

ਵਿਦਿਆ ਵੀਚਾਰੀ ਤਾਂ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ॥

THE KALGIDHAR TRUST

*Creating Educational Revolution in Northern India
under the divine guidance of Hon'ble Baba Iqbal Singh Ji*



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The Principals / Head Mistress
Akal Academies

Subject: Regarding Child Safety & Security

For realisation of the goals of universalisation of elementary and secondary education, it is critical to ensure safety and well-being of children in schools.

Guideline on safety and security of children

1. Children require a healthy and supportive environment to grow and develop. All children have a right to live in dignity, and have access to education in an environment that is safe, protective and conducive to growth and development. The school environment is associated with overall growth and development, cognitive behaviour, safety and security of a child. Schools need to protect their children from risk of natural disasters, health hazards, abuse, violence and accidents.

2. Suggestive Guideline for affirmative action

The safety and security of children may be looked at in multiple dimensions.

2.1.1 Location

Schools located near the highway, busy main roads, unmanned railway crossing or water Bodies/ canals/ seasonal rivers etc. are hazardous for the children, as most of the children come to school and return unattended by guardians. Also during playtime, children may wander off to unsafe surroundings including under construction civil works within the campus and places where materials are stored. Schools located in commercial areas and having tobacco selling shops nearby the school pose a different type of threat where children's health and safety may be affected insidiously. Eve teasing is another problem which the older girls may face at certain locations on the way to schools and this may ultimately lead to school avoidance by girl students.

For the existing academies the following points may be considered on priority:

- Training of children and teachers to negotiate the specific hazards en route to the school.
- Community awareness needs to be generated to impact parental choice so that they select schools within the neighbourhood.

2.1.2 Building

The building should be physically sound, all-weather structure with the following facilities and structural parameters:

- Drinking water source and toilets to have clean and aseptic draining soak-pits/ waste disposal.
- The building should be resistant to earthquakes, fire, safe from floods and other calamities as the children are more vulnerable to be harmed and less likely to be able to react effectively in case calamity strikes.
- The building should be free from inflammable and toxic materials.

- The school should have adequate emergency exits.
- There should be adequate supply of water and sand for firefighting purposes.

2.1.3 Campus:

One of the serious hazards for children in schools is uncovered, exposed, loose electricity cables and wires. Out of curiosity or in playful mood or accidentally, there is possibility of touching or pulling the live wires causing fatal hazard to life. The school play-ground should be levelled to avoid falling down of children which may cause injuries. Digging of wells, bore wells etc. should be cordoned off securely to prevent children from falling in. Schools having secluded rooms/ corners within the campus having the possibility of anti- social activities which can prove to be hazardous for children, particularly for girls should be securely cordoned off or locked up. Also construction of additional class rooms/toilets etc. may pose potential danger to children due to exposed construction materials/building under construction and these should be made out of bounds for children. Review within the campus must be taken up by the Principals and teachers continuously.

2.1.4 Classroom:

The class rooms should be white washed at periodic intervals and dusted regularly to maintain the class room hygiene. The windows should be secured and there should be no broken glass or fittings hanging loose. Class room floor should not be broken or uneven and may need to be repaired/maintained annually.

2.1.5 Teachers and Staff

Continuous education of teachers on the principles of child rights and the drills for safety and security in the event of disasters and accidents need to be systematically planned. The aspects of teacher's sensitization on response to disasters and respect for child rights should also be actively woven into teacher training programmes.

2.1.6 Excursions and trips:

Whenever schools organise excursions and trips, for any reason what-so-ever, the onus of safety and security of the children is totally upon the school authorities. The transportation used must be verified for road worthiness and the driver for antecedents and experience. Sufficient number of male and female teachers must be deployed so that boys and girls are adequately supervised. Arrangements for board and lodging should be made keeping in view the security and safety of the children.

2.2 Health and Hygiene:

Drinking Water

Sources of drinking water is important as availability of potable water or treatment required for making the water potable depends on the source. Most of the water borne diseases spread due to ignorance of the quality of drinking water. In case of schools, care is to be taken by the school authorities to ensure that water is safe.

2.2.2 Toilets:

There should be separate toilets for girls and boys. For hygienic maintenance of toilets, availability of water is of prime importance. Although the facility of running water is necessary for keeping the toilet clean.

2.2.3 Hygiene:

Teachers need to be trained to regularly monitor and ensure the general hygiene factors in the school premises and also of the children. Other than the basic hygiene factors, teachers can be sensitized to the local and specific issues, for example the preventive and curative steps in areas with prevalence of Japanese Encephalitis, iodine deficiency etc. There are also reports of substance and drug abuse at a very early age. Teachers should also be alerted on the signs and symptoms to watch out among children, especially as some of these are also linked to child's absence from schools, where a collaborative approach between teachers and parents would be required.

2.3 Psychological Punishment

Verbal, physical or mental abuse of children has negative impact on young minds and such children gradually develops fear –psychosis. They are unable to speak up, break down emotionally and mentally and ultimately loose the enthusiasm to come to school. Physical punishment inflicted on children in school could lead to minor or major injury or damage to physical health, for example twisting of the ears may damage internal parts of ears leading to deafness.

The following steps can be taken to eliminate the corporal punishments.

- Repeated and intensive training of teachers.
- In Service rules where duties and responsibilities of teachers are prescribed specific mention should be made for protection of children providing them safe and child friendly environment in school and prohibition of any form of corporal punishment, harassment discrimination or verbal abuse.

Eve teasing/sexual abuse:

These are becoming serious issues as incidents get reported from schools and nearby places.

Children should be taught early to differentiate between 'good touch/bad touch' and encouraged to speak out at the first instance.

It vests totally with the teachers to ensure that the schools are safe in this regard. The Principal /Headmistress and teachers must ensure that all parts of the school are accessible to everyone and there are no secluded/ isolated areas. Also the teachers should be sensitized to detect such an occurrence if the child displays any sign, which may include investigating sudden absence or unusual behaviour.

School Environment:

The school environment should be such that each child should feel that help would be available to him/her if he/she approached them. Children may find it easier to report incidents at the initial stage itself if the school environment is conducive.

Learning Together



Leading Together


Dr. Neelam Kaur

P.S. We should include one period in our time table for making children aware of safety and security. They may refer to 'My first Safety Workbook' (Series of 10 books ranging from K.G. to X).