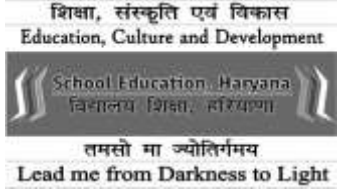




GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA / हरियाणा सरकार

Directorate School Education

विद्यालय शिक्षा निदेशालय



Off.: Shiksha Sadan, Sector 5, Panchkula, Haryana 134109 (India) - Tel: 91(0172)-2560246 Fax: 91(0172)-2560253

कार्यालय: शिक्षा सदन, सैक्टर 5 पंचकुला-134109 (भारत) दूरभाष : 91 (0172) 2560246 फैक्स: 91 (0172) 2560253

e-mail: edusecondaryhry@gmail.com - site: www.schooleducationharyana.gov.in

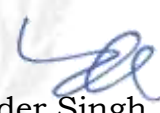
From

Director Secondary Education
Haryana, Panchkula

To


Director SCERT Haryana, Gurugram
All District Education Officers
All District Elementary Education OfficersMemo No: 8/193-2017-PS(4)
Dated: 15.09.2017**Subject: Regulations on School Safety**

The school education department, government of Haryana has approved the Safety Regulations for all schools operating in the state. These Regulations as enclosed herewith are to be followed by all concerned in letter and spirit.


Virender Singh, HCS
Joint Secretary to Govt. Haryana
School Education Department

A copy is forwarded to following for information and necessary action.

1. All Deputy Commissioners in the state of Haryana
2. All DEO and DEEOs are directed to circulate the copy in all schools operating in the state.
3. Secretary BOSE Haryana, Bhiwani
4. Secretary CBSE / Secretary ICSE, New Delhi
5. PS/CM, PS/EM, PS/ACSSE, PS/DSE, PA/DEE


Virender Singh, HCS
Joint Secretary to Govt. Haryana
School Education Department


HARYANA GOVERNMENT
SCHOOL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

REGULATIONS ON SCHOOL SAFETY

Whereas a safe environment to work and study in schools is the utmost need for a successful academic functioning of the schools to meet the objectives of schooling in the State of Haryana.

Whereas in furtherance of Article 21 & 21-A of the Constitution of India whereby the rights of life and liberty and education have been guaranteed to all school going children, the State Government is committed to ensure safe conditions within the premises of all the Government and Private schools in Haryana.

Since, children spend a large part of their day in schools and while travelling to and from their schools hence, their safety during this time is exceedingly important. Cases of abuse of children on the school premises, or even accidents, come up from time to time that can be reasonably prevented if some standard operating procedure is followed.

Whereas the safety issues are multi-faceted and multidimensional, so, while the physical infrastructure needs to be robust and safe, the human interventions and interactions are also required to be of qualitatively good standard. Timely supervision, re-orientation, publicity on safety issues are also very relevant in this regard.

Whereas, the State Government is empowered to regulate the affairs of all kinds of schools operating in the state, and whereas the powers have been conferred upon the Director, School Education Department under Section 21 of the Haryana School Education Act, 1995 to give directions to the managing committee requiring it to rectify the defects or deficiencies found at the time of inspection or otherwise in the working of the school and under Rule-187 of Haryana School Education Rules, 2003 to authorize any officer(s) for inspection of all or any of the functions and activities of the recognized schools, and whereas under Section 35 of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009, the appropriate Govt. has been authorized to issue guidelines and give such directions, as it deems fit, to the local authority and to the School Management Committee regarding implementation of the provisions of the Act.

Therefore, invoking the provisions of Haryana School Education Act and the Rules framed thereunder and RTE Act 2009, the Director, School Education Department /appropriate Govt., being lawfully empowered, hereby, provides for

a mechanism to ensure safety of academic environment to all stakeholders of all schools across the State.

1. Safety Committees

To ensure implementation of the regulations on safety norms and to provide for a standing mechanism to have supportive supervision of the schooling system, safety committees at three levels are constituted hereby. One, at the district level, other at Sub division Level & third, at the school level. The District Level Committee shall have a general superintendence and control over the safety issues of the schools in their respective areas, the sub division level committee shall keep a close eye to ensure that the compliances are being made as per directions, whereas the school level committees shall attend to the specific day to day problems with regard to the safety concerns of the schools. The jurisdiction of these committees shall be preventive as well as curative.

1.1. District School Safety Committee (DSSC)

Every district in the State shall have a district school safety committee under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner of the district. The other members of this committee shall be as under:

- i) Superintendent of Police/representatives of CP, not below the rank of DCP.
- ii) Civil Surgeon
- iii) Executive Officer/Joint Commissioner Municipality
- iv) Executive Engineer (B&R)
- v) Secretary RTA
- vi) District Town Planner.
- vii) Representative of private schools as nominated by the Deputy Commissioner.
- viii) Any other person the Deputy Commissioner may deem fit. (Like Child psychologist, Member of CWC etc.)
- ix) District Education Officer as member secretary.
- x) District Elementary Education Officer as additional member secretary.

This committee shall take steps to get the schools inspected at regular intervals, through Sub division level committees or may inspect itself taking suo moto cognizance of any incident, for ensuring adherence to the regulations on safety norms. Further, this committee will act as an

appellate authority against the decision of any lower level committees. The committee shall periodically carry out awareness campaign amongst the students, teachers and prepare publicity material, if need be, for maintaining safe standards in the schools and prevention of any untoward incident relating to schools. All actions, directions, orders of this committee shall be counted as lawful for enforcement by one and all concerned.

1.2. Committee at Sub-Divisional Level

There shall be a School safety committee at sub-Divisional level under the Chairmanship of Sub-Divisional Magistrate having following members:

- i) Deputy Superintendent of Police/ACP.
- ii) Block Development & Panchayat Officer.
- iii) Block Education Officer.
- iv) Representative of RTA
- v) Representative of Private Schools Association to be nominated by SDM.
- vi) Representative of Parents Association.
- vii) Any other person the SDM may deem fit.

This committee shall ensure timely inspections and monitoring of the safety apparatus concerning schools. It can give directions to the schools/school level committee for implementation of all steps needed to secure the smooth functioning of educational institutions. Any public person, noticing any lapse in the security system of any school, shall be authorized to bring it to the notice of the school as well as the SDM concerned. The SDM shall immediately get the complaint examined and issue necessary directions for rectification of the lapse, if any, found in the security of the school. Every school shall be bound to display the names and telephone, including mobile numbers of the SDM, DEO, BEO and SHO on a place prominently accessible and visible to the general public. All actions, directions, orders of this committee shall be counted as lawful for enforcement by one and all concerned.



1.3. School safety committee

Every school shall constitute a school safety committee under the chairmanship of the principal having other members as under:

- i) Teacher of physical education
- ii) Coordinator of the school
- iii) Security In-charge of the school (nodal officer to have liaison with different offices of the district administration)

This will be mainly responsible for execution and obedience of the safety regulations and directions contained herein as well as those received from higher level authorities.

Functions

- a. To prepare Child Protection Document specific to school environment and circumstances
- b. To prepare a Movement Plan – As to which areas will be sanitized for children only movement.
- c. To prepare a Communication Plan.
- d. To prepare Crisis Management Plan complete with evacuation plan, capability mapping etc.
- e. To appoint Safety/Vigilance Officer, Health officer etc.
- f. Training calendar – for various type of capacity building of staff in students and counselling sessions.

2. Safety Issues

A threat to safety can originate from any quarter. Therefore, we have to be vigilant on all these. There are many well-known risk patterns, yet, at the same time, many modern and complex situations have also started coming up which cast a shadow on the safe development of the academic environment of the educational institutions. To have a healthy atmosphere in the schools, we have to attend to all of these aspects of safety.

2.1. Journey to and from Schools (Transportation)

For this purpose, the role of the staff manning the transport facilities, the vehicles etc. assumes pointed importance as listed below:



2.1.1. School Bus

- i) Buses should be painted yellow and have the words 'School Bus', name of school and route number displayed prominently.
- ii) Buses should not have curtains or dark films. They should have internal white lighting and activities in the bus should be visible from the outside.
- iii) Buses should have a valid certificate of fitness, pollution and insurance certificate.
- iv) Buses should have horizontal grills on the windows.
- v) Buses should have a first-aid box.
- vi) Buses should have a fire extinguisher.
- vii) Buses should have working speed-governors and should not be driven at a speed of over 30 kmph.
- viii) Buses should not carry more than the specified number of children permissible as per capacity and permit.
- ix) Buses should have a qualified driver and conductor.
- x) Bus drivers should possess a valid driving license with minimum 5 years' experience of driving a heavy vehicle.
- xi) The driver should have no previous record of any traffic offences or challans.
- xii) The driver must be reminded to strictly follow all traffic rules and use safe driving habits; specifically he must never use mobiles while driving.
- xiii) The school bus shall have painted on it valid telephone numbers and e-mail ids of the bus-in-charge as well as the school principal/Admin head for feedback in case of improper driving; it should be updated in case of change of number. This information must be displayed even if the bus is a contract bus and it is the responsibility of the Bus-in-charge to ensure this is complied with.
- xiv) The School Bus-in-charge must ensure that the bus is being driven only by the authorized driver at all times on the route viewing of bus CCTV footage.

- xv) The School Bus-in-charge should ensure that all drivers attend a refresher training session every 6 months.
- xvi) Due action must be taken against any driver/conductor where warranted, which may include removal of the driver from services if it is a case of dangerous driving.
- xvii) The person who made the complaint must be informed of the action taken based on the complaint within 3 days.
- xviii) These complaints must be reviewed by the Administrator of the school as soon as possible.
- xix) In case there is a request during school hours to pick up a child (who normally uses the bus) due to an emergency, such exit should not be permitted if the person is not the parent/guardian him/herself, even if they are carrying the identity card, until and unless this has been specifically verified with the parent. Especially if the person is a driver/maid or any other relative, such pick-up may be permitted only once the school has verified this with the parent.
- xx) Children reaching school by bus should have a safe passage from the bus to the school premises. Ideally, the bus should stop within the boundary wall of the premises. If access makes this impossible, then there must be school guards present to ensure safe passage of children from bus drop point to school gate and every single bus has been emptied and no child has remained in a bus, before the buses move to park or leave the premises as may be the case.
- xxi) At dispersal time, children of classes KG to 2 must be accompanied to the school bus in a group by a designated representative.
- xxii) Every bus should have one female teacher and one female helper/didi present on the route. Therefore presence of an adult female is essential before the first student boards the bus at the start of the journey and also till the last student gets off at the end of the journey.

- xxiii) Attendance of all children on that route must be taken by the teacher in charge of the bus at the start of the journey and at departure time.
- xxiv) In case a child who usually travels by bus is being picked up by the parent for some reason, this should be done only after due procedure of request for special departure from parent to the Class teacher, and a specific gate pass signed by the Bus-in-charge. This gate pass is required to be given at the gate when the parent leaves with the child (if in Class 5 or below) or by the child him/herself (if in Class 6 and above).
- xxv) Routing should be accordingly planned so that the first and last child is not a female.
- xxvi) Routing of the bus should be planned so that children are dropped as close as possible to their residence.
- xxvii) The bus driver should ensure that the doors of the bus are closed before he begins moving, children are seated and that no child is directly in front of the doors even when closed. Conductor/helper should also ensure that there is no hindrance in passageways and all emergency exits are clear.
- xxviii) When children, especially those in Class 5 and below, get off at their bus-stop at/near their homes, it is imperative that they are not left alone on the road but must be handed over only to the parent/maid or authorized representative upon showing the identify card in their custody.
- xxix) Once all children are dropped at their stoppage, the female teacher or female attendant, who is the last to get off, must report to the Bus-in-charge confirming that the route is completed and all children safely dropped off.
- xxx) The Bus-in-charge will routinely monitor that all routes are being adhered to or by frequent monitoring of GPS tracking, as the case may be.
- xxxi) The location of the stop should also be such that inconvenience to smooth flow of other traffic is minimized – i.e. it should not stop in front of a gate or bus-stop or block a turning, as more cars/buses crowd also increases safety risk for children besides creating inconvenience to others.

xxxii) If however the location is such that it is not possible to stop without blocking other vehicles, then under such circumstances, a clear priority shall be given to the bus/vehicle that is loading/unloading school children, while other vehicles may wait their turn to enter/exit/cross the access point till the children are safely out of the way. The conductor with his whistle will play the manual role of ensuring other vehicles wait (which could also be performed by flashing lights or movable yellow arrows fitted on the bus if this more advanced signaling is feasible).

xxxiii) Whenever any vehicle is reversed then another staff/helper should ensure that no child is in the vicinity of such activity.

2.1.2. Journey not by School Bus

- i) Children from Class 5 or below should not be allowed to leave the school premises on their own but must be picked up from the designated spot within the premises by the parent/authorized representative after showing the parent's identity card.
- ii) In case the parent who usually picks up the child cannot come to pick up their wards at the last minute for some reason, they must compulsorily inform the school teacher concerned (or the Admin in charge) through SMS or phone, if not informed already in writing through the child by a note or diary where this was known in advance. They may then authorize someone else to pick up their child who must carry the identity card.
- iii) In case there is a request during school hours to pick up a child due to an emergency, such exit should not be permitted if the person is not the parent/guardian him/herself, even if they are carrying the identity card, until and unless this has been specifically verified with the parent. Especially if the person is a driver/maid or any other relative, such pick-up may be permitted only once the school has verified this with the parent.
- iv) School guards at dispersal area should not leave till pick-up of the last student to prevent any single case of a child waiting alone on a public road.

- v) School guards should be trained at alertness to watch for any undesirable characters who may be loitering in the area, particularly faces seen frequently even if they have no reason to be present. It is the school's responsibility to bring this to the attention of local police station, who will liaise with the concerned authorities to rectify this.
- vi) In case of students travelling by private vans hired directly by parents, the concerned parents may contact Traffic Police directly in case they are concerned about any violation by these private vehicles which may risk safety of the children.

3. Safe School Campus

A student spends a large part of his day in the schools. Various kinds of activities like academics, sports, extra-curricular activities, functions etc. are participated in by him. The atmosphere in and around all these activities is required to be conducive and safe.

3.1. General Discipline

- i) Entry/exit of all persons in the school should be logged clearly with their in and out times specified, so that at any point, there is a clear record of both insiders and outsiders present on the premises. There should be only one entry/exit point to the premises.
- ii) Daily attendance of students will be recorded through the class teachers at the beginning of each day and after lunch break must be ensured.
- iii) A separate register should be maintained for visitors or parents, including the name of the visitor, address, telephone no., purpose and person being met, in and out time, signature.
- iv) The identity cards should have a photograph of the child with name, class & section, blood group, names and mobile numbers of parents. If the child uses a bus, bus route number should also be indicated.
- v) Identity cards must be worn by all children, irrespective of whether they travel by school bus or some other shared transport or cycle or walk to school, or whether they are being dropped and picked up by the parents/other arrangement.

- vi) The identity cards must be issued to all the staff members (Teaching & Non-teaching) and to be worn mandatorily during their duty hours.
- vii) Walls around the school must be high enough to prevent any scaling; schools with lower walls must raise height of wall. Access to areas like bus area, gym, swimming pools, sports rooms/fields, canteen, toilets, parking lots, terrace etc. should be confined to persons whose presence in the area is required, and are therefore specifically authorized to have access to these areas.
- viii) Parents or other visitors may not have free access across premises during school hours, and if their entry is necessitated (for children with special needs), they must be accompanied so that their access is limited and monitored.
- ix) Likewise, students too should not have free access to wander around premises during school timings, and should be made to understand which areas are out of bounds and at what times it is permitted for them to be in specific areas.
- x) Every classroom must have open windows that permit viewing into the classroom.
- xi) There should be separate toilets for girls and boys, for teachers, and for support staff. The Support staff in particular should not be allowed to use toilets meant for children, even if they are assisting in this section.
- xii) Staff managing toilets should only be female. No male staff should be present on school premises in support roles like toilet cleaners/ attendants.
- xiii) Special care and extreme caution are required in swimming pool areas; strict supervision at all times is a must to prevent any case of drowning; at no time must any child be left unattended in or in the vicinity of the swimming pool.
- xiv) In case children have to stay back for after school activities, there should be a reliable authorized adult in charge, preferably a permanent teacher who takes responsibility to ensure safety of children till the final dispersal.

- xv) Absence of students: It is recommended that the school puts in place a system to ensure absence of a child from school is noted early in the day which makes it easier in case of accident/kidnapping. If a child is not attending school, the parents must inform the teacher by email or sms not later than 10 minutes after the official start of school.
- xvi) No entry of plumbers, electricians, carpenters, labourers, etc. is to be permitted on premises during school hours even if a new wing is being constructed, unless it is to attend to an emergency, in which case the person must be accompanied by a school admin. All children must be taught in open classrooms, the doors of which should not be locked under any circumstances.

3.2.CCTV Cameras

The school must have adequate CCTV coverage. Cameras must cover all critical areas of the premises. Areas for specific attention are as indicated:

- i) entry and exit points of the school (in case there is a side entrance, this too must have a CCTV camera)
- ii) all corridors and staircases
- iii) library, infirmary, auditorium
- iv) inside elevators
- v) dining halls, sports rooms, computer labs
- vi) entrance to classrooms
- vii) entrance to toilets
- viii) sports fields, swimming pools
- ix) areas where buses assemble
- x) entry and exit point of premises
- xi) any point on the outer perimeter/wall which is vulnerable, and which could show footage of persons attempting to gain entry to the premises, especially covering persons outside the main entrance.
- xii) The cameras must have point, tilt and zoom capability and the recording capacity of the footage should be at least 45

days and the record must be kept for a minimum period of two years.

All private schools shall immediately arrange for the installation of CCTV cameras at sensitive places. The Government schools shall raise the demand for budget after doing a survey of sensitive locations of the schools.

3.3. Neighboring Premises

- i) Unauthorized vendors, carts, shops and other establishments in the immediate area and boundary of schools must be removed.
- ii) Authorized vendors should possess a license which is endorsed by the local police station.
- iii) Schools may report any such cases to the local police station to get assistance in this regard.

4. Fire Safety

- i) Fire Extinguishers of ISI mark of adequate capacity and numbers should be provided in eye-catching spots in the school building. Fire Extinguishers are to be installed in all Government, Private aided and un-aided schools immediately. In Government Schools, fire extinguishers will be purchased from funds available in the school itself i.e. Child Welfare Fund / Health Fund / Building Fund etc. Till the time such fire extinguishers are purchased and installed, sufficient number of metal buckets filled with sand and water will be immediately installed in eye-catching spots of the school building.
- ii) First Aid Kits will be kept in schools to meet out any eventuality.
- iii) Emergency telephone numbers and list of persons to be contacted in case of any eventuality shall be displayed on the notice board and other prominent places in the school premises.
- iv) Mock drills will be conducted regularly. Wherever possible fire alarm may be provided in those schools which have large infrastructure and science laboratories.
- v) All electrical wiring and equipment will be got inspected and if found defective will be replaced with ISI mark equipments.



- vi) No High Tension Lines should run inside or over the premises of a school. Such lines, if exists, should be immediately shifted by bringing the matter to the notice of the District Education Committee.

5. Awareness and Publicity

It is important to create an awareness among all sections of personnel associated with a school, namely Children, Staff (teaching/non-teaching) and Parents about the risks involved with regard to child safety and simple preventive measures that can be taken to reduce these risks.

5.1. Children

The school must take steps in generating awareness among the students directly on the following important issues.

- i) Creating awareness of bullying, other forms of physical or sexual abuse: Most children may not be aware of the dangers they are exposed to, a result of two factors - their innocent minds and their trusting personalities. While care must be taken not to instill such terror in them that they are fearful of simple day-to-day living, it is essential to give them enough of an idea of some evils that do lurk and what they can do to prevent them. Bullying as a concept is easily understood and far easier for the school to put inputs in place, as part of its Anti-bullying policy.

5.2.General Awareness and Counselling

The counselling studies have stressed on the importance of inculcation of the following concepts in the minds of the innocent children.

5.2.1.Good touch, Bad touch – a child, even as young as 2 or 3 must be told about the difference between good touch and bad touch (also explained as safe and unsafe touch), and specific parts of the body which should not be touched or circumstances which makes these exceptions okay (specifically only mother giving bath, doctor examining in presence of parent, etc). The child must understand that if the touch makes him/her uncomfortable, s/he must report it, and must be encouraged to report feeling uncomfortable from a very early age.

5.2.2.Stranger safety- children from a small age, even as young as two, must be trained to be careful of strangers and never talk to strangers, but most importantly, never go anywhere with a stranger. Children must be given specific examples that they

must never go with a stranger even if they are told that the mother/father asked him to pick them up because of xyz reason. Also that all strangers may not grab them, but some may entice them with sweets/ice-cream and they should not fall into this trap.

5.2.3.Yell, Run & Tell – this simple mantra must be taught to every child. It explains what to do if someone touches you or comes close to touch you in a way that makes you uncomfortable or scared. First step – yell loudly (this has the dual purpose of attracting attention of anyone nearby as well as giving the perpetrator the clear message that s/he cannot get away with this and must stop immediately). Second step – run as fast as you can, to put maximum distance between you and the perpetrator. Third step – Tell – be sure to talk to your teacher/friend/parents about this so that action can be taken.

5.2.4.Awful acquaintances: Children should also be made aware that it is not only strangers who may cross the line with bad touch, but it is often known persons as well who could do this, after making them promise to keep the secret. They must be encouraged to share this immediately with a trusted adult.

5.2.5.Internet hazards and importance of not disclosing personal details to internet strangers, who could in fact be predators living in the area and using a false identity; encouraging them to share with parents any such contacts they are uncomfortable with so that the parent can guide them make sensible decisions. Children are require to be sensitized against internet/cyberbullying/abuse on facebook/ twitter/ youtube etc., by circulation of undesirable/objectionable material by school children or staff involving school children. Also, against misuse of electronic/telephonic media at schools leading to obscene emails/texts /videos/etc. during or after school hours by students or staff involving school children³

5.2.6.Elimination of suppression- Many children believe that it is better to remain silent rather than report an offence to themselves or others, for the following reasons:

They believe they may get into trouble or get a scolding if they report, hence they prefer to remain silent. They may see threat that, if they

tell, they will be killed/harmed or are blackmailed into silence by some other threat. A lot of children know instinctively that, when someone tries to abuse them physically, something is wrong. To their innocent minds however, it is not clear who the wrongdoer is. They are not clear that the problem is not with them but with the other person, so mistakenly assume they may be part of the problem and therefore remain silent.

5.3. Road Safety

A basic sense of road safety must be taught to children as early as possible in the classroom. Inputs would be age-appropriate, namely: for very small children, inputs must include

- i) never to walk on a road without an adult
 - ii) when walking with an adult, always to walk on the inner side of the road, not on the side of the traffic
 - iii) wherever possible, use the pavement
 - iv) never run across a road; while crossing, walking is better so oncoming vehicles find it easier to predict your path
 - v) how to cross a road – look right, then left, then right again (many adults themselves do not follow the second two steps, and therefore the child being aware of this is a good way for a child to take responsibility and remind the adult)
 - vi) Always use seat-belts; never stand in front seat of a car.
- Apart from the above, and especially for older children, basics of pedestrian safety must be explained including:
- vii) always be alert when walking on a road that you are not in the path of any oncoming traffic
 - viii) never use headphones or mobiles while walking/cycling on the road; focus completely on traffic and your own safety
 - ix) never walk behind a vehicle or bus that is reversing; preferably wait till it has stopped moving or cross from the front of the vehicle rather than behind it
 - x) If you must move between cars parked on the road, make sure you walk on the inner side rather than the outer side of the parked cars, to reduce proximity to moving vehicles.

- xi) For children who may cycle or walk to school, basic road precautions must also be explained, including right of way, hand signals, etc.
- xii) All children must be taught basic traffic rules, so they can influence the adults who drive them, and also imbibe this discipline for when they begin driving. They must specifically learn to never jump red lights and respect signals, use seatbelts/helmets, never over-speed or drive the wrong way, while using phones or after drinking alcohol.
- xiii) Dangers of underage driving – The school must impress upon older students the dangers of underage driving and driving without a license, either by motorbikes, cars etc. They should be made aware that this is a clear offence and of their responsibilities to abide by these rules from a safety perspective. The school should also make them aware of preventive measures in place to ensure there is no underage driving.
- xiv) any student older than 18 must be made to understand the critical importance of helmets/seatbelts, strict adherence to speed limits, traffic signals, etc. to prevent fatalities common among youngsters.

5.4. Self-Defence

Many children, especially those of smaller build or girls, tend to feel far more confident if they have exposure to some form of self-defence. It is therefore recommended that the school organize self-defence classes for children of all classes as part of its curriculum and ensure every child is aware of some basic form of self-defence.

5.5. Legal Literacy

Legal literacy clubs are to be formed in every school through which students must be made aware of their legal rights and duties under the Constitution of India. Relevant aspects of the school safety policy, the POCSO Act, Juvenile Justice Act, and other provisions of law that cover crimes against women and children, and road safety provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act must be discussed with students to make them aware and alert about the subject of safety, their responsibilities to adhere to the provisions on rights/penalties, if any.

5.6. Teachers

Teachers are the most important human resource whose positive interventions in generations and maintenance of a safe and conducive academic environment work wonders. The right attitude and owning up the responsibility for smooth functioning of the school can play valuable role.

5.6.1. Understanding Responsibilities

Every teacher must be made aware of responsibilities as protector of children in his/her custody, and carry out the same with diligence. Teachers are particularly well-placed to observe and monitor children for signs of abuse, to recognize and respond to such abuse. They are the main caregivers to children outside the family and have close contact with children on a regular basis and accordingly can play a key role to prevent/detect abuse. Some aspects to ensure this:

5.6.2. Responsibilities

Apart from responsibilities relating to education and imparting knowledge and skills to children, every teacher has additional responsibilities as care-giver to the child, specifically:

- i) To ensure that the child comes to no harm, especially during the time the children are assigned to him/her
- ii) To assist the child in developing self-esteem, confidence, independence of thought and the necessary skills to cope with possible threats to their personal safety, both within and outside the school
- iii) To encourage a climate of open communication with children so that information about abuse/violence with any child does not remain 'secret' till too late, but problems are reported early and can get nipped in the bud. Students are more likely to turn to trusted adults for help in resolving problem in a climate of safety, and the teacher must make children feel safe in their interactions with him/her.
- iv) To report any aspects that are at risk with regard to arrangements that should have been in place to protect the child from any danger or harm, so that any lapse could be immediately rectified, thereby preventing the dangers from happening/recurring
- v) To report any untoward incident that may come to their attention either directly or indirectly

5.6.3. Punishing Child

While it is the role of a teacher to make the child understand the need for discipline and accordingly face consequences for lapses, care must be taken that such consequences do not cross the line by way of being very harsh punishments that are damaging to the physical or mental health of the child. Accordingly, teachers must clearly be made to understand which disciplinary techniques are permissible and which are not.

5.6.4. Violence

Pulling the child's hair, or physical hitting, punching, throwing a book or chalk at the child or hurting him/her in any way must strictly be avoided.

5.6.5. Humiliation in other forms is also to be strictly avoided

- i) Denying the child food or water or toilet facilities
- ii) Forcing the child to stand in the sun
- iii) Removal of any item of clothing of the child and forcing them to stand in front of the class

6. Parents

Parents are the most compassionate stakeholders of the school system. Their concerns and feedback are valuable for maintaining discipline and safety on the school campuses.

- i) Understanding of important roles: While it is difficult for the school to be responsible for the way parents behave, it is possible for the school management to communicate clear expectations to parents on policy matters relating to child safety, with the objective that parents and the school can jointly facilitate safety of children by partnering to convey the same messages to the child so there is no confusion in the child's mind. This could be communicated through a circular but is far better addressed through a session conducted specifically for parents by the School Counsellor for a couple of hours. Communication should include:
- ii) Responsibility of adherence to school systems/policies: Clear guidelines to parents on rules for entry/exit/identity cards/pick-up/absentee intimation, etc. which parents must comply with.
- iii) Parents could use the opportunity of discussing with their children incidents reported in newspapers from time to time in an open manner, with a view to making children comfortable to bring up such topic in

discussions (e.g. case of little girl molested by guard in condominium lift). The focus of these discussions should be what constitutes bad touch, what could have prevented such a situation, what would you do in such a situation, etc...

7. School Counsellor

- i) In a school with girls, the School Counsellor must necessarily be a female.
- ii) The role of the Counsellor will be to prevent any problems from happening by advising the school management on specific interventions required and a close rapport with the children, and addressing problems if and when they do occur.
- iii) The Counsellor will handle any problem cases among children, be it simple problems of coping which create a sense of being unsafe, cases of bullying to cases of physical or sexual abuse.
- iv) The Counsellor must attempt to have a close rapport with children, and be seen as approachable, yet discreet; people should feel comfortable to approach him/her with problems such as a girl being stalked, or a boy falling into bad company and wishing to get out but needing help.
- v) The Counsellor should visit each class at least once a term – even if for just half an hour, to connect with children, where appropriate discussions can take place, but more importantly, there is interaction between child and counsellor so that a rapport can be built.
- vi) The Counsellor should interact closely with class teachers to be updated on any particular children who are facing problems, so that the counsellor can then build a direct rapport with such children.
- vii) In case of any suspicion that a child is a possible case of abuse, the matter must immediately be brought to the attention of the Counsellor who will handle the child, and involve parents and senior management in a discreet manner.
- viii) In the absence of an appointed school Counsellor, the School Principal shall directly connect with a qualified counsellor who can be consulted in case of extreme problems.

8. Helpline

Every school shall have a Helpline number clearly displayed on Notice-boards and telephone lists, so that any child could approach this helpline confidentially in case of a problem. The helpline should ideally be a dedicated easy-to-remember number, but could also be an intercom number or the number of the Counsellor who will handle calls discreetly. In addition, children must be made aware to dial the Police Control Room(PCR) 100 in case of emergency. The Child Helpline 1098 must be publicized through notices as well.

8.1. Safety of Informers

To maintain confidentiality of the complainant or person giving feedback in case of abuse or suspected abuse or any other feedback, anonymity shall be guaranteed. Accordingly, all anonymous complaints/feedback will also be accepted and acted upon by the School Safety Committee, whether received through any of the above means or by fax, telephone, mobile text message, WhatsApp, letter or any other means of communication.

8.2. Frequency of Meetings

- i) The district level committee shall meet once in every three month or earlier, if need be.
- ii) The Sub-Divisional level committee shall meet every month or earlier, if need be.
- iii) The School Safety Committee(SSC) shall review the security apparatus of the school every week.

In case of any case of abuse, the SSC will meet immediately upon such a case coming up, and have relevant follow-up meetings to ensure the case is treated as closed in all respects. This includes punitive measures as appropriate to the abuser in question, assistance to the child and family by way of counselling, updating of personal records to reflect the misdemeanor of the person.

9. Dealing with feedback/complaint

Any case of physical abuse or bullying: this must be dealt with, or escalated if there is injury of a severe nature while ensuring the following critical procedures:



Director
Secondary Education

- i) Immediate actions: this must be immediately brought to the attention of the School Counsellor, Principal, parents of the child and appropriate remedial action taken to ensure the child is protected and the abuser/bully is penalized and cautioned with strict warning or more serious punishment if warranted.
- ii) Confidentiality: the name of the victimized child must be kept confidential, except from those specific teachers/counsellors who may need to be aware so they can provide the necessary support. Likewise, the name of any other child/children who helped in passing the feedback to the management must also remain confidential; this is to ensure that they are not victimized by any other affected parties in the system nor become the focus of unwanted attention.
- iii) Medical attention: depending on the extent of injury, the school must provide immediate first aid, and bring in a qualified medical practitioner if warranted, and if the extent of injury is serious, then it is the responsibility of the school management to rush the child to the nearest medical facility, while informing the parents of the extent of the crisis.
- iv) Transparency: Schools found withholding facts of how the stage of injury /condition was reached from the parents (e.g. child fainting after being slapped by teacher or made to stand in the sun without water as punishment) are liable for penal action, and a criminal arrest can be issued against the person responsible for the abuse as per the relevant law in place.
- v) Expert assistance: Depending on the severity of the case, an expert counsellor to assist parents/family may be brought in to guide the child/family on how to cope with the situation. The School Counsellor should play a key role. In the absence of the School Counsellor for any reason, assistance from a trained Counsellor must be taken immediately.
- vi) Mandatory Reporting: Immediate intimation to the local police station about the incident is also mandatory, especially if it involves serious injury to the child, or use of weapons such as knives, guns to ensure that suitable arrests can be made as applicable, and as a deterrent for future cases.
- vii) Time frame for action: the school must initiate investigations within the first 24 hours, whether or not it is a working day if it is severe case where there is injury to the child requiring medical attention; if it is a

routine case, then investigations must begin by the first working day. An enquiry will be conducted by a team constituted by the school, with minimum 3 members of the SCC. The report must be submitted within 2 days. Punitive action must be taken against any person found guilty within 7 days of the incident, and personal records updated accordingly.

10. Special Attention for Children with Special Need

Children with special needs are at far higher risk of abuse, particularly sexual abuse, because they are seen as soft targets for the following reasons:

- i) They are often not aware that they are victims of abuse because of limited sense of danger, and a limited understanding of sexuality or sexual behavior:
- ii) lack of mobility
- iii) high reliance on adults for many of their needs
- iv) having a variety of caregivers and care settings
- v) need for intimate care such as washing and toileting
- vi) Even if they are aware, they are less likely to report this because of poor communication skills/ limited verbal ability
- vii) Fear of not being believed as they often suffer from poor self-confidence, low self-esteem, feelings of isolation, powerlessness and limited assertiveness.

Accordingly, special steps must be taken in case a school has any special needs students. The steps outlined below must also be strictly followed by any school for children with special needs, be it an integrated or exclusive school, including Child Development Centers, standalone Children Clinics, Learning Therapy Centers, Play Centers, Crèches, Early Intervention Centers, Assisted Living Homes, NGOs run exclusively for children with special needs in all categories of visual impairment, physical disability, cognitive-learning difficulties, speech impairment, hearing impairment, emotional and behavioral difficulties. These may be run by trained or semi-trained professionals or experts conducting therapy sessions with children for physical/ cognitive/ soft skill development. Regular schools that may admit students with special needs would also be bound by guidelines of this section.

11. Training of Staff

- i) Periodic sensitization and awareness campaigns/seminars/talks on disabilities and special needs of children must be conducted for the entire school staff including administrative staff, support staff, etc.
- ii) It must be clearly communicated in no uncertain terms to support staff that no form of abuse will be tolerated while they are interacting with children, nor should they cross the thin line in handling children by demonstrating any behavior that is inappropriate. They are also required to report any incidence of abuse they may see while doing their jobs, including inappropriate touching by older children of vulnerable special-needs children, which must immediately be reported and addressed by the SSC.
- iii) The State Council of Educational Research & Training (SCERT) will re-design the curriculum of in-service training for teachers so as to include inputs on Safety Measures for preventing and tackling outbreak of fire and other similar calamities.
- iv) The District Institutes of Education & Training (DIETs) will also likewise take steps to appropriately modify their curriculum for pre-service & in-service training for teachers.

12. Interface with Police

Reporting cases of abuse or serious injury: In the event of any case of abuse or physical injury to a child reported on the school premises, it is mandatory to immediately bring the same to the attention of the local police station. The police shall give top priority to every call from all schools.

13. Failure to comply with directions

If the managing committee fails to comply with the directions given under rule 189 the Director may, after considering the explanation or report, if any, given or made by the managing committee, take such action as he may deem fit, including:-

- (a) Stoppage of aid (in case of aided schools)
- (b) Withdrawal of recognition: or
- (c) Taking over the managing committee of the private school.
- (d) Initiating criminal action for disobedience of an order lawfully promulgated by a public servant under the relevant Sections of Indian Penal Code.