

Health and Safety Policy

Middle East

Kuwait

Oman

Qatar

Saudi Arabia

United Arab Emirates

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1. Purpose

This policy demonstrates Cognita Middle East's commitment to ensuring a safe environment for students, staff, contractors and visitors across our schools, nurseries, Enrich ME programmes and business units. The health and safety policy, document number **CME|HS|POL|V1.1|OCT25**, will be communicated to all Cognita staff and made available for all other relevant stakeholders as required.

This policy defines Cognita Middle East's commitment to achieving health and safety excellence. It establishes the overarching framework for managing health and safety across the region and will be implemented within each operating country in alignment with local regulatory requirements, reporting obligations, and the ISO 45001 Standard.

Whilst overarching responsibility for policy setting rests with Cognita Middle East, the daily operational implementation of this policy remains with the School Principal/Superintendent. The school shall ensure this policy is visibly communicated through induction training and that a letter of undertaking has been signed to acknowledge the policy by all staff.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Cognita Middle East Schools, Nurseries, regional Hubb and Enrich ME, covering all staff, students, contractors, third party providers and visitors.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with all applicable health, safety and fire safety regulations in each operating country, including, but not limited to those referenced within this document.

3. Statement of Intent

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for Cognita Middle East acknowledges the responsibility for shaping the values of future generations and providing proactive leadership, whilst actively promoting health and safety in all aspects of operations.

We are committed towards:

- Promoting a culture of responsibility and accountability toward the protection of human health and safety.
- Ensuring Cognita Middle East's commitment to health and safety.
- Minimising health and safety hazards and risks arising from equipment, activities and facilities.
- Promoting awareness and encouraging participation through effective communication and consultation with staff, students, contractors and concerned stakeholders.
- Providing ongoing training in relevant health and safety issues.
- Reducing the total number of accidents and using our best endeavours to ensure the prevention of injury and ill health to all staff, students, contractors, third party providers and visitors on our premises.
- Enhancing the health and well-being of our staff and students.
- Complying with all applicable local laws, relevant legislation and industry best practice.
- Providing adequate resources to maintain a healthy and safe environment.
- Achieving continual improvement of our Health & Safety performance.

4. Meeting Objectives

To meet such objectives, management commits to:

- Establish a robust health and safety culture that is prominent throughout Cognita Middle East schools, nurseries, offices and Enrich ME.
- Ensure that this commitment is driven by top level management.
- Support and actively pursue continual improvement of health and safety and ensure health and safety performance is continually monitored.
- Empower staff by providing information, instruction and training to allow them to safely perform their roles.
- Ensure the health and safety framework is developed, implemented, regularly reviewed and improved upon.
- Implement a sustainable procedure for identifying and controlling hazards.
- Ensure compliance with applicable legislation and regulation whilst striving towards industry best practice.
- Communicate and consult with employees on health and safety matters, policies and procedures.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Health and safety roles, responsibilities and accountabilities should be defined by senior management and added to position job descriptions where required by local regulation, otherwise, responsibilities may be found within this policy.

Cognita Middle East CEO

The CEO has responsibility for allocating operational resources and finances to support the company's commitment to continuous safety improvement.

School Principals / Superintendents

The School Principal / Superintendent has ultimate accountability for health and safety within their school setting and operates on behalf of Cognita Middle East.

The Principal/Superintendent is responsible and accountable for ensuring the implementation of the health and safety policy and the health and safety framework within their respective schools. The Principal/Superintendent must ensure emergency exercises are carried out at regular intervals as defined within Cognita Middle East policy and local regulations. The Principal/Superintendent are also responsible for ensuring health and safety training is complete, communication is frequent and all school staff are empowered to report incidents without fear of retribution.

The Principal/Superintendent is responsible and accountable for endorsing the Health & Safety Policy, ensuring the school complies with all applicable health and safety laws and regulations, allocating adequate resources for health and safety (e.g. budget, human resources, equipment, space, etc). Allocating responsibility for health and safety and delegation of authority by appointment of a suitable person to the role of Health & Safety Coordinator/Lead. They must ensure the appointed Health & Safety Coordinator/Lead attends mandatory Health & Safety training.

Executive Team

The Executive Team are responsible for ensuring health and safety remains at the forefront of everything they do and having it included within key meetings, supporting their respective teams in achieving health and safety excellence.

Regional Head of Health and Safety

The Regional Head of Health and Safety is responsible for the development and monitoring of the health and safety strategic plan for Cognita Middle East. Additional responsibilities include the development and implementation of the health and safety framework as well as providing support and guidance to all relevant persons within a reasonable timeframe.

Health & Safety Coordinator/Lead

Responsibilities include ensuring fire and life safety inspections are conducted at a regular frequency, recorded and issues identified are addressed within a reasonable timeframe, attending mandatory health and safety training, providing advice on the implementation of health and safety policies and procedures.

The Health and Safety Coordinator is also responsible for health and safety training is attended by all required members and records are retained. They implement and monitor the risk assessment management process for school activities and trips. They raise rising health and safety matters and concerns to the school Principal on behalf of school staff and collaborate on solutions. Communication, collaboration and raising awareness is a key responsibility. Supporting the investigation of incidents and reporting in a timely manner. They support the investigation of health and safety related issues or incidents and involving external agencies and as dictated by local legislation. The Health and Safety Coordinator steers the school Health and Safety Committee and attends the Cognita Middle East Health & Safety Network Forum.

Facilities and Operations Management

The Facilities and Operations Management Team manage the overall maintenance and safety of the school's infrastructure. They are responsible for ensuring traffic management provisions are in place, overseeing contractor management, ensuring contractors adhere to safe working practices on site. They also ensure emergency fire and lifesaving equipment is frequently tested.

The Facilities and Operations Management team collaborate with the Health and Safety Coordinator to ensure safety inspections are carried out, evidence of health and safety practices have been retained for audits and inspections and issues raised through the Health and Safety Committees are addressed in a timely manner. They collaborate to implement improvements based on inspection findings and ensure corrective actions are taken. They oversee the risk assessment process for school facilities, ensuring the residual risk remains as low as reasonably practicable.

Department Heads and Supervisors

School Department Heads and Supervisors are responsible for promoting and discussing health and safety issues through departmental meetings, supporting the active implementation of health and safety policies, supporting the implementation and monitoring the risk management process, reporting health and safety hazards and incidents, participating in accident, incident, and near miss investigations as well as ensuring duty schedules are in place for effective active supervision of students.

Enrich ME

Enrich ME, whilst operating under its own license, is an integral part of Cognita Middle East and must adhere to all Cognita ME health and safety policies and procedures.

The General Manager of Enrich ME holds ultimate responsibility for health and safety within their operations and activities, operating on behalf of Cognita Middle East.

Key responsibilities include adhering to all Cognita Middle East health and safety policies as well as local regulation relevant to their activity. Enrich ME staff must attend mandatory training, complete risk assessments for activities they are conducting and ensure they are actively reporting health and safety related incidents and concerns.

The Enrich ME team must collaborate with school-based health and safety leads and the relevant school teams to ensure that health and safety standards are upheld during joint activities and events. They are also expected to offer guidance and assistance during school led initiatives when applicable.

All Staff

All staff have the responsibility to protect their own health, safety and wellbeing and that of those who may be affected by their acts. All staff have a responsibility to ensure they familiarise themselves with the emergency and evacuation procedures, participate in emergency drills and actively report health and safety concerns or incidents. All staff must also ensure they familiarise themselves with relevant policies, procedures and risk management processes. All staff are required to attend mandatory health and safety training sessions.

All staff must act as a role model for health and safety practices, promoting a positive safe culture within the organisation.

Contractors and Third-Party Service Providers

Contractors and Third-Party Service Providers are responsible for ensuring they comply with Cognita Middle East health and safety policies and procedures. They must ensure requested documentation is provided ahead of starting work on a Cognita site, they are responsible for monitoring their own health and safety performance as well as adhering to local regulations. Contractors and Third-Party Service Providers are responsible for reporting health and safety incidents that occur on a Cognita site and supporting with corrective action if within their remit.

6. References

- Occupational Safety and Health System Framework (OSHAD SF)
- ISO 45001
- Federal Law No. 8 of 1980 – UAE Labour Law amended
- Ministerial Decision No. 32 of 1982 – Regulations for Protection, Health and Safety of Workers
- KHDA Guidelines for Schools and Nurseries
- ADEK Private Schools Policy and Guidance Manual
- MOE Guidelines for School on Health and Safety Standards
- Dubai Health Authority Health and Safety Guidelines for Schools
- UAE National Fire and Life Safety Code of Practice
- Dubai Municipality and ADEK Public Health Regulations
- Kuwait Labour Law No. 6 of 2010
- Kuwait Municipality Health Regulations
- Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) Kuwait
- KFSD Fire Safety Regulations
- General Authority of Sports
- Health and Safety Executive
- Labour Law No. 14 of 2004 – Health and Safety provisions
- Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE) School Safety Guidelines
- General Directorate of Civil Defense Fire Safety Regulations
- Oman Labour Law – Royal Decree 35/2003 (as amended), occupational safety provisions
- Ministry of Education Health and Safety Standards

- Public Authority for Civil Defense and Ambulance (PACDA) Fire & Life Safety Code
- Labour Law – Royal Decree No. M/51 of 2005 (as amended)
- Ministry of Education School Safety Regulations
- Civil Defense Fire Protection & Safety Regulations
- National Council for Occupational Safety & Health (as applicable)

Signature: 

Name: **Deborah Sharifi**

Position: Principal

Signature: 

Name: David Baldwin

Position: Chief Executive Officer

7. Document Control

Ownership and Consultation	
Document sponsor (role)	Regional Chief Executive Officer
Document author (role)	Regional Head of Health and Safety
Legal advice	Regional Head of Legal
Consultation	Director of Education General Manager – Cognita Enrich ME Principals
Document review and maintenance	Regional Head of Health and Safety

Compliance	
Compliant with	Local legislation ISO 45001

Audience	
Internal	All staff – Middle East
External	School websites

Document Application	
Regional	Middle East

Version Control	
Implementation date	01/11/2024
1 st review date	21/10/2025 (annually thereafter)
V1.1	Minor revision to include GCC country references, clarify scope wording and add dual signatory requirement. No material change to policy framework.

Related Documentation	
Related documentation	Health and Safety policies, forms and SOPs, recorded within the Document Control Register.