



WOODSTOCK SCHOOL POLICY MANUAL

1.15 BOARD POLICY: POLICY ON CHILD PROTECTION

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

I. POLICY STATEMENT

Woodstock School believes that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect, all individuals regardless of their age, culture, challenges, gender, language, racial origin, physical condition, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse. Woodstock School works to provide an environment where no one is subject to any kind of abuse including sexual abuse or grooming, and/or bullying from students, parents or adults employed by the school.

Woodstock School views the welfare of each individual as paramount and is committed to providing a safe, nurturing community, within which everyone can live, study, learn, work and mature. Therefore, abuse (including sexual abuse and grooming) or bullying of any kind is unacceptable. This policy deals specifically with the issue of abuse, bullying, sexual abuse or grooming by students or adults in the community. All suspicion and/or allegations of grooming, sexual, inappropriate and abusive behaviour as defined in this document will be taken seriously and responded to by stern and appropriate measures.

In regard to child protection, Woodstock School is committed to aligning with the responsibilities set out in the laws of India (see References) read with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) See Appendix I and II.

All staff are required to complete a Child Protection course prior to students arriving on campus at the beginning of each academic year through Educare called "Child Protection Basics for International Schools" available at the link here: [Child Protection](#).

POLICY & PROCEDURES

II. DEFINITION

- 1. Staff member** - includes administrators, any staff appointed directly / indirectly by school administration, interns, student teachers, volunteers and employees. Any other person, such as a spouse / family member of a serving staff who are not working for the school but are currently staying with the staff member in or outside the school campus/ property are also included in this definition.
- 2. Child** - any child (Woodstock students, children of staff or employees or any child under the age of 18 years, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.)
- 3. Child abuse** -Child abuse, sometimes called child maltreatment, describes four types of child mistreatment: physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, and neglect. In many cases, children are the victims of more than one type of abuse. The abusers can be parents or other family members, caregivers such as teachers or babysitters, acquaintances (including other children), and (in rare instances) strangers.



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4. **Grooming** - Child grooming is befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, and sometimes the family, to lower the child's inhibitions with the object of child sexual abuse.
5. **Counsellor** – A qualified staff member specially assigned the duty to make a proper detailed report to monitor and ensure the welfare of the victim.

III. PROHIBITED BEHAVIOUR

The following behaviour will be considered abuse in staff-child relationships at Woodstock:

1. Physical abuse

Any action that causes physical pain, hurt, injury or discomfort to a student, however light, comes within the ambit of physical abuse. It includes but is not restricted to the following:

- i) Using physical contact to correct or punish a student, or deliberately hurting or injuring a student physically; provided that nothing in the above mentioned definition includes any kind of bruise or injury which occurs during any sports or athletic activity or any other routine activity of the school.
- ii) Using any form of corporal punishment that causes discomfort to the student including for example, standing on a bench, standing with a schoolbag on one's head, holding one's ears through one's legs, kneeling etc.
- iii) Giving students alcohol, substances containing alcohol, inappropriate drugs, illegal drugs or other harmful substances;
- iv) Detention (to keep in custody or confinement) in the classroom, library, toilet or any enclosed/locked space in the school.

A doctor or a technically qualified medical staff member may need to be assigned to conduct a physical exam as soon as practicable to ensure evidence is not lost following a reported incident. Notwithstanding anything in the above-mentioned paragraphs, in case of medical emergency, only authorised medical staff can provide any legally permitted medication (containing alcohol) to any student/child within the school premises.

2. Emotional abuse

Any non-physical treatment of a student that is harmful to the psychological development of a student falls within the purview of emotional abuse. It includes but is not restricted to the following:

- i) Withholding of approval, affection or respect;
- ii) Abusing power (intimidation, threats, silencing);
- iii) Frequently and unnecessarily shouting at or taunting students;
- iv) Using bullying or stereotyping comments publicly or privately against a student or group of students;
- v) Ridiculing a student with regard to his or her family background or status or community; and
- vi) Belittling a student for poor academic performance.



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Notwithstanding anything in this clause, any advice or corrective statements given *bona fide* by a staff member, in furtherance of the development of a student, shall not be considered as an incident of emotional abuse.

3. Sexual abuse/grooming

- i) Making sexual innuendos or telling risqué jokes in the presence of an individual student or groups of students;
- ii) Sharing personal sexual information with students;
- iii) Participating in any form of physical sexual contact or sexual activity with any student;
- iv) Showing inappropriate intimacy, either verbally or physically towards a student or anyone else in the presence of the student;
- v) Sharing pornographic materials, taking pictures or any form of recording media for pornographic reasons with students; and
- vi) Grooming, as it may lure minors into child trafficking, illicit businesses such as child prostitution, or the production of child pornography.

4. Neglect

- i) Failing to notice, pay attention and respond to students' basic emotional and/or physical needs;
- ii) Leaving students alone for long periods and/or inadequately supervised (based on appropriate age norms);
- iii) Failing to ensure students' safety; and
- iv) Failing to respond to allegations of abuse (as defined in this policy and national laws).

5. Discrimination

- i) Assigning different tasks to the students based on caste, community or gender prejudices;
- ii) Bringing social attitudes and prejudices into the school by using belittling remarks against a specific social group or gender or ability/disability;
- iii) Using derogatory remarks against a child; and
- iv) Discriminating against a student on the grounds of academic ability.

6. Other acts

- i) Any other acts which *the school or the law deems* inappropriate.

IV. PREVENTION OF ABUSE

1. Student Protection Panel (SPP)

A Student Protection Panel which includes an administrator, Head of Personal Counselling, the Chaplain, the Resident Medical Officer and two residence staff members is in place to protect students from the above-mentioned prohibited behaviours by any staff member, volunteer, or employee.



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The SPP is responsible to:

- i) Ensure the Child Protection policy is kept up-to-date and the procedures regularly reviewed in the light of experience or changing situations;
- ii) Ensure that all staff, volunteers and employees understand the policy and procedures and put them into practice;
- iii) Educate staff and students regarding the policy and investigating reports or violations of the policy and communicating information to the Principal;
- iv) Compile a report for the Principal about any allegation of abuse and the outcome;
- v) Create awareness through various programs;
- vi) Develop training programs for staff, students and parents; and
- vii) Ensure that the names and contact details of the committee are clearly displayed on the school premises.

If an allegation is against the Principal or a member of the Board, then the report should be forwarded to the President of the Board.

2. Compulsory reporting obligation

- i) Staff (including members of the SPP), Employees and Students need to report any hint, gossip or suggestion, observation, suspicion of any allegation to the SPP;
- ii) The SPP is required to prepare a report consisting of all the material information along with details of the informant. Moreover, the report needs to explain the circumstance of the source of the information so the investigating officer can make an informed decision to assess a rating/prioritization of a case; and
- iii) The report shall be expeditiously forwarded to either the Special Juvenile Police Unit or the local police without any delay.

3. Recruitment procedures

- i) All applications for positions at Woodstock will be subject to careful scrutiny during the application process. The scrutiny procedure will be designed to elicit information about the applicant's career and past experience (requiring explanations for any gaps in employment history);
- ii) A compulsory background check to rule out the existence of any criminal record or allegation of sexual/grooming/physical/emotional abuse must take place. If any such record exists, the applicant will be barred from employment. References will be collected for all administrators, staff and volunteers applying to Woodstock School.

V. Policy dissemination

All staff members, consultants, volunteers and employees serving at Woodstock School and spouses resident on campus will receive a copy of this policy and sign a statement that they have read and will abide by it, both in terms of their own conduct and in terms of their professional responsibility for the conduct of colleagues and students.



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A copy of the Child Protection Policy will be distributed in the orientation folder for new staff, volunteers and employees. A signed acknowledgement of receiving this policy and having read it will be kept in their personnel file. A copy of the policy shall be provided to the parents or guardians of students for their reference.

In case any changes are made to the policy, all staff members, consultants, volunteers, employees and spouses resident on campus must be made aware of the changes and will be required to re-sign the new policy.

Students, Parents and Guardians must be made aware of this policy through orientation programmes and routine parent communications.

VI. Visitors on campus

A confidential list of individuals who are barred from the school campus by virtue of past infringement of this policy or a similar policy in place at the time will be circulated to the Principal to ensure that such persons are not allowed on campus.

A record of people entrusted with the responsibility of dropping and receiving a student at the school will be maintained from the beginning of each academic year. No other person, apart from the names mentioned in the list shall be allowed to take custody of the child, in whatsoever manner, from the school premises.

I understand the Student Protection Policy and agree to abide by these guidelines as written.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDICES & REFERENCES

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child ratified by India on 11th December 1992
- Anti-Bullying policy, reference
- Prevention of Children from Sexual Offences Act read with the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2013 and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Rules, 2012
- The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 read with The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Rules, 2007 and the National Charter for Children, 2003
- The Constitution of India



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REVIEW & REVISION

Policy owner: Dean of Student Life
 Written by: Jeff Doerfler, Dean of Student Life
 Review by: Education Team
 Approval required: Education Team

POLICY UPDATES HISTORY:

Date	Reviewed by & Date of review	Approved by & Date of approval	Next review
2003		Ad Cab – David Jeffery	2011
March 2012	Director of Student Services	PAC Mach 21, 2012	March 2014
September 2015	Dean of Student Life Education Team	Education Team Date: 09/09/2015	August 2017
April 2017	Dean of Student Life & Education Team 19-Apr-2017	Board of Directors Date: 28-Apr-2017	April 2020
August 2017	Rab and Rab Associates LLP, Law Firm 29-April-2017 Education Team 11-Dec 2017	Board of Directors 16-Nov-2017 Asked Board legal member to review Bhavenesh Kumari Patiala 21-Nov-2017	November 2020
September 2020	Education Committee 20 Aug 2020	Board of Directors September 2020 Approved w a request to review the Acts and legal references to ensure they are the most updated references.	September 2023
October 2021	Principal	The composition of the SPP was re-constituted due to departure of some members	September 2023