

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

VISION

Our vision is to be a globally renowned academia fostering excellence in future – ready robust pedagogy and profound learning environment to disseminate values of academics freedom and the spirit of collaboration and innovation. To develop an ethos of entrepreneurship and build ethical future enterprise leaders who add value to society, spearhead in nation building.

MISSION

Our mission is to impart quality value based education of international standard and focus on holistic development of the students imbibing skills for solving real life problems. Along with our clean and green campus – our infrastructure offers homey stay, hygienic food. It's our priority to engage all our staff from ground level to top management as a family to ensure that all students make a smooth transition to our institution and do not feel alone.

OBJECTIVES

1. **Promotion of value education and community service** : to impart values such as resilience, determination, confidence, and creative & critical thinking, to develop good social skills and the ability to form good relationships, to promote participation in community life and fulfilment of civic and social responsibility.
2. **Instilling cultural, linguistic diversity and heritage** : to instil the importance of inclusion within society of different groups and persons with different personal characteristics, the diversity of society, cultural knowledge, various languages, India's cultural values, history and its rich heritage, yoga, Ayurveda and holistic living, to implant cross cultural dexterity.
3. **Cognitive Acceleration Program** : To encourage schema (class preparedness), cognitive conflicts (make the children face challenges and to solve problems in collaboration), social learning, meta cognition (knowing about knowing), bridging (transferability of knowledge), teacher mediation to master learning.
4. **Internationalism and Entrepreneurship**: To promote global citizenship, globalization and sustainable future, physical & psychological health, inter personal skills to enhance employability skills.
5. **Nurturing Leaders**: To instil leadership qualities, to foster the physical, intellectual, technological, social, emotional, and artistic development of the students, develop self-discipline and personal responsibility, to promote creativity, effective communication, and critical thinking skills, to have a strong student leadership program with active involvement of students of all age groups.
6. **Multi literacy**: To develop the ability to interpret, identify, create and communicate meaning across a variety of visual, oral, musical and alphabetical forms of communication.

7. **Curriculum and learning atmosphere** : To build a curriculum leading to experiential learning and to have multiple curricula, to provide clear learning outcome, detailed instructions and assessment for all courses to ensure course mastery, student success, to offer a dynamic, interactive educational environment that engages students in the learning process, to promote inter-disciplinary learning, to review and update curriculum, instruction, and assessment in a regular cycle.
8. **Assessment practices**: To support every child's individual strength, Self-assessment, Peer assessment, learning how to give feedback.
9. **Teach less and learn more strategy**: To reduce lecturing from podium, to increase quality of education not quantity.
10. **Technology and digitalization**: To use technology to create effective modes and means of instruction and expand access to learning, to educate the students in futuristic technologies, to have robust digital infrastructure.
11. **Safe campus**: To be a residential school of international standard providing safety and security, in a healthy and hygienic atmosphere.
12. **Community partnership**: Cultivating the educational partnership among home, school, and community, nurturing a culture of collaboration, collegiality, and mutual respect
13. **Professional Development**: Implementing professional development for the staff that is essential for effective instruction and improved student learning.

14. CORE VALUES (SPIRIT OF PSSEMRS)

1. Metacognition –

- a) Knowing about knowing
- b) Learn until perfection is achieved.

2. Growth mindset

- a) Understand that we are continually learning
- b) Helping each other learn and succeed
- c) Healthy competition.

3. Pursuit of excellence

- a) Resilience in every action
- b) Greatest involvement to pioneer
- c) Act with responsibility and compassion

4. Uncompromising integrity

- a) Act with fairness
- b) Maintain transparency
- c) Unyielding integrity

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Context

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child enshrines the right of every child to protection from harm and abuse. The Government of India is a signatory to the convention, having ratified it on 11th December 1992.

All incumbents have been entrusted with the responsibility to ensure that children are safeguarded. It is imperative for the members of the community, specifically teachers and wardens, to observe changes in student behavior and recognize outward signs of abuse. It is vital that they are alert to the signs of any distress and understand the school's Child Protection Policy.

Rationale and Guidelines

All schools have a responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of their students. It is particularly important for a school like PSSEMRS, with a fully residential student population, and to whom parents have entrusted their children in good faith, to be very vigilant in the task of safeguarding the welfare of students.

PSSEMRS is a closed environment from which students have no access to the local community and no physical access to parents or guardians during term time, the latter only by prior arrangement. Because of this there is an added imperative for staff to be vigilant and keep track of behaviours exhibited by students.

All members of the community are expected to uphold their responsibilities for safeguarding the welfare of children. It is especially important that children should be heard in an open and honest way and that they should be aware that any disclosures or allegations they may make cannot remain confidential between the student and member of staff. Thus if a child asks for a promise of confidentiality, it should not be given unconditionally by the adult.

Some children are subjected to abuse within families; statistically, children are more likely to be sexually abused, for example, by a family member or close family contact than by a stranger. Physical punishment and emotional abuse do happen within families and staff should be aware of how such experiences may affect children's behaviour on their return to the school.

SCOPE

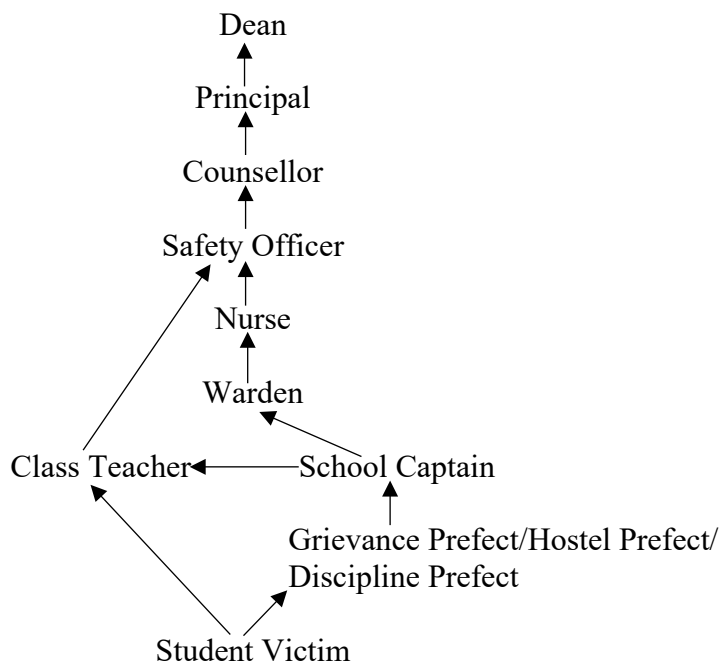
This policy is formulated for PSSEMR School, and it applies to all the members of the community- staff at all levels (Academic, Co-curricular, Administrative), students, parents and visitors.

Legal framework

The policy has been formulated on the basis of the existing laws of the country and the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child that seek to protect children. Legal frameworks used are as follows

- The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1991)
- POCSO (Protection of Child from Sexual Offenses) Act, 2012
- Council of Indian School Guidelines for prevention of bullying and ragging in schools (*Extract of D.O. No. 12-19/2012-RMSA-1 dated 8th November, 2016)
- Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

Leadership team for child Protection



Note: Grievance at hostel may be reported as prescribed in the hostel policy and SOP. However, a child is at liberty to report abuse with any adult who he/she may find comfortable to report.

Child Protection Committee

1. Clear Reporting Guidelines: who to report to when there is any event. Very important. Who do you want them to report to, talk to? How do you communicate that to them? Staff should have this information too.
2. Our policy should give clear reporting guidelines in terms of their concerns. If there is a problem between staff. It should be the senior person in school who shall deliberate as it is a very sensitive matter.
3. Signs & Symptoms
 - How to respond if the student/child discloses abuse including process
 - How to respond if a student/child on campus displays signs of Stress
4. Student Code of Conduct
5. Staff Code of Conduct
6. Communication & Publicity
7. Corridors should have photographs and contact number of the contact persons, in English and regional languages. It's about reinforcing child protection at every level.
8. How does our community get access to this document? Website publishing and Social Media.

Roles and Responsibilities

The team provides strategic leadership for Child Protection in PSSEMR School. The team is led by the Dean and others as described above. This team is responsible for the ongoing monitoring, compliance, review and improvement of the Child Protection Policy at PSSEMRS.

The following are the roles and responsibilities of the school's Leadership Team for Child Protection:

- Develop school's policies with regard to Child Protection and Safeguarding and maintain confidentiality of all case documents
- Conduct annual review of compliance/effectiveness of the existing policy every academic year (during policy review)
- Ensure safe practices for staff recruitment
- Schedule regular mandatory training for staff (in-house and face- to-face)
- Liaise with local/medical/legal services (if required)
- Provide detailed procedures to report, address and investigate any allegation
- Ensure that the proceedings are fair and do not hamper the child's development and the future opportunities in any way
- Coordinate with the Admissions Department to ensure that students and parents have read the Child Protection Policy and signed the declaration form
- Ensure that police verification and background checks for all staff are carried out in adherence with guidelines of the Recruitment Policy

Training

Staff members are made aware of the procedures for student safeguarding, child abuse prevention, recognition, intervention and reporting. Training sessions are conducted at the beginning of every term.

Defining child Abuse

This policy gives definitions of the widely understood categories of child abuse.

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

Extract of D.O. No. 12-19/2012-RSMA dated 8 November 2016 issued by the government which contains broad policy statements, advice and guidance for schools in combating bullying and ragging should be read and understood by all teaching, boarding, co-curricular, administrative staff and coordinators in the institution.

Physical abuse covers all aspects of physical punishment, beating, slapping and the use of excessive force against a child. Children may display the external traits of excessive physical punishment, the most obvious being bruises and abrasions on the skin some of which may be old or faded.

Sexual abuse covers all aspects of inappropriate sexual behaviours between children, and between adults and children. Inappropriate touching, observing and displaying of the sexual organs represent sexual abuse. Sexual penetration of a child by an adult or of a younger child by an older child, is the most serious example of child abuse.

The activities may involve:

- Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

- Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)
- Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Emotional abuse can take many forms but the intention behind such abusive behaviour is to belittle the child and to undermine their feelings of self-worth. Emotional abuse can involve insulting behaviours, rejection and withdrawal of emotional warmth, blaming and sarcasm.

Emotional abuse may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Neglect is widely regarded as pernicious lack of care for a child. Often children are neglected as part of a cycle of generational neglect within a family, where good parenting has never been learned or practiced from generation to generation. Neglect is often demonstrated through inconsistent parenting, lack of physical care, poor hygiene and nutrition.

Neglect may involve a parent or care giver failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Sexual assault: Under Section 7 of POCSO Act, 2012; whoever, with sexual intent touches the vagina, penis, anus or breast of the child or makes the child touch the vagina, penis, anus or breast of such person or any other person, or does any other act with sexual intent which involves physical contact without penetration is said to commit sexual assault.

Sexual harassment : Under section 11 of POCSO Act, 2012; a person is said to commit sexual harassment upon a child when such person with sexual intent,- (i) utters any word or makes any sound, or makes any gesture or exhibits any object or part of body with the intention that such word or sound shall be heard, or such gesture or object or part of body shall be seen by the child; or (ii) makes a child exhibit his body or any part of his body so as it is seen by such person or any other person; or (iii) shows any object to a child in any form or media for pornographic purposes; or (iv) repeatedly or constantly follows or watches or contacts a child either directly or through electronic, digital or any other means; or (v) threatens to use, in any form of media, a real or fabricated depiction through electronic, film or digital or any other mode, of any part of the body of the child or the involvement of the child in a sexual act; or (vi) entices a child for pornographic purposes or gives gratification therefore.

Identifying abuse

All staff should be vigilant in observing students' behaviours. It is not a simple matter to identify traits in behaviour and to readily attribute causes. Students who spend a number of years in an academic institution, particularly a closed one, mature and develop naturally and will exhibit differing behaviours as they mature and develop an understanding of their place in the world. Nonetheless, a sympathetic staff member will always be sensitive to the needs of the students with whom they have been entrusted and should be open and available as a first point of contact should they be approached. Staff in the boarding section must be particularly vigilant in assuring that all students are protected from bullying and ragging of any kind. Any incidents must be reported to Counsellors / Principals/Dean immediately.

Staff Responsibilities and Guidelines

There is the possibility that a staff member may be confronted with an allegation by a student. While this is a difficult matter to deal with, the child must be listened to and the allegation investigated by Grievance Council members as described above. At no time from the point of allegation to conclusion of the investigation should the student be scapegoated by any adult and due process should be completed in an impartial manner. Clearly, the parents of the child making the allegation should be contacted and involved in the investigation. Such an allegation should not result in the student being sent away from the school summarily in view of the substantial emotional and intellectual damage that such a move would cause to the student. In the event of a false allegation being made by a student against a member of staff, normal disciplinary procedures against the student would be applied. In the event of an allegation by a student being upheld after due process, the member of staff would be subject to instant dismissal and could face criminal charges.

- Staff should be aware that their behaviour in relation to students will be open to scrutiny by colleagues and students alike. There is no possibility of hiding abusive behaviour and all staff and students have a duty to report what they see as abusive behaviour by staff and students alike.
- No member of staff will engage in physical punishment against a student. This includes any form of beating, slapping or use of any instrument to inflict pain on a child. These examples are not exhaustive but constitute physical abuse and criminal behaviour.
- No member of staff will engage in humiliating treatment of a student. This includes excessive shouting, name calling, humiliating language or gestures. This also includes kneeling, bowing or other unnatural body positions. These examples are not exhaustive but constitute emotional abuse and criminal behaviour.
- No member of staff will engage in any form of intimate relationship with a student. This includes sharing of personal information including photographs of a sexual nature. These examples are not exhaustive but constitute sexual abuse and criminal behaviour.
- Staff should act in a responsible manner at all times in relation to students. On very rare occasions children make false allegations against adults who are entrusted with their care. These false allegations may be as a result of a desire to harm a teacher. What is certain is that whether or not an allegation is subsequently proven to be untrue, the reputation of a teacher can be destroyed along with considerable emotional damage being inflicted on the teacher and his or her family. Therefore, all staff should take steps to protect themselves from unwarranted accusations of unprofessional conduct, including abuse, by acting at all times in a professional manner.
- All staff members have been made aware of the Child Protection Policy which specifies roles and responsibilities for safeguarding children. Staff at all levels, are required to sign this document.

Consistency of Policies for prevention

The Child Protection Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Security and Emergency procedures SOP
- HR Policies
- Discipline Policy
- Boarding Policy

- Hostel SOP
- Visitor's Policy
- Sports Policy
- Student code of conduct Policy
- Infirmary Policy
- Sensitization Workshops for all Staff, Students and Parents
- Safety in School Buses (Transport Policy)
- Safety in Outbound Trips (Excursion Policy)

The Child Protection Policy is subject to change on the discretion of the Management and the Policy will be reviewed annually.

Statutory Compliances

Compliances used by our school to inform policy and procedure in health, safety, security and safeguarding:

- Swimming Pool Operation License.
- FSSAI License.
- Fire and Electrical safety.
- Pollution & Environment Clearances.
- Public Liability Insurance.
- Security services provided by an agency registered under the PSARA Act.
- The Transport Policy.
- The Infirmary Policy.
- The Security Policy and visitor management through Visitor's Policy
- School facilities, buildings, security and protections measures compatible with Compliances with all legal and statutory requirements/obligations.

Training for Staff/student/parents:

- Cyber bullying
- Sexual harassment
- POCSO
- Internet usage
- Earthquake drills
- Fire evacuation drills
- Lockdown drills

Grievance Procedure

- The respective Nodal office (Students- Child Protection Committee, Staff – HR/Principal/Dean) will maintain a register to endorse the complaints and keep the name and contents of the complaints in confidence.
- The Committee will hold a meeting with the complainant within 3 days of receiving the complaint.
- A copy of the complaint will be given to the respondent so that he is given an opportunity to prove himself innocent and thereafter an inquiry will be conducted.
- Reconciliation by mutual consent between the complainant and the respondent
- Examination of the witnesses if any.
- Statement of the respondent.
- Cross examination if required.
- Defense witnesses to be examined (if any).
- Site inspection (if any).
- Confrontation
- Disciplinary proceedings.
- Committee will send compiled report to the senior management team for further actions.

Redress

The Senior Management Team would take appropriate action against the respondent if found guilty depending on the recommendations from various committees.

The penalties could be as follows -

- Warning
- Written Apology
- Bond of good behavior
- Adverse remark in the confidential report
- Stopping of Increment/Promotion
- Transfer
- Suspension
- Dismissal/Termination
- Police /Legal Action.

APPENDIX - 1

Child Protection Report Form

This form must be used by members of staff to report incidents that raise any concern about possible child abuse. Care must be taken to report information pertaining to child abuse, accurately and confidentially. A hard copy of the form should be handed over to the Child Protection Officers. This document has to be signed by all parties concerned.

Name of the person filing the report	
Nature of relationship with the student	
Student involved	
Roll No :	Class :
Date :	Day:
Time:	
Name of the Witness/es	
Details of the Concern	

**A record of the incident of what you saw or heard, including the actual nature of abuse in an accurate form, without any embellishment, or an extra record – as far as possible- of anything said to you by the child is to be made. Include relevant comments made by you, preferably in verbatim form. Avoid asking too many questions than are necessary to clarify any uncertainty. Please attach any information that will support your report of the incident which may consist of email trail notes, other staff comments etc.*

Signature of the Reporting Staff	
Counsellor's Remarks	
HR Remark	
Safety Officer's Remark	
Principal's Remark	
Action Taken	
Signature of the Dean	

APPENDIX 2

A few possible indicators of abuse to facilitate early identification and raising red flags among staff who are observant and alert are given below. However, the indicators are not exclusively limited to the ones given as a reference for identification of abuse.

Possible Indicators Of Physical Abuse	Possible Indicators of emotional Abuse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained bruises on any body part • Bruises inflicted at different points of time (colors) • Injuries reflecting the shape of the article used (hand, ruler etc.) • Unexplained burns • Injuries inconsistent with information provided by child • Unexplained laceration, abrasions or fracture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in mood, behavior • Indifferent attitude towards things on matters of how they act or what happens to them “Negative impulse behavior” • Self-loathing, self-isolating behavior • Developing risk-taking behavior such as stealing, bullying etc. • Self-harming behavior or eating disorders • Distancing from family members and lack of social skills
Possible Indicators of Sexual Abuse	Possible Indicators of Neglect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual knowledge, behavior or use of language inappropriate for age level • Unusual interpersonal relationship patterns • Evidence of physical trauma or bleeding to oral, genital or anal areas. • Difficulty in walking, sitting • Refusing to change into PE clothes, fear of bathrooms • Not wanting to be alone with an individual • Early pregnancy • Exposure to pornography 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neglect of basic needs of hygiene and hunger • Parents disinterested in child’s academic performance • Child’s unwillingness to go home during vacations • Both parents and / or legal guardians are inaccessible or absent in the case of an emergency.

APPENDIX - 3

DECLARATION - CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

I _____ (Employee ID _____),
Department of _____ at PSSEMR School hereby agree that I have
fully read, clearly understood, will strictly abide by the Child Protection Policy of the School.
I am aware that I must refrain from carrying out any or all (but not limited to) the following
activities:

- Corporal punishment
- Abuse of any kind (e.g. touching the child inappropriately)
- Making personal remarks
- Sharing photos or videos with children unconnected to learning
- Unprofessional relationship with members of the school community

The institution has the right to terminate my employment without prior notice, withhold salary
and other benefits and initiate legal action, if I violate any of the clauses mentioned in the
Child Protection Policy.

I am also aware that it is my duty to report any act of violation by a staff member or child to
the Child Protection Team. Withholding any information or protecting anyone is an offence,
and if I am found doing so, suitable action may be taken against me.

Staff Signature

This policy will be reviewed as per the review policy.