



## SAPPHIRE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL CROSSINGS REPUBLIC GHAZIABAD

### Protection of children from Sexual offences Act (POSCO) and sexual harassment prevention committee

#### Members of POSCO Committee

The present members of the complaints committee to deal with the complaints of sexual harassment in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the supreme court of India relating to sexual harassment of women workers at work places and students are as follows.

#### School management committee:

1. Mrs. Vandana Midha Principal
2. Mrs. Veena Katyal Member(Counselor)
3. Mrs. Aditi Sharma Member (Coordinator)
4. Mrs. Yashi Sharma Member
5. Mrs. Ruby Emmenual Member
6. Mr. Ankit Rajpoot Member
7. Ms. Safia Khan Student Representative
8. Mr. Sivraj Bisoi Student Representative

#### Committee Against Sexual Harassment

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, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has issued circulars since 1998,, to all the institutions, advising them to establish a permanent cell and a committee and to develop guidelines to combat sexual harassment, violence against women and ragging at the universities and colleges. It has further advised the institutions to be proactive by developing a conducive atmosphere on the campus, where the status of woman is respected and they are treated with.

#### Objective

The objectives of the Committee are:

- Prevent discrimination and sexual harassment against women, by promoting gender amity among students and employees;
- Deal with cases of discrimination and sexual harassment against women, in a time bound manner, aiming at ensuring support services to the victimized and termination of the harassment;
- Recommend appropriate punitive action against the guilty party to the Chairperson.

#### Procedure for Approaching Committee

The Committee deals with issues relating to sexual harassment at the Sapphire International

school, Crossings Republic. 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 Convener of the Committee. If the complaint is made to any of the Committee members, they may forward it to the Convener of the Committee Against Sexual Harassment.

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) as:

- Physical contact and advances
- Demand or request for sexual favours
- Sexually coloured remarks
- Showing pornography
- Other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature. (Vishaka judgement by Supreme Court)

**The following is also sexual harassment and is covered by the committee:**

- Eve-teasing,
- Unsavoury remarks,
- Jokes causing or likely to cause awkwardness or embarrassment,
- Innuendos and taunts,
- Gender based insults or sexist remarks,

Unwelcome sexual overtone in any manner such as over telephone (obnoxious telephone calls) and the like,

- Touching or brushing against any part of the body and the like,
- Displaying pornographic or other offensive or derogatory pictures, cartoons, pamphlets or sayings,
- Forcible physical touch or molestation and
- Physical confinement against one's will and any other act likely to violate one's privacy.

## **Procedure for dealing with complaints**

### **1. Filing of a complaint**

If any associate believes that she/he has been subjected to sexual harassment, such person may file a complaint with any member of the committee.

The committee member on receiving a complaint will intimate the committee head. The committee head would arrange for a meeting within a week of receipt of the complaint for discussing the complaint raised.

Complaints must be brought within 30 working days of the incident of sexual harassment. Complaints brought after that time period will not be pursued absent extraordinary circumstances. The determination of whether the complaint was timely or whether extraordinary circumstances exist to extend the complaint period must be made in conjunction with the Legal team.

Every attempt will be made to get the complainant to provide the complaint in writing. The complaint shall include the circumstances giving rise to the complaint, the dates of the alleged occurrences and names of witnesses, if any. The complaint shall be signed by the complainant.

### **2. Process of Enquiry**

- The committee will ask the complainant to prepare a detailed statement of incidents/allegations. The statement of allegation will be shared with the accused.

The accused will be asked to prepare a response to the statement of allegations and submit to the committee within the given time.

The statement and other evidence obtained in the inquiry process will be considered confidential.

The committee will organize verbal hearings with the complainant and the accused.

The committee will take testimonies of other relevant persons and review the evidence if necessary. The committee should ensure that sufficient care is taken to avoid any retaliation against the witnesses.

During the enquiry process, the complainant and the accused would be expected to refrain from any form of threat, intimidation or influencing of witnesses.

The committee will arrive at a decision after carefully and fairly reviewing the circumstances, evidences and relevant statements.

The committee will ensure confidentiality during the inquiry process and will ensure that in the course of investigation a complaint:

(i) Both parties will be given reasonable opportunity to be heard along with witnesses and to produce any other relevant documents.

(ii) Upon completion of the investigation, both parties will be informed of the results of the investigation.

The committee will be empowered to do all things necessary to ensure a fair hearing of the complaint including all things necessary to ensure that victims or witnesses are neither victimized nor discriminated against while dealing with a complaint of sexual harassment. In this regard the committee will also have the discretion to make appropriate interim recommendations in relation to an accused person pending the outcome of a complaint) including suspension, transfer, leave, change of work location etc.

The investigation into a complaint will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances.

The committee will investigate and prepare an enquiry report with recommendation within 4 weeks of the complaint being filed.

Once the investigation is completed, a determination will be made regarding the validity of the harassment allegation. If it is determined that harassment has occurred, prompt, remedial action will be taken. The committee will share the investigation details and the findings and agree on the applicable disciplinary action. This may include some or all of the following

(i) Restore any lost terms, conditions or benefits of employment to the complainant.

(ii) Committee will take appropriate disciplinary action, up to, including termination against the accused. All related documents will be maintained in the associate's folder, ensuring confidentiality.

This anti sexual harassment policy shall not, however, be used to raise malicious complaints. If a complaint has been made in bad faith, as demonstrated by clear and convincing evidence,

disciplinary action which may include, termination will be taken against the person raising the complaint.

### **Decision and Action**

Once the investigation is completed, a determination will be made regarding the validity of the harassment allegation. If it is determined that harassment has occurred; prompt, remedial action will be taken. The committee members will share the investigation details and the findings thereof with the appropriate functional head and agree on the applicable disciplinary action. This may include some of all of the following:

- (i) Restore any lost terms, conditions and benefits of employment to the complainant.
  
- (ii) Discipline the accused. This discipline can include demotion, suspension and termination.

The disciplinary action will be carried out by the concerned department. Such disciplinary action may include transfer, demotion or termination. All related documents will be maintained ensuring confidentiality.

### **Policy Implementation and Review**

The policy will be implemented and reviewed by the committee. The school reserves the right to amend, abrogate, modify, rescind / reinstate the entire policy or any part of it at any time.

## **CONSENT**

I have read the document carefully and agree to follow the same. I shall abide by rules and regulations as stated/ laid in the document.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

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