



Child Safety Policy

Child Protection Policy

Every Organization dealing with children needs a child protection policy to build systems & process in an organization that prevent child abuse of any kind.

- A Policy not only looks at response and redressal mechanism. It looks at building a safe culture for children in an institution.
- When a educational institution does not have a child protection policy, it makes itself vulnerable to shocks.
- A policy creates safeguards in recruitment & deters any violation through a positive environment building.
- A useful document when it is operationally clear and has Standard Operating Procedures.

What constitutes child abuse?

- Child abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical or emotional ill treatment, sexual abuse, and negligent treatment resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity.

Types of abuse every child must be protected from

- ☐ Physical abuse.
- ☐ Emotional/ psychological abuse.
- ☐ Neglect or Negligent treatment.
- ☐ Exploitation
- ☐ Sexual abuse
- ☐ Abuse in virtual space.

Role of the School

- The School promotes holistic school safety, where every student has a right to a protective environment, free of violence, harassment, abuse & neglect.
- Welfare of children in the highest priority & that it is the responsibility of everyone to ensure that they are protected.
- The school follows a zero-tolerance approach to any act of violence, bullying, sexual abuse etc. in the school premises.
- To create awareness among the parents, students, teaching, non-teaching and the ancillary staff about the Child Protection Policy followed by the school.
- To inform stakeholders about the nature of abuse, consequences of such abuse and the ways to report any suspected/ confirmed abuse with evidence.
- Staff members are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with students.

- The complaint of child abuse is addressed directly to the Head of School. If the complaint is against the Head of School it should be addressed to the Chairperson of the Management. All complaints should be documented by the committee.
- If a complaint includes an accusation against another child, for incidents that occurred within the school premises, the accused child's parents are informed by the school. Discipline will remain solely ensured by the CPC.
- The school aims at taking prompt action against any incidence of abuse.
- No members of the school staff are allowed to investigate the matter without consulting the CPC.
- With concerns about possible abuse, the CPC member and Head of School will inform the POCSO wing of the Police department. No other person is entitled to inform the matter to any third party or Media without permission of the CPC.
- To inform the POCSO wing of the police department about the abuse. To review the Child Protection Policy every two years.
- To train the staff with POCSO training.
- To inform the stakeholders that any person who might be aware of the fact of physical abuse of a child and fails to report such a fact to the CPC is punishable with imprisonment of 6 months or fine under Law.
- Teachers/staff should not be allowed to email/WhatsApp or call children except and unless it is related to school work.
- No child or parent should be contacted on social media by the school staff.
- To install CCTVs in classrooms and in school premises and ensure that their feed is monitored.
- To have safe boundaries around photographing children, using photographs of children, Internet and technology usage within the school premises. Arrange for regular sessions on personal safety with all children.
- To create a committee consisting of the Principal, one male teacher, one female teacher, one female student, one male student and one non-teaching staff member must be set up to serve as complaints and redressal body.
- The coordinators should have access to the virtual classrooms to monitor lessons.
- The participant who behaves inappropriately in the virtual classrooms should be given enough reminders and then put in the waiting room. In case of usage of abusive language or sharing of inappropriate content done by the participant/s, the facilitators should remove the student/s immediately and inform their respective co-ordinators.
- The staff must adhere to norms set by school in terms of the attire allowed at the workplace in a physical classroom as well as a virtual classroom.
- The staff should be mindful of the language used to interact with the students. Derogatory and demeaning language should be strictly avoided.

Role of the Parents

- To inform the school with the names of all people who have permission to collect their child from school (or to confirm that their child may leave the grounds unaccompanied). They will also be asked to inform the school of any change in this routine.
- To brief school about arrangements following any separation or divorce.
- To brief the school about any major life changing event that might affect the student emotionally or psychologically.
- To inform the school of any possible or confirmed incidents of child abuse taken place within the premises of the school and not to deal with the issue on their own.
- To make their child aware that they can access the Child Helpline 1098 in case they wish to report any abuse.
- To be informed that any person who might be aware of the fact of physical abuse of a child and fails to report such a fact to the CPC is punishable with imprisonment of 6 months or a fine under Law.
- To be informed that anybody giving false complaints to CPC shall be also punishable under law.
- To monitor the student's virtual behaviour to safeguard them from potential abuse virtually.

Role of the Students

- To inform the teachers/counsellor about any incident of abuse that they have undergone or witnessed physically or virtually so that the teachers can report the incident to the CPC.
- To be aware that they or their parents can access the Child Helpline 1098 in case they wish to report any abuse.
- To be informed that withholding of any information related to the abuse is a punishable offence.
- To be informed that any person who might be aware of the fact of physical abuse of a Child and fails to report such a fact to the CPC is punishable with imprisonment of 6 months or a fine under Law.
- To be informed that anybody giving false complaints to CPC shall be also punishable under Law.
- To adhere to the school norms, be mindful of their own actions and safeguard themselves by indulging in appropriate behaviour at all times.

Procedure to report an abuse

- Incidents of possible abuse
- Inform Class teacher/Associate Teacher
- Inform Child Protection Committee Member
- The case will be examined by the CPC team
- Sexual abuse confirmed

The concerned student will be referred to the POCSO wing of the Police Department

- Non Sexual abuse

Appropriate action will be taken upon the nature & intensity of the act. The accused will be informed of the consequences.

Expected Behaviour and Actions

- Treat every child with empathy and respect, regardless of their race, colour, gender, sexuality, language, religion, religious belief, heritage, political/ other opinion, national/ethnic/ social origin or property/ disability/birth/ other status.
- Listen to children and respect their views.
- Ensure that physical contact with a child is respectful, culturally appropriate and essential to the purpose of your interaction with the child.
- Establish an atmosphere that fosters the development of children through your actions and words.
- Always take permission from children before taking their photos or videos.
- Keep all personal information about children or their parents/guardians confidential and secure and ensure that such information is dispensed to only those individuals who are legitimately entitled to it.
- Attend all the applicable training sessions and workshops on the CPP and child-related laws conducted by the organization. Ensure you implement the lessons learned from such sessions and workshops.

Prohibited Behaviour and Actions

- Do not use language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, intimidating, offensive, discriminatory or culturally insensitive.
- Do not use any form of corporal punishment on children.
- Do not place a child in an environment where there is the risk of harm or abuse and do not harm or abuse any child physically, emotionally or sexually.
- Do not share with or show children (electronically or in any other form) inappropriate content including pornographic material or material encouraging crime, violence, terrorism, racism, sexism, self-harm, suicide, cruelty and gambling.
- Do not develop, induce or support physical or sexual relationships with children, in any way.
- Do not use or encourage the use of alcohol, drugs, cigarettes or other intoxicating substances while interacting with children or provide such intoxicating substances to children.
- Do not develop any form of relationship or arrangement (financial or otherwise) with children which could in any way be deemed to be exploitative or abusive. Do not use child labour in any form.

Early warning signs to look out for, in sexual abuse offenders

Signs of offenders (students)

- Uses force and coercion in social situations
- Unusual intensity when discussing sex and sexuality
- Socializes inappropriately with children much younger
- Gives gifts, requires secrecy in relationships
- Unusual interest in sex, sexualizing inanimate objects and activities
- Does not stop sexual misbehaviour when told to stop

Signs of offenders (adults)

- Has "favourite" student or child
- Attempts to find ways to be alone with children
- Inappropriate language, jokes and discussions about students/children
- Sexualized talk in the presence of students/children
- Gives private gifts or has private chats on Facebook/internet.

Consequences faced by offenders for abusing any child

- In incidents involving abuse with evidence, the CPC member and Head of School will take a decision based on the evidence and then might inform the POSCO wing of the Police department. No other person is entitled to inform the matter to any third party or Media without permission of the CPC.
- If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, that staff may be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils, and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigations.
- Confidentiality will be breached in cases of intentions of self-harm or intentions of harming any other person. Confidentiality about cases of abuse will be entirely a call taken by the CPC. A formal announcement will be made to staff about the outcome. Either the member of staff will be fully reinstated or the member of staff will be terminated from work.
- In all cases the child, about whom a concern is raised will be explained about the necessity to pass information on to the CPC and perhaps other agencies if required.
- Consequences for an abuse will be decided entirely by the CPC examining the nature and intensity of the abuse.
- Any person who is aware of the fact of physical abuse of a Child and fails to report such a fact to the CPC is punishable with imprisonment of 6 months or fine under Law.
- Anybody giving false complaints to CPC shall be also punishable under Law.

Long-term impact of unmitigated abuse

The impact of child abuse can persist for a lifetime after the abuse has been committed. Some victims of abuse are resilient and thus manage to function and survive.

Much research has established the relationship between long-term child abuse and life-time health and well-being, especially if the children do not get appropriate support to help them cope with the trauma. The most important point to consider is that children often are exposed to multiple forms of abuse and suffer a myriad of symptoms.

Furthermore, all forms of abuse have the potential for long-term impact on the victims, and can affect the victim's ability to function as a human being. Abuse challenges the self-value, self-esteem, and sense of worth of its victims, rendering them hopeless, helpless and unable to live a complete life.

Long-term impact of child abuse

- Poor educational achievement
- Inability to complete responsibilities
- Inability to live according to a plan/ability
- Inability to care for self
- Inability to co-exist, cooperate or work with others
- Lack of self-confidence, prone to addiction
- Inability to express love / or accept love
- Inability to lead family, constant health problem
- Prone to mental health related issues.
- Low self-esteem, depression and anxiety
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Attachment difficulties
- Eating disorders
- Poor peer relations
- Self-injurious behaviour (e.g., suicide attempts)