

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Policy Statement

The Mahindra United World College, India (MUWCI) is committed to the prevention of child abuse and to the protection of children in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Decisions to report or act upon suspected cases of child abuse or neglect will be based on the preliminary investigation establishing such act has been committed as defined by the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 heeding to the prevailing laws of India and Maharashtra.

This commitment means that the interests and welfare of children are our primary consideration when any decision is made about suspected cases of abuse or neglect.

The procedures outlined in the policy are in line with the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2000 and The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012.

When required, we are committed to providing families with access to outside agencies and/or individuals who can support families in resolving issues associated with child abuse.

We promote safe practice within the College community whereby all students will feel confident to bring their concerns forward and feel supported in those concerns.

This policy refers to the professional responsibility of any employee of the College relating to children as students in the College or children who an employee of the College may have contact with through the outreach educational institution of Akshara/Triveni.

Definitions

Child: Any person below the age of 18 is considered a child.

MUWCI: Mahindra United World College of India.

Akshara/Triveni: Mahindra UWC College Educational Outreach

MUWCI Faculty: Adults appointed, who primarily work with IB Diploma Students residing at the College.

MUWCI / Akshara Faculty: Adults appointed, who primarily work in an educational support role with children in the local community.

MUWCI Staff: - MUWCI faculty and MUWCI Akshara faculty collectively.

Child Abuse: Child abuse is the term used to describe different types of

maltreatment inflicted on a child or young person. It includes non-accidental physical injury, neglect, sexual abuse and emotional abuse, including psychological harm of children and young people and requires different and specialized responses. In its most serious forms, abuse can lead to death or long term harm to the physical or emotional well-being of a child or young person.

Areas of Abuse

There are four main areas of Child Abuse. It should be recognised that any signs of abuse may also be symptomatic of other problems.

1. Neglect

Neglect is the persistent or severe neglect of a child, which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development. It can occur where parents/guardians fail to meet the basic and essential needs of their children such as food, clothing and medical care. Parents refusing or failing to give love and affection to their children is a case of emotional neglect.

Signs or symptoms which may possibly indicate neglect:

- a. Hunger
- b. Tiredness or listlessness
- c. Child dirty or unkempt
- d. Poor school attendance or often late for school
- e. Poor concentration
- f. Affection-demanding or attention-seeking behaviour
- g. Stealing or scavenging compulsively
- h. Failure to achieve developmental milestones

2. Physical Abuse:

This is physical injury to a child with reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. It involves any non-accidental injury where someone physically hurt, injures or kills a child. This can involve hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning and biting. It also includes giving a child poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs or alcohol.

Signs or symptoms which may indicate physical abuse:

- a. Unexplained burns, cuts, bruising, inconsistent account of how bruising or injuries occurred, bite marks
- b. Bald patches
- c. Fear of going home or parents being contacted
- d. Depression or poor self-image

- e. Fear of medical help
- f. Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance
- g. Violence or aggression towards others including bullying

3. Sexual Abuse:

Sexual abuse includes children being involved in sexual activities that they do not fully comprehend or agree too. It occurs when the older person uses his/her power over the child to involve the latter in a sexual activity. It may involve:

- a. Sexual grooming
- b. Inappropriate exposure to sexual acts or materials
- c. Passive use of children as sexual stimuli for adults
- d. The child and young person may be subjected to exhibitionist activities, voyeurism or be coerced into posing for pornographic materials
- e. Inappropriate sexual contact or acts between older individuals and the child/young person
- f. Intercourse as a result of rape, assault and coercion

In India, Sexual Abuse includes any kind of sexual offence and is defined in line with the POCSO Act (2012). In keeping with the best international child protection standards, the said Act also provides for mandatory reporting of sexual offences.

The said Act defines a child as any person below eighteen years of age, and defines different forms of sexual abuse, including penetrative and non-penetrative assault, as well as sexual harassment and pornography, and deems a sexual assault to be “aggravated” under certain circumstances, such as when the abused child is mentally ill or when the abuse is committed by a person in a position of trust or authority vis-à-vis the child, like a family member, police officer, teacher, or doctor.

This casts a legal duty upon a person who has knowledge that a child has been sexually abused to report the offence; if he fails to do so, he may be punished with six months’ imprisonment and/ or a fine.

Signs or symptoms which may indicate sexual abuse:

**Please note that most frequently there are no signs of this type of abuse.*

- a. Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age inappropriate behaviour
- b. Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching
- c. Persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains
- d. Eating disorders
- e. Attention-seeking behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation
- f. Regressive behaviour

- g. Enuresis, soiling
- h. Frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately
- i. Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming
- j. Bruises, scratches in genital area
- k. Lack of trust of a familiar or particular adult
- l. Usually through complaint

4. Psychological/Emotional Abuse:

This type of abuse involves persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. This occurs where constant lack of love and affection, threats, verbal attacks, taunting, shouting, can lead to a child's loss of self-esteem. It can also include harassment or indifference on the basis of race, culture, gender or disability. Aspects of psychological and emotional abuse include:

- a. Hostile rejecting/degrading (e.g. taunts)
- b. Terrorising (e.g. threats or acts that induce fear)
- c. Actively isolating (e.g. locking a child in a room for extended periods of time)
- d. Exploiting/corrupting (e.g. teaching a child to steal)
- e. Denying emotional responsiveness (e.g. denying affection and shows of love)

Signs or symptoms which may indicate psychological abuse:

- a. Rocking, banging head, regression
- b. Self-mutilation, drug or solvent abuse
- c. Fear of parents being contacted
- d. Running away, compulsive stealing
- e. Masturbation in public
- f. Eating disorders
- g. Soiling, smearing faces, enuresis
- h. Sudden speech disorders, selective mutism
- i. Over-reaction to mistakes, continual self-deprecation
- j. Delayed physical/mental/emotional development

Responsibilities

Faculty members (MUWCI and Akshara) are particularly well-placed to observe the outward signs of abuse and the unexplained changes in behaviour or performance which may indicate abuse.

Protecting the welfare of children is the role of every professional who comes into

contact with children at MUWCI. This includes all staff knowing how to respond to suspected cases of child abuse and neglect and the process for reporting suspected case to the relevant persons.

Procedures

Safe Recruitment:

MUWCI is committed to safe recruitment. The Human Resources department follow rigorous procedures for the appointment of all members of staff in the college and in the Akshara/Triveni outreach programme.

Staff Training:

MUWCI is committed to maintaining and increasing staff awareness of how to prevent, recognise and respond to child abuse and neglect. This school ensures that all staff is updated annually on procedures relating to child abuse and neglect. As part of their induction, all adults will familiarise themselves with the MUWCI Child protection policy and will be encouraged to read additional resource material.

MUWCI staff will report concerns immediately to the Designated Child Protection Officer as given below:

Name	E-mail Id	Mobile Number
Aparna Ramchandran	aramchandran@muwci.net	+91 98901 83831

Akshara/Triveni children will report to the Head of Akshara, who will then immediately inform the Designated Child Protection Officer. MUWCI staff will be required to record observations using the Child Protection Concern Form 1 (see Appendix 2). The Child Protection Officer will investigate the matter fully and will give a report to the Head of College.

If there are obvious signs of harm the student will be taken for medical treatment immediately.

The Head of Campus Infrastructure Services will make the decision on whether to report to the relevant authorities based on the principle of this Child Protection policy and the laws of India.

Emergency:

First aid is to be given as in any emergency. Follow-up care and counselling will commence as soon as practical.

When the Student Discloses:

- a. Remain calm, do not panic or express shock.
- b. Listen carefully - do not prompt responses.
- c. Reassure the student - tell them they are doing the right thing and that you are glad they are confiding in an adult.
- d. Do not project or assume anything, let the student tell their story; leave your own assumptions out.

- e. Possible questions to ask in a non-leading manner include:
 - What happened to you?
 - Who did this to you?
 - Where did it happen?
 - When did this happen?
- f. Use age specific language. Ask for clarification for any meaning or words you don't understand.
- g. Let the student know they are believed.
- h. Let the student know that you will do your best to protect and support them.
- i. Do not promise secrecy to the student. Explain that it is necessary that in order to help them, you will have to tell certain other parties but it will be as confidential as possible. Assure them that their issue will not be general knowledge within the school community.
- j. Check that you have a full understanding of what the student has told you before the end of the discussion.
- k. Make the student comfortable. Ensure that the student is not left in a situation where he/she may be pressured to change their story.
- l. Report to the Child Protection Officer and Head of Akshara. You will be asked to record what the child has said or what you have observed, include dates and times. It is important that this is recorded in as much detail as possible so that the student/child does not have to repeat the details of abuse unnecessarily.
- m. In line with international guidelines, the College will not take any photographs of a child's injuries but instead records them by use of diagrams.
- n. Maintain confidentiality. Do not discuss this with any other members of staff, children or people outside of school. It will be considered a breach of professional standards if you do this.

When a Student supported by Akshara/Triveni discloses

Adopt the same procedure but report to the Head of the Akshara programme who will take appropriate action. This guidance applies to a Akshara faculty. Students who are working as volunteers should immediately inform the nearest responsible person in the partner organisation.

Training:

The College is also committed to updating staff on policies and procedures on an annual basis at the beginning of each academic year so that all those working with children understand their responsibilities and are familiar with expected practice.

A further commitment is training senior leadership on a regular basis to ensure that they are up to date.

Risk Assessment:

Risk assessments will be carried out for all activities and programmes that the College judges to involve risk to students.

Partner Organisations: As part of the risk assessment of activities and projects, due attention will be paid to the child safeguarding arrangements that are in place at those activities and projects.

Implementation of this Policy:

It will be the responsibility of the Head of Campus Infrastructure and Services, to ensure that the Policy is fully implemented.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed and updated each year in August. The Head of College will sign a copy of the revised policy and will share it with the Governing Board.

Appendix 1

STAFF HANDBOOK

What should you do if you are worried about a child's welfare?

Or

What should you do if a student/child tells you something that concerns you? (Makes a disclosure of abuse)

DO NOT KEEP YOUR CONCERNS TO YOURSELF

Abuse can be:

- a. Neglect (for example: dirty, no lunch, inappropriately dressed for weather)
- b. Physical (for example: bruising, burns, sores, bites)
- c. Emotional (for example: withdrawn or disturbing behaviour)
- d. Sexual (for example: inappropriate sexualised behaviour or comments). There are many other physical and behaviour indicators of abuse.

Any concerns relating to the MUWCI students should be reported

When the student/child discloses:

- a. Remain calm, do not panic or express shock.
- b. Listen carefully - do not prompt responses.
- c. Reassure the student/child - tell them they are doing the right thing and that you are glad they are confiding in an adult.
- d. Do not project or assume anything, let the student/child tell their story; leave your own assumptions out.
- e. Possible questions to ask in a non-leading manner include:
 - o What happened to you?
 - o Who did this to you?
 - o Where did it happen?
 - o When did this happen?
- f. Use age specific language. Ask for clarification for any meaning or words you don't understand.
- g. Let the student/child know they are believed.
- h. Let the student/child know that you will do your best to protect and support them.
- i. Do not promise secrecy to the student/child. Explain that it is necessary that in order to help them, you will have to tell certain other parties but it will be as confidential as possible. Assure them that their issue will (should) not be

general knowledge within the College community.

- j. Check that you have a full understanding of what the student/child has told you before the end of the discussion.
- k. Make the student/child comfortable. Ensure that the student/child is not left in a situation where he/she may be pressured to change their story.
- l. Report to the Child Protection Officer and Head of Akshara. You will be asked to record what the child has said or what you have observed, include dates and times. It is important that this is recorded in as much detail as possible so that the student/child does not have to repeat the details of abuse unnecessarily.
- m. In line with international guidelines, the College will not take any photographs of a child's injuries but instead records them by use of diagrams.
- n. Maintain confidentiality. Do not discuss this with any other members of staff, student, or people outside of school. It will be considered a breach of professional standards if you do this.

When a student/ Child supported by Akshara / Triveni Discloses:

Adopt the same procedure but report to the Head of the Akshara programme who will take appropriate action. This guidance applies to Akshara faculty. Students who are working as volunteers should immediately inform the nearest responsible person in the partner organization.

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AND DUTY AS A MEMBER OF STAFF AT MUWCI, TO PASS ON ANY CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD.

Appendix 2

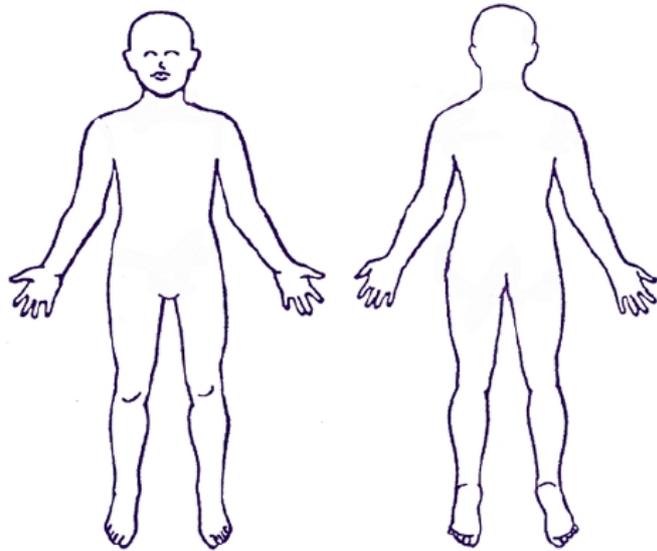
INITIAL RECORD OF CONCERN - FORM 1

(To be completed by adult who has first point of contact by child and then given to the Child Protection Officer/ Head of Akshara).

Child's Name:
Date of Birth:
Child's School:
Child's Wada or Village:
Date and Time of Concern:
Your Account of the Concern: (what was said, observed, reported and by who)

Additional Information:

(context of concern/disclosure/details of any physical signs)



Please indicate any markings on body outline.

Your Response:

(what did you do/say following the concern)

Your Name:

Your Signature:

Date:

Your Role/Responsibility:

Date and Time of this Recording:

Form 1 Passed on to Child Protection Officer/ Head of Akshara: Yes/No

Date and Time of Meeting arranged to discuss Form 1 with Child Protection Officer:

Appendix 3

CHILD PROTECTION RECORD – FORM 2

(To be completed by the Child Protection Officer/Head of Akshara)

Date Form 1 was received and discussed:			
Child's Name:			
Context: MUWCI / Akshara Teacher:			
Male/Female:	Ethnic Origin:	Disability:	Religion
Record of initial discussion:		Date of referral:	Reported by:
Who has the information been shared with?			
Initial action points:		Agreed	Action by:
		Timeline:	
Report on the action taken: <i>including professional agencies known to be involved with the family, the extent to which both the child and the family are aware of the steps already taken, if parents have been informed then times and</i>		Date:	Action by:

<i>dates and a record of meeting.</i>		
Further action points:	Date:	Action by:

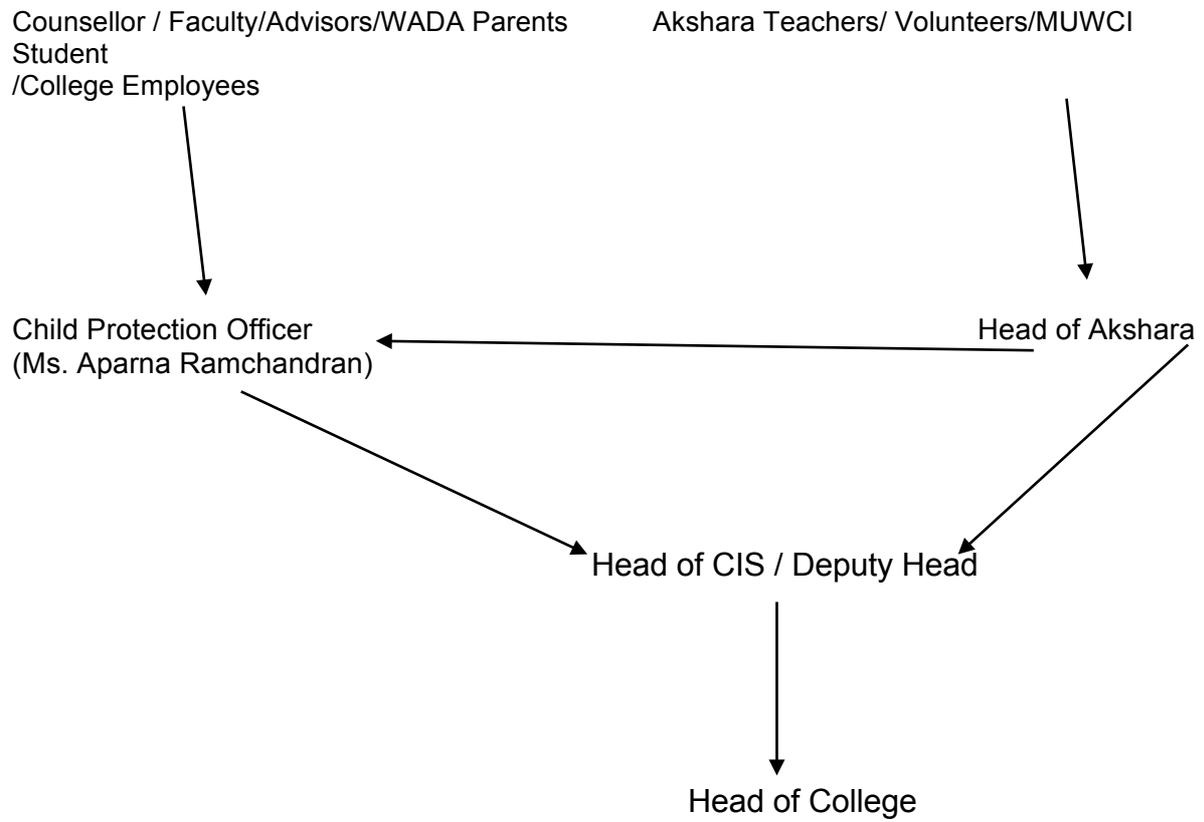
This confidential document needs to be kept with the Initial Record of Concern – Form 1

Signature: _____ Date: _____

ANNEXURE A - CHILD PROTECTION - CODE OF CONDUCT

1. MUWCI is committed to the safety and protection of students. This Code of Conduct applies to all employees and volunteers who represent the College and who interact with students in both a direct and/or unsupervised capacity.
2. MUWCI is committed to the safety and protection of children in the local community with whom the college works through Akshara/ Triveni.
3. MUWCI committee to provide education and an awareness of child abuse for employees and volunteers.
4. The public and private conduct of those acting on behalf of MUWCI can inspire and motivate those with whom they interact or can cause great harm if inappropriate. We must, at all times, be aware of the responsibilities that accompany our work.
5. We should be aware of our own and other persons' vulnerability, especially when working alone with students, and be particularly aware that we are responsible for maintaining physical, emotional, and sexual boundaries in such interactions. We must avoid any covert or overt sexual behaviours with those for whom we have responsibility. This includes speech or gestures as well as physical contact that exploits, abuses, or harasses.
6. We must show prudent discretion before touching a student and be aware of how physical touch may be perceived or received, and whether it would be an appropriate expression of greeting, care, concern, or celebration. MUWCI staff and volunteers are prohibited at all times from physically disciplining a child.
7. Physical contact with students can be misconstrued both by the recipient and by those who observe it and should occur only when completely nonsexual and otherwise appropriate, and never in private. One-on-one meetings with a student are best held in a public area; in a room where the interaction can be (or is being) observed; or in a room with the door left open, and another staff member is notified about the meeting.
8. MUWCI staff should not travel in a car alone with a student and if this is unavoidable the relevant Deputy Head should be informed.
9. We must intervene when there is evidence of, or there is reasonable cause to suspect, that students are being abused in any way. Suspected abuse or neglect must be reported to the appropriate school and civil authorities as described in the Child Protection Policy.
10. Employees and volunteers should refrain from the use of tobacco products, alcohol and/or drugs when working with students. Adults should never give to students any drugs, cigarettes, images or reading material that is inappropriate.
11. Employees and volunteers should not accept gifts from students of a value greater than Rs. 1000 without written permission from the Head of College.

ANNEXURE B - REPORTING STUDENTS IN CRISIS – FLOW DIAGRAM



ANNEXURE C

Seeking Guidance about or Reporting Sexual Assault

THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT, 2012 NO.32 OF 2012 (W.E.F. 14-11-2012) defines a range of offences which must be reported.

Under this act any person (including the child), who has apprehension that an offence under this Act is likely to be committed or has knowledge that such an offence has been committed, shall provide such information to, — (a) the Special Juvenile Police Unit; or (b) the local police.

Reporting Sexual Assault

If you or someone you know has been hurt, threatened or assaulted, you need to talk to the College Health and Wellness Counsellor as soon as possible to get the necessary support so that the offence can be reported. If you have any concerns about reporting we still want you to speak with an adult who will direct you to people who can give you the guidance you need: Speak with your advisor, an adult member of faculty you trust or the counsellor. They will give you appropriate advice. Under Indian Law if details of a sexual assault affecting someone under 18 years of age are given to anyone, they are legally obliged to report this to the authorities.

Owner of the Document/Content	HOC
Date of review	November, 2017
Legal review by	Group Legal, M&M Ltd.
Date of legal review	27 th November, 2017
Approved by	Board of Directors
Approved date	28 th November, 2017