

RISHS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
Kundrathur Main Road, Mangadu, Chennai -122

COMMITTEE AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT & CHILD ABUSE

With regard to the Supreme Court Judgment and guidelines issued in 1997 to provide for the effective enforcement of the basic human right of gender equality and guarantee against sexual harassment and abuse, more particularly against sexual harassment at work places and schools, CBSE has issued circulars since 2004 to all the schools, advising them to establish a permanent cell and a committee to develop guidelines for combating sexual harassment, violence against women and bullying at the schools. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act & Rules, 2012, deals with all manners of sexual offences, reporting mechanisms and subsequent penal consequences.

These guidelines serve as a method for numerous stakeholders from teachers and community welfare associations to the police to ensure that all possible steps are taken to prevent child abuse and empower children to recognise symptoms of potentially abusive situations. It has further advised the schools to be proactive by developing a conducive atmosphere on the campus, where the status of the woman/ girl student is respected, and they are treated equally without any bias or discrimination. Keeping the above guidelines in view, Rishs International School, Mangadu, has constituted a Committee Against Sexual Harassment. The details of which are as below:

COMPOSITION

The members of the committee for the current academic year 2021-22 are:

S.N	Name	Designation	Email address
1	Mrs Meenakshi Raman Shyam (Principal)	Committee Head	principal@rishsinternationalschool.com
2.	Mrs Chitra Krishnan (Vice Principal)	Member	viceprincipal.hs@rishsinternationalschool.com
3.	Mr. Chandrasekaran (Vice Principal)	Member	viceprincipal@rishsinternationalschool.com
4.	Mrs. Barathi Bennet (Sr Sec Coordinator)	Member	coordinator.sr.sec.rishs@gmail.com
5.	Mrs Shanmuga Priya (Headmistress)	Member	headmistress@rishsinternationalschool.com
6	Mrs Buvaneswari (PGT Tamil)	Member	bhuvaneswari.rishs@gmail.com
7	Ms Mercy Evangeline (School Counselor)	Member	councilor.rishs@gmail.com
8	Dr, Ramesh (Physical Education Director)	Member	phe.rishs0@gmail.com

ROCEDURE FOR APPROACHING COMMITTEE

The Committee deals with issues relating to sexual harassment and child abuse at Rishs International School Mangadu. It is applicable to all students, staff and faculty. A complaint of discrimination or sexual harassment may be lodged by the victim or a third party. A written complaint may be addressed to the Head of the committee. If the complaint is made to any of the Committee members, the member may forward it to the Head of the Committee. Here it should be noted that according to the Supreme Court guideline, Sexual harassment can be defined as "unwelcome" sexually determined behaviour (whether directly or by implication).

FUNCTIONS AND ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE

1. WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING MODULES:

Rishs International School will conduct workshops and peer training sessions for students, parents and teachers, twice in a year. The aim of these workshops will be:

- *What constitutes abuse and exploitation?

- *Manner of reporting and complaining (how and to whom)
- *To address the nature, cause and effect of abuse

- *To counter and deal with the consequences constructively

- *Self-disclosure and safety guidelines for potential instances ahead

2. ROLE OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:

The committee will elect and appoint 15 student representatives (Senior & Junior School) who will play the following roles (Once the school reopens offline):

- *Act as peer complaint mediators, with whom the students can discuss their issues

- *Participate in peer workshops and work with teachers towards a plan of action

- *Create peer facilitators within their own grades, who keep a track of any cases

- *Report and observe the misbehaviour of any student for possible abuse

3.EMPLOYEE AWARENESS ABOUT POCSO AND CHILD PROTECTION RIGHTS:

- *An annexure highlighting safety rules will be circulated and signed by each employee which makes them aware of their rights as well as duties

- *The act against any form of abuse will be put up at a visible board for easy access

- *The complaint protocol and manner of reporting will be written alongside and made visible through notice boards and displays

4. ANNUAL REPORTS:

Ms. Merline and Ms. Barathi Bennet will maintain an annual record of:

- *Cases (reported)
- *Time bound actions followed
- *Confidentiality and equality ensured for the person in question
- *Follow up actions: punishments or otherwise
- *Teacher initiatives
- *Redressal and resolving of the cases

5. MEETINGS AND TIMELY DISCUSSIONS OF THE COMMITTEE:

The Committee will also hold timely meetings, to discuss the plan of actions, potential cases, queries and updates which will be supervised by the Principal Mrs. Meenakshi Shyam.

This will ensure the functioning and progress of the implemented ideas within the school.

Appropriate Standards of Behaviour for Staff & Employees, Adults, should:

Provide an enabling environment for children's personal, physical, social, emotional, moral and intellectual development.

Encourage and respect other employees' and children's voices and views.

Be inclusive and involve all children without selection or exclusion on the basis of gender, disability, ethnicity, religion or any other status.

Be aware of the potential for peer abuse (eg: children bullying, discriminating against, victimising or abusing children).

Develop special measures/supervision to protect younger and especially vulnerable children from peer and adult abuse.

Be aware of high risk peer situations (eg: unsupervised mixing of older and younger children and possibility of discrimination against minors).

Avoid placing oneself in a compromising or vulnerable situation when meeting with children.

Meet with a child in a public, central location whenever possible.

Immediately report the circumstances of any situation which occurs which may be subject to misinterpretation.

Make oneself aware and educated on the laws, rules and guidelines related to child protection as amended from time to time.

6. Inappropriate/Offensive behaviour for staff and employees:

Hit or otherwise physically assault a child.

Turn out a child from the classroom

Use language that will mentally or emotionally abuse

Show discrimination of race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality, political persuasion or any other status

Develop a sexual relation with a child.

Kiss, hug, fondle, rub or touch a child in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way.

Do things of a personal nature that a child could do for him/herself, including dressing, bathing and grooming.

Initiate physical contact unless initiated by the child (eg: holding hands).

Suggest inappropriate behaviour or relations of any kind.

Allow children to engage in sexually provocative games with each other.

Stand aside when they see inappropriate actions inflicted by children on other children because it is frequent and commonplace.

7. Behaviour Protocols for volunteers & staff members:

Should not give cash or any kind of gifts directly to the children, but always channelise the same through officials.

Should not 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.

Should not ask personal details of the child without a certain reason and if known, then not to divulge it to others.

Should not enter without accompanying staff to girls' or boys' residential facilities without prior permission from authority.

Should not ask any child to meet alone outside campus.

8. Complaint Mechanism:

i. Children in institutional care or their representatives can make individual requests or complaints to the director / management of the institution.

ii. In case of complaints against professional staff such as nurses or teachers, among others, working with and for children, a complaint can be made to the Monitoring Committee.

iii. The Committee will appoint a person responsible for attending to all complaints brought before it in a time bound and confidential manner.

9. Disciplinary Action

The disciplinary action will be commensurate with the nature of the violation (students)

Warning

Written apology

Bond of good behaviour

Debarring entry into campus Suspension for specific period of time

Withholding results

Debarring from exams

Debarring from contesting student election

Debarring from holding leadership posts or membership of Committees

Expulsion

Any other relevant mechanism

The disciplinary action will be commensurate with the nature of the violation (employees)

Written apology

Adverse remark in the Confidential Report

Suspension

Termination

Denial of re - employment

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