child, of—
 - physical violence or
 - serious emotional or psychological harm

- serious neglect of a child.

During an investigation into a child safety concern, any information relating to the incident must be kept strictly confidentially, including information regarding the student or the suspected parent, staff, volunteer or contractor. Staff failing to adhere to this, may face disciplinary actions.

Breaches of the Policy

Reporting breaches of unacceptable behaviour

- If a staff, volunteer, contractor, parent or student identifies a breach of conduct then they need to report this to the child safety committee immediately for further investigation.
- Staff are required to fill in a ‘Staff Child Safety Incident Report’ which is to be sent to the child safety committee.
- All child safety breaches will be reported to the College Board as required.
- The Human Resources Manager is to keep records of the alleged staff member who was suspected of an incident
- Any significant allegations/serious misconduct of a worker’s behaviour or actions towards a child must be reported to the Commission for Children and Young People obligation (A full description of the CCYP is outlined in appendix 2). The allegations may be reported to other organisation such as VIT or the police if required.
- All information will be kept confidential and will only be disclosed to relevant people as required

(A full description of the Al-Taqwa’s response process is outlined in the College’s Breaches of Child Safety Policy Response Process as well as the College’s Child Safety Code of Conduct policy).

If a breach is investigated and determined to be substantiated, the child safety committee will take action to find a solution to reduce/minimize the identified risk. Furthermore, the child/ren

involved will be offered counselling by the college's counselling and welfare department. If parents/caregivers require support the colleges counselling and welfare department will offer assistance by means of referring/suggesting external support agencies.

Risk Management

We apply a safety risk management approach to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse and/or harm. This will inform our policies, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse and/or harm to our students.

Reviewing this policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if needed. We undertake to seek views, comments and suggestions from our students, parents, careers, staff and volunteers in revision of this policy.

RESOURCES

Ministerial order No.870-Child Safe Standards- Managing the risk of child abuse in schools

Mandatory Reporting Policy

Breaches of Child Safety Policy Response Process

Child Safety Code of Conduct policy

Staff Handbook

Induction Process

The Commission for Children and Young People Factsheet

* Members of the school board are briefed on this policy annually and child safety will be a standing item on the agenda of each board meeting.

APPENDIX 1

Child Safety Reporting Process

