



# SAFEGUARDING SPOTLIGHT



Dear GFS Families,

Welcome to the first edition of our monthly safeguarding newsletter. At GFS, safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do. We are committed to creating a safe, nurturing environment where all children feel protected and supported. This newsletter has been designed to keep you informed about the safeguarding practices at GFS, key updates, and useful tips for how you can contribute to the safety and well-being of your children at home and in the community. Safeguarding covers a wide range of issues—from physical safety and emotional well-being to digital security and mental health. Each month, we will focus on a specific area of safeguarding that we feel is especially important, provide practical advice for parents, and share updates about our ongoing work to keep all students safe. By working together—parents, students, and school staff—we can ensure that every child in our school feels secure and supported, both inside and outside the classroom.

**MRS AMANDA HERRON,  
VICE PRINCIPAL & DESIGNATED  
SAFEGUARDING LEAD**

## did you KNOW?

At GFS, we are fortunate to have a large Safeguarding Team available to support our school community. We encourage you to familiarise yourself with the team and their areas of expertise so that you can reach out to the most appropriate member if needed.

In addition to our core Safeguarding Team, we are proud to have 26 school leaders who have completed Level 2 safeguarding training. This more in-depth training equips them with a greater understanding of safeguarding issues and the skills to manage more complex situations.

All staff at GFS have received comprehensive safeguarding training. This includes knowledge of UAE laws, school-specific policies and procedures, recognising the signs of abuse, and following the correct protocols for reporting and addressing concerns. Moreover, every member of staff is well-versed in safer working practices, ensuring we provide a safe and supportive environment for all students in our care.

## MEET THE GFS SAFEGUARDING TEAM



**Amanda Herron**  
Safeguarding training and compliance. External cases.



**Mary Kennedy**  
Management of concerns in the Primary School.



**Patrick Tidd**  
Management of concerns in the Secondary School.



**Harshan Nalaka**  
Concerns involving students of determination.



**Caroline Fealy**  
Concerns related to online and digital safety



**Stepheni Juriansz**  
Wellbeing concerns and counselling referrals



**Stacey Heath**  
Concerns of secondary students



**Natasha Smith**  
Concerns of KS1 students



**Hanaa ElSayed**  
Whole school concerns and Arabic Speakers



**Carolyn Gorham**  
Concerns of Foundation Stage students



**Update the photography consent for your child.** It is necessary we know the students that can and cannot be photographed for use by GFS. Photography consent is available on GEMS Connect. Please note that on the app 'no' is automatically preset; to record your preference as 'no' it is necessary that you select 'yes' then 'no' again and then save your preference. We will always refer to these records when taking photographs.

**Parent IDs** - IDs will only be printed once all necessary photos are uploaded on GEMS Connect. If you do not have a parent ID yet, please ask for a visitors pass when you enter the school gate.

A graphic featuring three spotlights hanging from a metal truss. The spotlights are yellow and are shining down on the text. The text 'Spotlight on' is in a large, bold, blue font, and 'DIGITAL SAFETY' is in a smaller, bold, red font below it. There are three yellow stars of varying sizes at the bottom of the spotlight beams.

# Spotlight on

## DIGITAL SAFETY

One of the common concerns we are currently facing at GFS is the misuse of online resources at home, particularly among students engaging with social media, messaging apps, and other digital platforms. While these tools can be valuable for learning and communication, they also present risks, including cyberbullying, inappropriate content sharing, and breaches of privacy. It is important for parents and students to be aware that under UAE law, such behaviours are taken very seriously. The UAE's Cybercrime Law (Federal Law No. 5 of 2012) prohibits the misuse of the internet, including sharing harmful or defamatory content, online harassment, and the invasion of privacy through unauthorised sharing of images or personal information. The use of VPNs is also regulated, and misuse can result in legal penalties under UAE's Cybercrime Law. Parents and students are encouraged to remain mindful of the apps they download and use, ensuring they comply with UAE regulations and that content is age-appropriate. At school, we actively educate students on responsible online behaviour and the legal implications of misuse, but we encourage parents to monitor their children's online activities and have open discussions about digital safety. Working together, we can promote a safe and respectful online environment.

## TIPS

*for keeping your child safe online*

1. **Monitor Online Presence:** Regularly check the social media platforms your child is using and the content they are engaging with or posting.
2. **Discuss Appropriate Behavior:** Reinforce the importance of respectful communication, both online and offline. Remind them that the digital world has real-world consequences.
3. **Understand the Risks:** Talk to your child about the potential dangers of sharing personal information online and the impact of cyberbullying.
  4. **Set Boundaries:** Establish clear guidelines for social media use, including time limits and content restrictions using parental controls.
5. **Encourage Reporting:** Urge your child to speak up if they encounter or witness inappropriate behavior online. Reporting such incidents can help prevent further harm.

## ➤➤➤ RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Download the '[Parental Control Guidebook](#)' to help you set controls and monitor your child's social media activities.

[NSPCC](#) (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) offers extensive guidance on keeping children safe online

OCTOBER 28th marks the start of **Digital Safety Awareness Week**. Students will be engaged in a range of activities promoting Digital Safety. Look out for more information.