SCHOLA NOVA
CHILD SAFEGUARDING & PROTECTION POLICY
(Academic Year 2025–2026)

1. Policy Statement

Schola Nova is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. We recognize that every child has the right to grow and learn in a safe, secure, respectful, and nurturing environment, free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and harm.

The children of Schola Nova are a sacred trust, and it is our moral and professional obligation to protect their physical, emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing at all times.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of every adult working in or associated with the school.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:
- All students enrolled at Schola Nova
- All teaching and non-teaching staff
- Management and administrative staff
- Interns, volunteers, contractors, and visitors
- All school-related activities, on and off campus

3. Definition of Safeguarding

Safeguarding refers to:
- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring children grow up in safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to achieve positive outcomes

4. Forms of Abuse and Harm

Safeguarding concerns may involve:
a) Physical Abuse – Deliberate physical injury or harmful restraint.

b) Emotional or Psychological Abuse – Humiliation, intimidation, threats, rejection, constant criticism, or emotional neglect.
c) Sexual Abuse – Any sexual activity involving a child, including inappropriate touching, exposure, exploitation, or grooming (including online grooming).
d) Neglect – Failure to provide basic physical, emotional, educational, or medical care.
e) Bullying and Cyberbullying – Repeated harassment, intimidation, social exclusion, or online abuse.
Any suspicion, disclosure, or observation must be treated seriously.

5. Designated Safeguarding Structure

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Dr. Semra Salik
Position: Admin Team - Clinical Psychologist
Contact #: +923345510161

Responsibilities of the DSL include:

- Receiving all safeguarding concerns and disclosures
- Maintaining confidential records
- Assessing risk and taking immediate action where required
- Liaising with parents, management, and external authorities when necessary
- Ensuring safeguarding procedures are followed
- Ensuring staff are aware of safeguarding responsibilities.

6. Staff Code of Conduct and Professional Boundaries

All adults must:
- Maintain professional and appropriate relationships with students
- Avoid one-to-one situations in isolated areas
- Ensure transparency in all interactions
- Never use physical punishment or humiliating language
- Avoid private communication with students on personal devices or social media
- Respect students' dignity and privacy

Any breach of professional conduct must be reported to the DSL immediately.

7. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

Safeguarding concerns may arise through a child's disclosure, observed physical or behavioral changes, or reports from peers, parents, or staff.

Step 1: Immediate Reporting – All concerns must be reported without delay to the DSL.

Step 2: Documentation – A written safeguarding record will include date, time, nature of concern, observations, and actions taken.

Step 3: Assessment and Action – The DSL will determine immediate safety needs, parental involvement, and referrals to authorities.

The best interest and safety of the child always takes priority over confidentiality.

8. Handling Disclosures from Children

If a child discloses harm, staff must:

- Listen calmly and attentively
- Reassure the child they have done the right thing
- Not promise confidentiality
- Not investigate or ask leading questions
- Report to the DSL

9. Allegations Against Staff or Adults

If a safeguarding concern involves a teacher, support staff, volunteer, or visitor, the matter will be immediately escalated to school leadership, handled confidentially, and referred to appropriate authorities when required.

The accused person may be temporarily removed from direct contact with students during investigation.

10. Child-Friendly Reporting Options

Students may report concerns through any trusted teacher, school counselor, coordinator, principal, or through formal or informal written complaints as outlined in the student handbook.

Students will never be penalized for raising concerns in good faith.

11. Safer Recruitment and Staff Training

Schola Nova ensures that background checks and references are obtained where possible, safeguarding expectations are shared at hiring, staff sign acceptance of safeguarding responsibilities, and awareness sessions are conducted periodically.

12. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

All safeguarding records are stored securely, access is restricted to authorized personnel, information is shared strictly on a need-to-know basis, and records may be retained after student withdrawal if concerns exist.

13. Monitoring and Review

This policy shall be reviewed annually, updated when regulations or school practices change, and communicated to staff, parents, and students.

14. Policy Acceptance

All staff, interns, and volunteers must read this policy, sign acknowledgment of understanding and compliance, and follow safeguarding procedures at all times.

Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.