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THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S
INTERNATIONAL AWARD



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

THE INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, INDIA

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#WORLDREADY

Child Protection Policy

Child Security, Protocols, Training & Agreement

Child Protection Policy

- Is a statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children from any kind of harm (Abuse, Violence, Exploitation, Discrimination, Bullying, etc) and makes clear to all what is required in relation to the protection of children.
- It helps to create a safe and positive environment for children.
- As per Government Law and various Education Boards there are several policies laid down and every organization needs to formulate their internal policies and agreement by employees to abide by to ensure complete safety and security of children.

Laws

- National Child Protection Policy: It aims at providing a safe and conducive environment for all children through the prevention and response to child abuse, exploitation and neglect. It provides a framework for all institutions, and organizations (including corporate and media houses), government or private sector to understand their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding/ protecting children and promoting the welfare of children; individually and collectively.
- NCPDR- National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights- The commissioner's mandate is to ensure that all Laws, Policies, Programmes And Administrative Mechanisms are in consonance with the Child Rights perspective as enshrined in the Constitution of India and also the UN Convention on the Rights of the child.
- Role of School Teachers, Management and all employees of institutions need to be made aware about the provisions of the Act, some of which cast a duty on them to report any instance of child abuse, as in Sections 19(1) and 21.
- In-house induction sessions should be held for all teachers to include a specific module on gender sensitization.
- Sexual offences committed by the persons who are in the ownership, management of staff of education institutions and persons in positions of Trust and Authority over children are liable for higher punishment as per the provisions of the Act.
- School/Classroom Environment: Schools must ensure and promote a harmonious school/classroom environment and inclusiveness.

Policy Framework

A Child Protection Policy provides a framework of principles, standards and guidelines on which to base individual and organizational practice in relation to areas such as:

- IAYP shall ensure that all organizations working with IAYP in its social commitment of digital empowerment of the society must conform to the laid out principles of child protection and child rights.
- All IAYP staff, workers and projects strictly adhere to the following child protection standards so that children are not exposed to exploitation or abuse at any level at any time.
- The Award Foundation will ensure that all communication about children will portray them as dignified citizens of the country. No attempt will be made to portray them as victims' unnecessarily, neither any communication exaggerates or glamorizes the poverty and challenges faced by the child.
- Anyone (staff or community) suspected of child abuse or inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with severely, action that may include investigation as well as severance of employment of relationship.
- No corporal punishment shall be given to any child by any of its staff members.

Definitions

1. Child: As per the Juvenile justice (Care and Protection) Act,2020 (Act - section 2.k), a "child" means a person who has not completed 18 years of age.

2. Child Rights: The rights of any person below the age of 18 years as recognized by the UNCRC and other concerned international instruments and operationalized through Indian legislations.

3. Child Abuse: All forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, physical abuse- including hurting or injuring a child, inflicting pain, poisoning, drowning or smothering.

4. Sexual Abuse: including direct or indirect sexual exploitation or corruption of children by involving them (or threatening to involve them) in inappropriate sexual activities.

5. Emotional Abuse: repeatedly rejecting children, humiliating them or denying their worth and rights as human beings.

6. Neglect: the persistent lack of appropriate care of children, including love, simulation, safety, nourishment, warmth, education and medical attention.

7. Vulnerable children: children hailing from critical backgrounds including dysfunctional families, working children, destitute, orphans, street children or children in acute vulnerable situation or any environment that is risky and might inhibit the growth and development of the child shall also be considered as critical background, with emphasis on a working child.

8. Corporal Punishment: Any deliberate infliction of physical/emotional pain on a child by an adult.

9. Child Protection: By protection we mean safeguarding all the children (between 0-18 years) from all forms of physical, sexual, mental, emotional, spiritual, economic and social abuse and exploitation.

Child Safety Checklist for Schools- Personal, Social, Emotional and Sexual Safety.

1. Do not use language or behaviour towards Children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, intimidating, offensive, discriminatory, culturally insensitive.
2. Do not use any form of corporal punishment on Children.
3. Do not place a Child at risk of harm or abuse any child physically, emotionally or sexually.
4. 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.
5. Do not develop, induce or support physical or sexual relationships with Children, in any way.
6. Do not use or encourage the use of alcohol, cigarettes or other intoxicating substances while interacting with Children and from providing such intoxicating substances to children.
7. Do not develop any form of relationship or arrangement (financial or otherwise) with children which could in any one be deemed to be exploitative or abusive. Do not use Child Labour in any form.
8. Do not give cash or any kind of gifts directly to children.
9. Do not do things of personal nature that a child could do for him/herself, including dressing, bathing and grooming.
10. Do not initiate physical contact unless initiated by the child (eg. holding hands)
11. Do not use the language that will mentally or emotionally abuse the child.
12. Do not suggest inappropriate behaviour or relations of any kind.
13. Allow children to engage in sexually provocative games with each other.
14. Stand aside when they see inappropriate actions inflicted by children on other children because it is frequent and commonplace.
15. Do not use his/her position for his/her own benefit or for the benefit of family or friends.
16. Do not work under the influence of intoxicating substances such as alcohol or any other substances that significantly impair ability to do the job assigned.

17. Do not take/collect photos, videos or stories of children and/or upload the same on blogs or any social networking sites without prior permission from the authority concerned.
18. Do not ask personal details of the child and if known, then not to divulge it to others.
19. Do not encourage any kind of infatuation.
20. Do not ask any child to meet alone outside campus.
21. Take children for outing only in groups and with prior permission of the Person in charge (Principal).
22. **Recommendation-** Provision for CCTV cameras should be made in school premises at all strategic places along with the warning.

What happens when a Teacher/Committee/Staff has reasonable cause to believe that a child is being abused?

1. Be inclusive and involve all children without selection or exclusion on the basis of gender, disability, ethnicity, religion or any other status.
2. Be aware of the potential for peer abuse and develop special measures/supervision to protect younger and especially vulnerable children from peer and adult abuse (E.g.: children bullying, discriminating against, victimizing or abusing children).
3. Ensure the responsible use of computers and other information technology and refrain from inappropriate usage, especially that relating to the creation, viewing, downloading or distribution or any inappropriate or offensive material, including, but not restricted to, abusive images of children, pornography or child pornography.
4. Report all concerns regarding actual or potential child abuse, mistreatment, or any other violation according to the reporting and responding system.
5. Ensure that there are staff members (Female staff) when escorting the child between locations and also when taking care of child/children at any location.
6. Record all decisions of movement of children to hospitals or referral service centres or even referral service centres or even in case of repatriation/restoration.
7. Ensure good constructive working relationships with all co-workers.
8. Staff, employees, duty bearers shall not Kiss, hug, fondle, rub or touch a child in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way.
9. Should not act in any manner that puts children at risk.
10. Do not turn out a child from the residential home/facility.
11. Never threaten a child.
12. Never use abusive language.
13. Never tease/mock a child or call out nicknames.
14. Do not act in any way that intends to embarrass, shame, humiliate or degrade a child.

These indicators of abuse and neglect will be used by the staff member as a guideline for reporting to the team, who will determine if the case needs further attention. A report must be made when a staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse or neglect. All reports are confidential.

What happens after suspected abuse or neglect is reported?

- Where there is cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, it is the responsibility of the staff member to report their suspicions to a member of the team and the Head of the School. All staff, faculty and administrators are mandated to report incidences of abuse and neglect. All reports of abuse and neglect must be made to the Head of the School within 48 hours for immediate response.

Procedures for reporting suspected case of child abuse or neglect

- **Step 1:**
When a child reports abuse or there is reasonable cause to believe that abuse is occurring, the teacher will seek advice from the counsellor within 48 hours. The counsellor will take initial steps to gather information regarding the reported incident and in cases of serious physical or sexual abuse or neglect; will immediately inform the Head of School and together they will set up a school-based response team to address the allegation. The response team will include the school nurse, counsellor, principal and other individuals as the Head of School sees fit. In all cases, follow up activities will be conducted in a manner that ensures that information is documented factually and that strict confidentiality is maintained.
- The following procedures will be used:
 - 1) Interview staff members as necessary and document information relative to the case.
 - 2) Consult with school personnel to review the child's history in the school.
 - 3) Determine the course of follow up actions.
- **Step 2:**
Minor Case- Most Minor cases of suspected abuse or neglect will be handled by school counsellors, such as those involving student relationships with peers.
 - Parenting skills related to disciplining children at home, Student - parent relationships, Mental health issues such as depression, low self-esteem, grieving. Some cases will be referred to outside resources example: Mental health issues such as depression, psychosis, dissociation, suicidal thoughts.
 - Based on acquired information, a plan of action will be developed to assist the child and family.

Appropriate actions will include:

1. Discussions between the child and the counsellor, in order to gain more information.
2. Depending upon the age of the child, these discussions may include drawing pictures and playing with dolls to elicit more information as to what may have occurred. In-class observations of the child by the teacher, counsellor or administrator. Meetings with family to present the school's concern. Referral of the student and family to external professional counselling.

3. **Serious Allegations:** More serious allegations will involve reporting to outside resources: Severe depression, Severe and/or ongoing physical abuse or neglect, sexual abuse and/or incest.
- The following actions will be taken:
 - 1) Reporting to the social services where the law requires it.
 - 2) Reporting to the police authorities where the law requires it.
 - 3) Potential consultation with the consulate of the country of the involved family (where applicable).
 - 4) Consultation with the school's attorney or another attorney.