

POCSO COMMITTEE (PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT, 2012)

To safeguard the interests of the learners, Oxford World School set up the POCSO Committee (set up under the provisions of Prevention of Children from Sexual Offence Act 2012) on 22nd August 2107. The Committee works towards safeguarding the learners from the challenges they face in their formative years at school. The Committee takes up age appropriate initiatives to create awareness about sexual exploitation and to ensure that all learners are aware of their rights and responsibilities towards themselves. Training sessions are conducted for the faculty and staff to recognize and report issues of abuse and neglect. Complaint Boxes are placed strategically and checked regularly by the Committee members to address the complaints, if any.

Through its awareness campaigns and programmes, the Committee strives to ensure that all learners are treated with dignity and respect at all times. In a series of Awareness programmes and Special School Assembly conducted in the School throughout the year, learner participation is encouraged. Age appropriate videos are shown and self-defence sessions are also conducted as a part of the Awareness programmes.

The POCSO committee comprises of the following members:

Term of Office: 3 years

Sl No	Members	Designation
1	Dr Kavita K Roy	Principal
2	Ms. Bhama Pramod	Academic Coordinator
3	Mr Anil Jabde	Administrative Officer
4	Ms. Manjiri Kanade	Librarian
5	Ms Amrita	HR Executive
6	Mr. Pandhari Ramesh Ghodke	DTP Operator

CCTV Camera at the strategic points is placed. **Complaint boxes are easily accessible to the students. Awareness Programmes are conducted every month.**

PURPOSE

Having responsibility for children during a large part of every day, it is our primary responsibility is to safeguard individual children and address concerns regarding their emotional or physical well-being. The policies of the Child Protection Committee apply to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the School.

The guidelines set out in this policy is to safeguard and protect our students by ensuring that every adult who works in our school – teachers, non-teaching staff , governors and volunteers – has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse of a child is suspected.

DECLARATION BY THE SCHOOL

The issue of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school, and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence.

We ensure that the recommended child protection procedures are followed with empathy and professionalism.

OPERATING PROCEDURES

- The Child Protection Policy will remain available to all parents via the school's website and will be reviewed every years.
- Parents will be asked to supply the School with the names of all persons 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.
- Parents are asked to brief School about arrangements following any separation or divorce.
- Parents will be made aware that members of staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with students.
- Parents will be made aware that staff may on occasions have to help change student's clothes when administering first aid, after toilet accidents, for HPE and on other such occasions.
- In the event of a parent making a complaint about a member of staff, volunteer or student, the school's complaints procedure should be followed and the complaint addressed directly to the Principal. If the complaint is against the Principal it should be addressed to the Chairperson of the Management.
- The complaint should be documented by the parent complaining.
- If a complaint should include an accusation against another child, the accused child's parents will be informed. Discipline must remain solely in the hands of the members of Child Protection Committee (CPC).
- Emphasis will be placed on both early detection and swift intervention, but no member of the school's staff will investigate directly and signs of possible abuse will not be considered by the School as proof.
- Staff will act promptly in referring the concern to the designated CPC member. Together they will discuss the concern and complete the incident report.

- The Designated Teacher meets with the Principal (or Chairperson of the Board of Governors in the absence of the Principal) and an appropriate course of action is planned. A written record of decisions should be made
- The teacher and/or CPC member will talk further with the child in an attempt to reassure him/her and to clarify and record what has happened.
- The CPC member, in consultation with the Principal, will decide whether, in the best interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to a counsellor.
- Where there are concerns about possible abuse, the CPC member and Principal will inform the POSCO wing of the Police department.
- If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, services the member of staff may be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils, and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigations.
- In all cases, it will be explained to the child, about whom there is concern, that it may be necessary to pass information on to the CPC and perhaps other agencies. No promise of confidentiality can be given. Detailed records will be kept of all concerns and actions relating to suspicions of abuse. All notes will be written objectively, without speculation and immediately following any incident that they record.

HOW A PARENT CAN RAISE A CHILD PROTECTION CONCERN

If a parent has a child protection concern they can follow the steps below:

1. Talk to the class teacher.
2. If parent is still concerned, they can talk to the Principal or can talk to the designated member of CPC.
3. En-capsule the complaint and discussion with CPC member/ principal in a mail.

THE CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

A child may suffer or be at risk of suffering from one or more types of abuse and abuse may take place on a single occasion or may occur repeatedly over time. They may give rise to concern but are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred.

ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED CPC MEMBER

The designated CPC member will:

- Promote a child protection ethos in the school
- Develop and update the school's child protection policy regularly
- Ensure parents receive a copy of the child protection policy every 2 years.
- Provide training to all school staff including support staff regarding child protection- An awareness of "stranger danger"; an understanding of how to respond to perceived threats; care in regard to e-safety; and the development of standards of behaviour that are appropriate.
- Be available to discuss the child protection concerns of any member of staff
- Be responsible for record keeping of all child protection concerns & maintain all records in a secure location
- Make referrals to the School's designated counsellor
- Research information regarding current policies regarding child protection

DEFINITION: WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

1. Neglect

Actual or likely persistent or significant neglect of a child, including poor hygiene, constant hunger, inadequate/inappropriate clothing, constant tiredness, lack of adequate supervision, untreated illness, lack of peer relationships or compulsive stealing

2. Physical Abuse

Actual or likely deliberate physical injury to a child, or wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child.

Possible signs or symptoms of physical abuse include:

- Unexplained bruises (in places difficult to mark)
- Untreated injuries
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Fear of going home

3. Sexual Abuse

4. Emotional Abuse

Possible signs or symptoms of emotional abuse include:

- Bullying of others
- Change in personality from outgoing to withdrawn
- Difficulty in forming / maintaining relationships with others
- Attention seeking
- Wetting and soiling
- Sudden speech disorders
- Low self-esteem

THE PREVENTATIVE ACTION PLAN

An awareness of “stranger danger”; an understanding of how to respond to perceived threats; care in regard to e-safety; and the development of standards of behaviour that are appropriate.

Safe Handling and Use of Reasonable Force – a policy on physical restraint by staff is set. It acknowledges that staff must only use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person

Intimate Care -As a general principle, members of staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with pupils. It is, however, unrealistic to suggest that staff should touch pupils only in emergencies; in particular, a distressed child may need reassurance that involves appropriate physical comforting.

The Internet and Digital Technologies – We acknowledge the opportunities for learning as well as the risks attached to the internet and digital technologies. So when there is a need for students to use the internet, teachers will send a prior intimation to parents. The School advises parents to dissuade their children from internet browsing, engaging in social media and using message applications on smartphones.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually by the CPC and updated as necessary, particularly in the light of new advice from Government agencies and experts in the field of child welfare.

Sexual Harassment Redressal Committee

We undertake topics like sexual harassment very seriously. It is also discussed in detail with all children across the school to ensure all problems are addressed and reported. A safety box to address any complaint for harassment or complaints of any kind is placed in the corridors of all building so that children can express their grievances fearlessly.