

Child Protection Policy – D Y Patil International School, Worli

Purpose

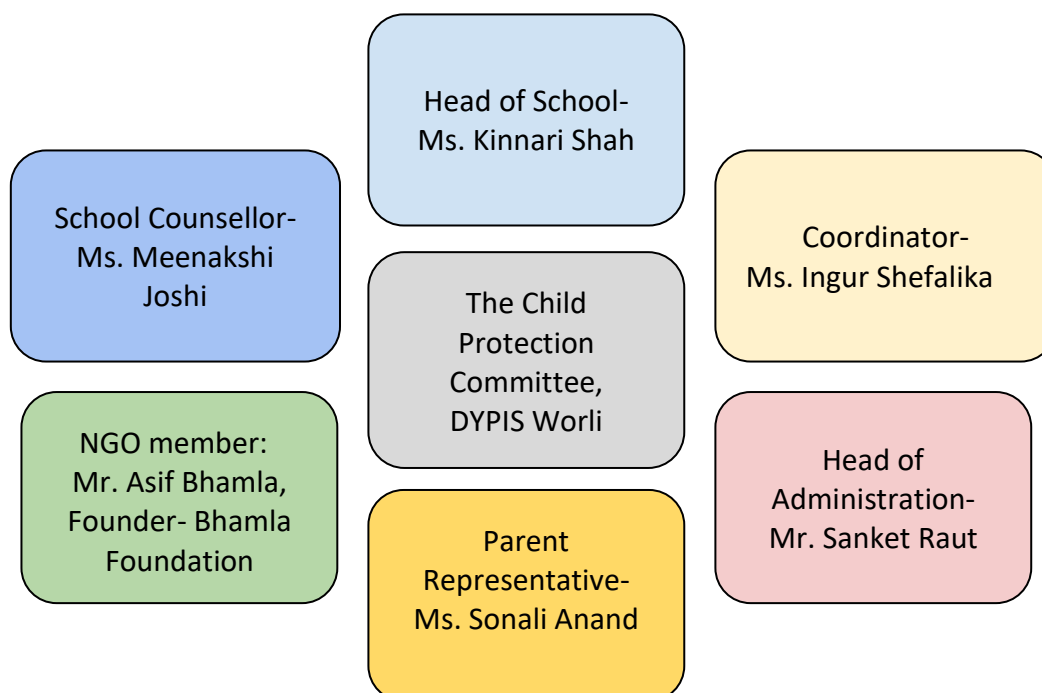
DYPIS, Worli is committed to safeguard the interest of children under its care and takes responsibility for their emotional and physical wellbeing when they are on the premises of the school. This policy applies to all the stakeholders involved in the child’s growth and development including the Senior Management Team, Teaching staff, Parents, Students, Non-teaching and ancillary staff who are working with the school. It aims to guide and direct the school community with procedures in case of allegation, suspicion, or incidence of abuse or neglect of students.

School’s Commitment

To ensure that any form of child abuse, verbal, psychological, and/or physical will not be ignored by the members of the Child Protection Committee of DYPIS, Worli or any trainer/vendor associated with DYPIS, Worli. The school understands that any form of child abuse is a criminal offence. We ensure that child protection is given utmost importance and the issue of child abuse is dealt with empathy and professionalism. The school follows a “Zero Tolerance Policy” and every suspected or reported incident is dealt with by the Senior Management Team and the Counsellor in cooperation with the parents and the students. The stakeholders are encouraged to be vigilant - to notice any underlying behaviour involving abuse and report it to the concerned authorities.

Child Protection Committee at DYPIS, Worli

The Child Protection Committee at DYPIS Worli includes -



Child abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, commercial or other exploitation resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. (Source: A report of the consultation on child abuse prevention, WHO, Geneva, 29-31 March 1999)

1. TYPES OF ABUSE EVERY CHILD MUST BE PROTECTED FROM

1.1. Physical abuse

According to WHO, physical abuse of a child is defined as the intentional use of physical force against a child that results in – or has a high likelihood of resulting in – harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity. Physical abuse may involve hitting, punching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, biting, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing intentional physical harm to a child. (These symptoms could also indicate harm to self, such as, cutting and suicide ideation).

1.2. Emotional/psychological abuse

According to WHO, emotional and psychological abuse involves both isolated incidents as well as a pattern of failure over time on the part of a parent or caregiver to provide a developmentally appropriate and supportive environment so that the child can develop a stable and full range of emotional and social competencies commensurate with his or her personal potential and in the context of the society in which the child dwells. Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved; that they are inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person, age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children causing children frequently to feel frightened, or the exploitation or corruption of children are few of the types of emotional abuse.

1.3. Neglect and negligent treatment

According to WHO, neglect includes both isolated incidents, as well as a pattern of failure over time on the part of a parent or other family member to provide for the development and well-being of the child – where the parent is in a position to do so – in one or more of the following areas- health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter and safe living conditions. Negligence might take place irrelevant of the financial condition of the parents. Neglect is the failure on the part of the parents, guardian, teacher or any other responsible people to recognize or provide for the child's basic needs, such as food, shelter, medical care, educational opportunities, or protection and supervision. It is abused through omission of the necessary environment and resources for the child to reach their full potential.

1.4. Exploitation

Commercial or other exploitation of a child refers to the use of the child in work or other activities for the benefit of others. This includes, but is not limited to, child labour and child prostitution. These activities are detrimental to the child's physical or mental health, education, spiritual, moral or social-emotional development.

1.5. Sexual abuse

According to WHO, "Child sexual abuse is the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared or that violates the laws or social taboos of society".

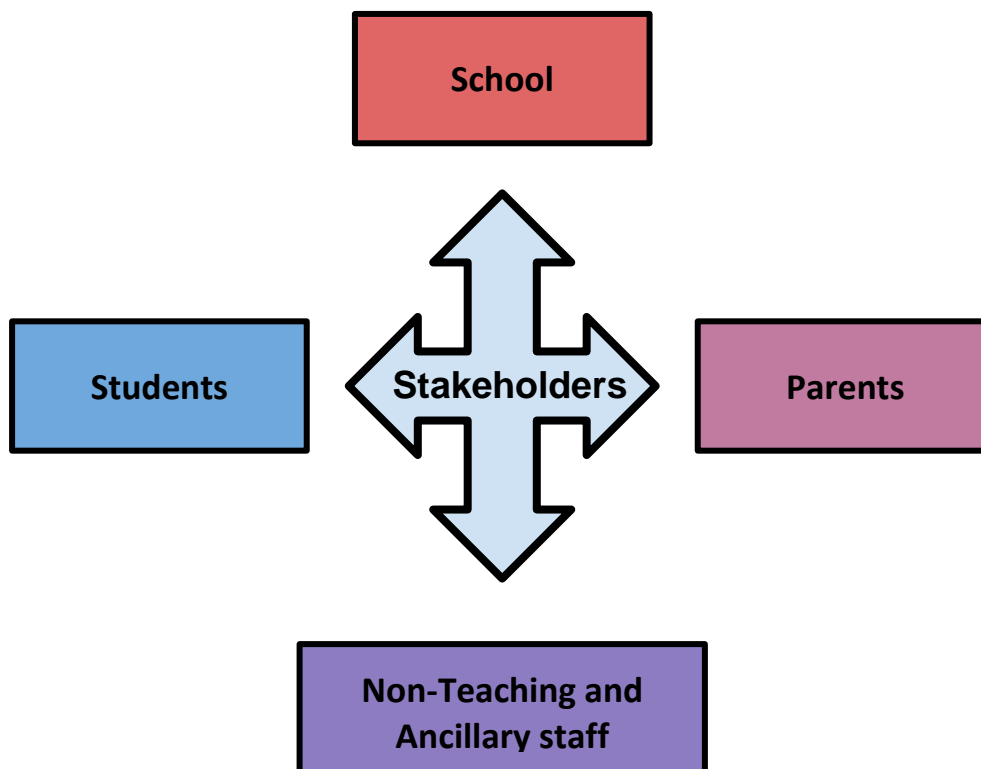
1.5.1. Sexual abuse is an act or behaviour which constitutes a sexual offence under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012, as amended from time to time. Such sexual offences include penetrative sexual assault (including rape), non-penetrative sexual assault (including touching the private parts of a child), sexual harassment (including stalking a child, showing a child pornography and making a child exhibit his/her body) and using a child for pornographic purposes (including storing of pornographic material involving a child for commercial purposes).

1.5.2. An abetment of and an attempt to commit a sexual offence under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 are also considered to be offences. Certain offences under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 are considered to be aggravated offences and are subject to stringent punishments. For instance, sexual assault committed by persons in a position of trust or authority in relation to the child (including relatives of the child, persons managing or working in an educational institution, police officers or public servants) are considered to be aggravated offences.

1.6 Abuse in Virtual Space

Virtual worlds have become a regular destination for children. Easy access and affordable fees enable children of all walks of life to participate in virtual worlds. Games specifically, appear to be a great attraction for young children in their use of the internet. While virtual worlds provide entertainment to many children, it also offers opportunities for sexual child offenders to access contact with vulnerable children. Aggressors can exploit all the possible communication channels of virtual worlds (chat, messengers, video and audio) to perpetrate virtual sexual abuse (sexual age play, virtual rape and pornography) via avatars, and traditional forms of online sexual abuse (exposure to sexually explicit/harmful content, the creation, storage and distribution of real child pornography, and online solicitation which can lead to three devastating contact crimes: rape, sex tourism and child trafficking). Devoid of geographical borders and lacking in a universally agreed upon and accepted definition of both online child sexual abuse and virtual sexual abuse, law enforcement can do little should an abuse become known. It becomes imperative for parents and caregivers to engage with their children in discussions of safety and for the collaboration of parents, schools, virtual world operators and law enforcement to join in efforts to prevent such abuse, especially in the case of child-headed homes where there is no primary parental supervision. (Reddy and Minnaar ,2019)

2. ROLES OF STAKEHOLDERS



2.1 Role of The School

- To make the Child Protection Policy available to all parents via the school's website.
- To appoint faculty and support staff who are well qualified, competent and of sound nature to carry out the school's programmes, services, and activities to ensure student protection and well-being.
- To ensure all school staff members are aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.
- To create awareness among the parents, students, teaching, non-teaching and the ancillary staff about the Child Protection Policy followed by the school.
- To inform stakeholders about the nature of abuse, consequences of such abuse and the ways to report any suspected/ confirmed abuse with evidence.
- Staff members are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with students.
- Staff members may on extremely necessary occasions have to help change student's clothes when administering first aid, or after accidents, for PE etc.
- The complaint of child abuse is addressed directly to the Head of School. If the complaint is against the Head of School it should be addressed to the Chairperson of the Management. All complaints should be documented by the committee.

- If a complaint includes an accusation against another child, for incidents that occurred within the school premises, the accused child's parents are informed by the school. Discipline will remain solely ensured by the CPC.
- The school aims at taking prompt action against any incidence of abuse.
- No members of the school staff are allowed to investigate the matter without consulting the CPC.
- With concerns about possible abuse, the CPC member and Head of School will inform the POSCO wing of the Police department. No other person is entitled to inform the matter to any third party or Media without permission of the CPC.
- To inform the POCSO wing of the police department about the abuse.
- To review the Child Protection Policy every two years.
- To train the staff with POCSO training.
- To make students aware that they can access the Child Helpline 1098 in case they wish to report any abuse.
- To inform the stakeholders that any person who might be aware of the fact of physical abuse of a child and fails to report such a fact to the CPC is punishable with imprisonment of 6 months or fine under Law.
- To inform the stakeholders that anybody giving false complaints to CPC shall be also punishable under Law.
- To conduct sessions on Cyber Safety for parents and students informing them about appropriate Virtual Behaviour and conduct and consequences of indulging in abuse through virtual platforms.
- Teachers/staff should not be allowed to email or call children except and unless it is related to school work. No child or parent should be contacted on social media by the school staff.
- To install CCTVs in classrooms and in school premises and ensure that their feed is monitored.
- To have safe boundaries around photographing children, using photographs of children, Internet and technology usage within the school premises. Arrange for regular sessions on personal safety with all children.
- To create a committee consisting of the Principal, one male teacher, one female teacher, one female student, one male student and one non-teaching staff member must be set up to serve as complaints and redressal body.
- The coordinators should have access to the virtual classrooms to monitor lessons.
- The participant who behaves inappropriately in the virtual classrooms should be given enough reminders and then put in the waiting room. In case of usage of abusive language or sharing of inappropriate content done by the participant/s, the facilitators should remove the student/s immediately and inform their respective co-ordinators.
- The staff must adhere to norms set by school in terms of the attire allowed at the workplace in a physical classroom as well as a virtual classroom.
- The staff should be mindful of the language used to interact with the students. Derogatory and demeaning language should be strictly avoided.

2.2 Role of the Parents

- To inform the school with the names of all people 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.
- To brief school about arrangements following any separation or divorce.
- To brief the school about any major life changing event that might affect the student emotionally or psychologically.
- To inform the school of any possible or confirmed incidents of child abuse taken place within the premises of the school and not to deal with the issue on their own.
- To make their child aware that they can access the Child Helpline 1098 in case they wish to report any abuse.
- To be informed that any person who might be aware of the fact of physical abuse of a child and fails to report such a fact to the CPC is punishable with imprisonment of 6 months or a fine under Law.
- To be informed that anybody giving false complaints to CPC shall be also punishable under law.
- To monitor the student's virtual behaviour to safeguard them from potential abuse virtually.

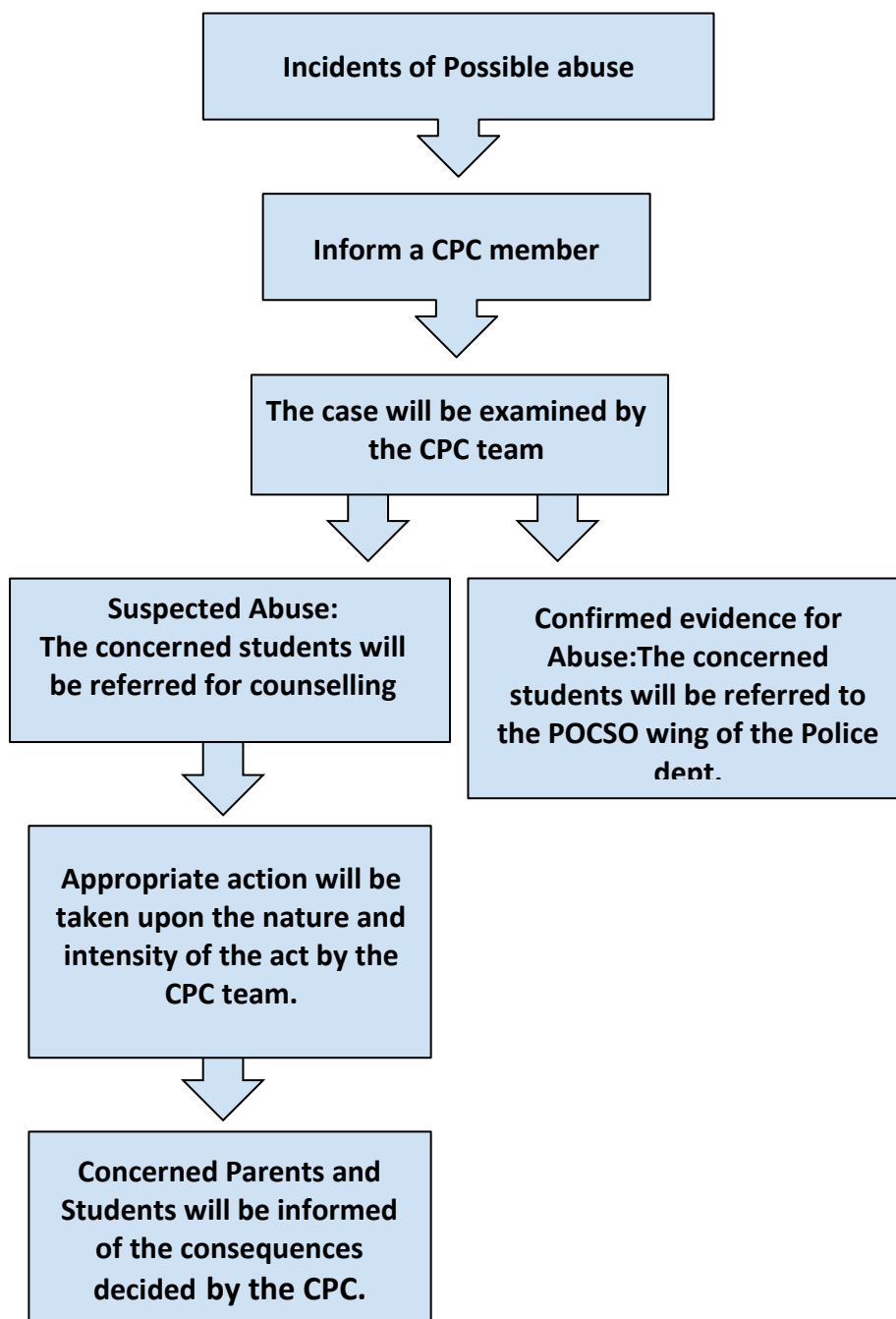
2.3 Role of the Students

- To inform the teachers/counsellor about any incident of abuse that they have undergone or witnessed physically or virtually so that the teachers can report the incident to the CPC.
- To be aware that they or their parents can access the Child Helpline 1098 in case they wish to report any abuse.
- To be informed that withholding of any information related to the abuse is a punishable offence.
- To be informed that any person who might be aware of the fact of physical abuse of a Child and fails to report such a fact to the CPC is punishable with imprisonment of 6 months or a fine under Law.
- To be informed that anybody giving false complaints to CPC shall be also punishable under Law.
- To adhere to the school norms, be mindful of their own actions and safeguard themselves by indulging in appropriate behaviour at all times.

2.4 Role of the Non teaching and the Ancillary Staff

- To be aware of the POCSO rules about maintaining distance from the students and indulging in appropriate behaviour during student interaction.
- To report to the Administration senior most staff (the Team member of CPC) about any incident of abuse that they have witnessed.
- To be informed that withholding of any information related to the abuse is a punishable offence.
- To be informed that any person who might be aware of the fact of physical abuse of a Child and fails to report such a fact to the CPC is punishable with imprisonment of 6 months or a fine under Law.
- To be informed that anybody giving false complaints to CPC shall be also punishable under Law.

3. PROCEDURE TO REPORT AN ABUSE AT DYPIS, Worli



4. Statement from the Council of International Schools and Middle States

The Council of International Schools (CIS) and the Middle States Association (MSA) have added specific standards related to Child Protection Programs in their most recent edition of accreditation standards. International schools can reasonably anticipate that, following the leadership of The Council of International Schools and the Middle States Association, other accreditation agencies will similarly include Child Protection Standards in the next revision of

their standards. All international schools will be well served by these standards in developing the Child Protection Program for their community.

To reflect evolving programs and practices in the areas of Child Protection and related issues as well as the continuity of learning programs in exceptional circumstances, CIS and MSA are introducing a specific number of amendments to the Accreditation Standards and Indicators contained in the 8th Edition of the “Guide to School Evaluation and Accreditation”. These amendments will apply to all schools, whatever their position in the accreditation cycle, from 1st January 2013 onwards.

Standard D1

The school shall have faculty and support staff that is sufficient in numbers and with the qualifications, competencies and sound moral character necessary to carry out the school’s programmes, services, and activities, to support the fulfilment of the mission and objectives, and to ensure student protection and well-being.

Indicator D1a

Recruitment and screening processes are in place to ensure that employees in all categories are appropriately qualified and of sound moral character.

Indicator E4b

A culture of shared responsibility for the social and emotional well-being and protection of students is promoted by the school leadership and teachers through programmes to address awareness, prevention and responsiveness to issues such as sexual harassment, substance abuse, hazing and bullying, and discrimination in any form.

Indicator G4b

Appropriate and regularly reviewed arrangements exist to cover threats to the security of people and premises as well as to support – to the extent possible - programme continuity under exceptional circumstances.

Definition of Terms

Child protection - concerns include suspected, alleged, self-disclosed, or witnessed abuse of a child by anyone associated within or outside the school which must be investigated and followed by appropriate action.

Child Abuse - According to the World Health Organization, child abuse constitutes, “All forms of physical and/or emotional illtreatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health,

survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.”

A person may abuse a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional (e.g. school) or community setting; children may be abused by individuals known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger. Often children may experience multiple forms of abuse simultaneously, further complicating the problem.

Most child abuse is inflicted by someone the child knows, respects or trusts. International school communities have unique characteristics of which school personnel must be aware in terms of the individuals who are around the children. School personnel should be knowledgeable of the potential reasons why children may not be able to talk about any victimization they might have experienced.

5. Long-term impact of unmitigated abuse

The impact of child abuse can persist for a lifetime after the abuse has been committed. Some victims of abuse are resilient and thus manage to function and survive.

Much research has established the relationship between long-term child abuse and life-time health and well-being, especially if the children do not get appropriate support to help them cope with the trauma. The most important point to consider is that children often are exposed to multiple forms of abuse and suffer a myriad of symptoms.

Furthermore, all forms of abuse have the potential for long-term impact on the victims, and can affect the victim's ability to function as a human being. Abuse challenges the self-value, self-esteem, and sense of worth of its victims, rendering them hopeless, helpless and unable to live a complete life.

Long-term impact of child abuse

- Poor educational achievement
- Inability to complete responsibilities
- Inability to live according to a plan/ability
- Inability to care for self
- Inability to co-exist, cooperate or work with others
- Lack of self-confidence, prone to addiction
- Inability to express love / or accept love
- Inability to lead family, constant health problem
- Prone to mental health related issues.
- Low self-esteem, depression and anxiety
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Attachment difficulties
- Eating disorders
- Poor peer relations
- Self-injurious behaviour (e.g., suicide attempts)

6. Early warning signs to look out for, in sexual abuse offenders

Signs of offenders (students)

- Uses force and coercion in social situations
- Unusual intensity when discussing sex and sexuality
- Socializes inappropriately with children much younger
- Gives gifts, requires secrecy in relationships
- Unusual interest in sex, sexualizing inanimate objects and activities
- Does not stop sexual misbehaviour when told to stop

Signs of offenders (adults)

- Has “favourite” student or child
- Attempts to find ways to be alone with children
- Inappropriate language, jokes and discussions about students/children
- Sexualized talk in the presence of students/children
- Gives private gifts or has private chats on Facebook/internet.

7. Consequences faced by offenders for abusing any child

- In incidents involving abuse with evidence, the CPC member and Head of School will take a decision based on the evidence and then might inform the POSCO wing of the Police department. No other person is entitled to inform the matter to any third party or Media without permission of the CPC.
- If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, that staff may be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils, and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigations.
- Confidentiality will be breached in cases of intentions of self harm or intentions of harming any other person. Confidentiality about cases of abuse will be entirely a call taken by the CPC. A formal announcement will be made to teaching staff about the outcome. Either the member of staff will be fully reinstated or the member of staff will be terminated from work.
- In all cases the child, about whom a concern is raised will be explained about the necessity to pass information on to the CPC and perhaps other agencies if required.
- Consequences for an abuse will be decided entirely by the CPC examining the nature and intensity of the abuse.
- Any person who is aware of the fact of physical abuse of a Child and fails to report such a fact to the CPC is punishable with imprisonment of 6 months or fine under Law.
- Anybody giving false complaints to CPC shall be also punishable under Law.

References:

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/child-maltreatment>

<https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/POCSO%20Act%2C%202012.pdf>

<https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Protection%20of%20Children%20From%20Sexual%20Offences%20%28Amendment%29%20Act%2C%202019%20%281%29.pdf>

<https://www.teachforindia.org/child-protection-policy/>

https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/POCSO%20Rules%20merged_2.pdf

<https://www.icmec.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/AISA-CP-Handbook-2016.pdf>

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/long-term-consequences/>

<https://www.childlineindia.org/>¹

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/291295038_Safeguarding_children_from_becoming_victims_of_online_sexual_abuse_facilitated_by_virtual_worlds

Handbook on Implementation of POCSO Act, 2012 for School Management and Staff

<https://cutt.ly/0cRHUm>