IMPROVING SCHOOL SAFETY

A School Safety Audit Tool for Internal and External Safety Evaluation

Why a School Safety Audit Tool: To take preventive action for children's safety and protection. More often than not, attention to children's safety in schools comes far too late – usually post harm, typically as a belated response. Safety-related incidents like a child drowning in a school water tank, school routes being sites of harassment and attack for adolescent girls, serious bullying resulting in health problems – all these point to an urgent need to define school safety, identify and preempt risks. Several risk-related themes get missed because they are at the intersection of school and home or academics and personal safety, and responsibility gets passed on, to no one in particular**.** School safety needs to be an ongoing priority, handled by active, alert, committed stakeholders who are clear about accountability. **This tool helps take the complex issues of safety and protection and break them down into actionable tasks** that schools can take proactively, in a systematic regular manner.

What is the Tool?
An easy to use hundred-point check- list, which helps parents and school authorities work together to frame safety into actionable points and also helps school communities to co-develop/jointly review a set of safety codes and policies.

- The checklist is geared to help parents and authorities **inspect and evaluate** safety regularly
- The format helps school safety committees develop customized school codes to **improve safety measures**
- Helps ensure preventive action is **planned and scheduled** through the year, rather than be re-visited only when a crisis arises.

This coordinated approach requires convergence by school authorities, parents, children and officials.

SCHOOL SAFETY AUDIT CHECKLIST (RECOMMENDED A QUARTERLY AUDIT)

NOTE: Use this checklist and update it to evaluate your school preparedness, plan and improve it over the years. You might also consider asking an external school safety audit team or a group of individuals do a safety audit of your school and provide recommendations.

SUBJECT	CHECKLIST SCORE FOR SELF EVALUATION	GUIDLEINES TO HELP SCHOOL DEVELOP POLICY/CODE ON EACH SAFETY THEME
Records and Documentation Checklist:	10 criteria to be scored out Of 20	School administration should ensure student information is collected, regularly updated and student confidentiality is maintained
Health and Physical Safety Checklist:	10 criteria to be scored out Of 20	Along with each criteria, guidelines are provided to help sub groups develop a **RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN** on health and physical safety
Emotional and Social Safety Checklist:	10 criteria to be scored out Of 20	Using the criteria as a starting point schools should co-develop a school-specific **SAFETY AND INCLUSION POLICY** to address prevention, reporting and response on themes like bullying, violence, harassment and discrimination
Cyber Safety Checklist:	10 criteria to be scored out Of 20	School develops a CYBER SAFETY POLICY
Emergency Protocols and Crisis Response:	20 criteria to be scored out of 10	Sub groups develop/review plans and allocate responsibility to implement CRISIS RESPONSE PLANS
	Q1: TOTAL	
	Q2: TOTAL	
	Q3: TOTAL	
	Q4: TOTAL	

TO USE THIS TOOL EFFECTIVELY:

1. **A School Safety Committee** is appointed each year in every school: This includes school authorities, staff, parents and children. If School Management Committees or PTAs exist, this could be a sub group from the SMC.
2. **Parent volunteers are invited to participate actively** in the development and review of policy and also to volunteer implementation on some preventive steps. (This is especially useful if teachers are already overburdened)
3. **School authorities retain accountability and are liable** and thus must oversee safety measures themselves. But enlist the help of parents to build joint responsibility for safety. School management, principals and administrators are ultimately accountable.
4. **Hearing regularly from parents, staff and children** is important and must be factored into the safety audit process to flag issues/problems and identify emerging risks.
5. **In the case of each criteria - individual responsibilities should be outlined** as well as frequency with which action should be taken. **For example**: Parents should do spot checks of isolated UNSAFE areas in schools as identified through the mapping process. This should happen once a month, at different times of the day.
6. **Specific trainings** for each safety sub group is planned and implemented based on each section of the tool.

For questions, help, trainings or related resources you could reach us at:
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RECORDS AND DOCUMENTATION

Score yourself on 2 for each of the 10 criteria.

Note:
PRINCIPLE 1: Remember, **confidentiality** is a **key** to children's safety and protection, and all student information and records should be kept securely and access should be restricted. Personal information about children should be shared on a 'need to know' basis only. This means that information should be shared only with those people who need that particular information in order to respond to and support the child's needs – in the child's best interest. Any breach of confidentiality should be dealt with firmly by school authorities. If parent volunteers are part of school safety committees, their role should ideally not allow access to child/family private information. If parents serve on admission committees and will have access to such family information, then schools should disclose this in admission forms or before the process, offering parents the option to limit personal information sharing.

PRINCIPLE 2: Be aware of language issues and literacy levels of parent/guardians. It is wise to devise a system by which parents/guardians can be informed verbally about all the documents they must provide and policies the school has, their relevance, and the importance of communicating regularly with the school authorities about important changes/events in the child or family's circumstances.

Criteria	Recommendations	Score
1. Emergency contact information	1. Ensure that there is emergency contact information kept on file for each child. This is the name and contact number for person(s) to be called in an emergency. This should include the parents/guardians as well as at least two other persons they authorize as the emergency contact.	
	2. Update this information each year– send a form home with the child, and ensure that it is updated in their file. Class teachers can be assigned the responsibility of ensuring that parents submit updated information. Parents can also be responsible for informing school of any major changes in contact numbers, health conditions and so on.	
	3. In instances where a child's parent/guardian does not have a personal contact phone number, ensure that they provide the school with the number of some other person (for example a neighbor or employer) who will be able to reach the parent/guardian quickly.	
	4. Ensure that the parent/guardian understands that it is their responsibility to update this information – even during temporary absences, such as if they are traveling and the child is placed in the care of some other relative or friend.	
2. Medical Information	1. School maintains a record of every child's basic medical history. This should be updated annually. This should include blood group; vaccination history; known allergies and their symptoms and cure; special conditions or illnesses; medications the child is taking; dietary restrictions; any other special treatment that is required. Respecting the child's privacy, this information will not be accessible to parent groups, but only school authorities who *need to know*.	

	2. Make sure that parents understand that this form should be updated with the school every time there is a significant change in the child's health status. A reminder note or update form could be sent to the parent/guardian every term.	
3. Medical release form	1. In the event of a life threatening or very serious medical or other emergency, the school must have the sanction of the parents to make medical decisions that are necessary to save the child's life if a parent/guardian cannot be reached, or when time does not permit. These decisions may include taking the child to hospital, presenting the child before a registered doctor, administering life saving medication (on the advice of a registered doctor), administering CPR, etc.	
	2. Ensure that parent communities understand the implications of allowing school to deliver emergency medication or not. Bring it up in a parent orientation.	
4. Documenting and planning for significant family disruption issues	1. Make a list for internal use on what you consider to be major family events that disrupt a child's life. This could include – death in the family, divorce/separation, parent remarriage, serious illness in the family. These may also lead to change in guardianship (temporary or permanent) for the child. Based on this, decide how a school will respond. The school's role is to understand the circumstances of the child in order to decide how SUPPORT plans will be devised in case required. Make a SUPPORT plan for how the school will respond together with staff members who know the child well, parents, and the main teacher implementing this plan. If a specialist resource is available, ensure that checks and references are in place.	
	2. Provide parents/guardians with a format they can use to inform the school in the event of these major upheavals in a child's life. Assure them of confidentiality with sensitive information. Explain to them why you are collecting this information, i.e. to be able to appropriately support their child. (Avoid parent groups being involved with such information, restricting it to school authorities/teachers and if for some reason there is involvement of a parent committee member, disclose this before private information is shared).	
5. Field trip supervision	1. When children are to be taken on a group field trip, the school must make appropriate safe arrangements for transport, adult supervision, ensuring access to toilets, safe drinking water and food and these should be shared with the parents/guardians. Provide all details in writing to parents.	
	2. Ensure that parents/guardians sign a permission and authorization form allowing their child to attend the field trip or outside excursion.	

6. Student pick up/release authorization	1. Make a plan for how children will be released from the school at the end of the school day, and what the system of hand-over will be. This is especially relevant for younger students up to Class VI (12 years old). Parents/guardians must give the school written authorization for who will pick up their child (including information about who is NOT authorized). CAMPUS CHECKS: Nobody who is not part of a pickup list should be in the school premises. An individual is appointed to check the school campus thoroughly and ensure that no unauthorized persons are on campus. Even if a person is authorized, the check should include ensuring that people are limited to spaces where they have work.	
	2. In situations where parents/guardians are making informal arrangements with other parents, please ensure that they call or email (in the case of call, maintain a log) with pick details, authorizing other parents to pick them up.	
7. Confidentiality and Personal Information Storage	1. Maintain individual student files that contain all these (and any other) relevant documents in a safe but easily accessible manner.	
	2. Access to children's personal files must be restricted. Decide beforehand who has access to these files. Therefore it is advisable to keep education progress reports and other similar non-private documents that require wider access separate from personal information.	
	3. During staff orientation, ensure teachers are serious about confidentiality of child-related information	
	4. If parent groups are involved in school admission procedures, then limiting the sharing of personal information/files is recommended. Overall teacher/staff orientation about maintaining confidentially is a must, taking special care in case teacher- parent- administrative roles overlap	
8. Attendance, absenteeism and lateness policy and tracking system Responding to chronic or sudden unexpected absenteeism	1. Ensure that you have a well thought out policy on attendance, absenteeism and chronic lateness. The policy is intended to ensure children's attendance not only for the purpose of discipline and learning outcomes, but also because absenteeism and chronic lateness might be an indicator of a problem or safety issue the child is facing, and this gives schools a unique opportunity to provide assistance to a potentially at-risk child. Make sure that parents know that you take attendance very seriously and that you will make enquiries and intervene in cases where children are irregular.	
9. Staff recruitment and induction policy	1. In addition to professional qualifications, it is important to understand the suitability of all prospective staff to work with children. This includes making sure that they have no history of violence or inappropriate behavior; no criminal convictions; no	

	formal or informal complaints from children made against them; recommendation letter from previous employer. Talk to police about checks and verification and talk to previous employers.	
	2. An induction policy where all new staff are required to agree to adhere to staff conduct policy with regard to child protection; staff are explained about zero tolerance to violence and bullying. All volunteers, staff, service providers who have contact with children must sign the Staff Conduct Policy and be approved for dealing with children.	
10. Safety standards documentation for all infrastructure and equipment	1. The school must ensure that all infrastructure and equipment meet safety standards. Certificates of safety clearance for all infrastructure and equipment should be filed and service contracts maintained. This should include building occupancy certificate, clearance from fire department, earthquake retrofitting etc.	
	2. Up-to-date Annual Maintenance Contracts are kept in a file and there is a system for renewal. These include agreements for services such as bus service, catering, drinking water, electrical and plumbing maintenance	
	3. Services such as transport/school bus providers, canteen services (including mid-day meal) should also have written agreements with clear guidelines on health and safety. These should be maintained in a file.	
	4. Establish a school safety committee that can be made responsible for ensuring safety standards are met and be in charge of monitoring physical infrastructure. You could get the help of parent volunteers for this committee. They can devise a system of monitoring, registering complaints and doing the follow up, as well as ensuring that the paperwork is up-to-date. They should report to the principal on at least a quarterly basis about their findings and to discuss improvements or necessary maintenance work.	
TOTAL (of 20)		

ADDITIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES TO CONSIDER	
Emergency communication plan	Make a plan for how you will communicate key information to children's parents or guardians in the event of a school-wide emergency, or emergency that involves large numbers (examples: emergencies caused by weather/natural disaster; bomb/terror scare; unrest or other problems in the area). Think about how you could create class-wise sms / whatsapp groups and designate staff who will administer these groups. Allocate this work to parent volunteers (one or two per class)
Media and children's privacy	Whenever the school is involved in any media activity, or if there is to be any publication in which children's photographs, identities, or names will be used, it is mandatory for schools to get prior permission from the parents/guardians. This cannot be a one-time authorization that will cover every kind of media exposure. Parental consent, via a written release, has to be obtained before every instance of releasing a child's information/photo in the public domain.
Transfer certificate and related documents	Ensure that you keep all relevant documents related to children's transfer to or from your school in a method that is ready-to-use. This is essential for children's education to not face disruption in the event of a child having to change schools for whatever reason – parental relocation, transfer to different school, etc. Make sure parents know it is their right to access this from the school and that administrative staff understand that this is a right. It can be made easier through filing and easy to use accessible templates.
Vendor/Brand Related Policies	A rationale for choosing vendors or having school tie-ups with brands should ideally be recorded and shared with larger community of parents. School committees could decide on how they will rationalize this. Through comparative quotes or a simple discussion. For instance if a particular brand of food is served in the lunch canteen, a brand of shoes prescribed as part of uniforms, or a stationary item preferred – the rationale for this must be explained to the safety committee and the larger parent committee.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Score yourself out of 2 based on school preparedness for each of these ten criteria and discuss ways and systems to raise this score with your School Safety Committee. In column 2, you are provided with some recommended actions. Please build on these detailing out which school safety committee members are responsible, frequency of checks and timelines by which action will be taken. Please ensure inspections are done on going, every month or two, rather than only once a year).

Criteria	Recommendations	Score
1. Secured Entry and Exit	1. School should be secured with a boundary wall from all sides and gates should be manned at all times. It is important to do regular checks of boundary walls.	
	2. A record should be maintained of every person entering and exiting the school with date, time and purpose.	
	3. All strangers must be made to wait the gate before getting permission from the administration to enter the premises.	
	4. All Staff Members should have id cards and be briefed on areas which are inaccessible/accessible to them. If areas are not accessible to staff this needs to be emphasized to staff, parents, children. For example: **A notice in the toilet: ONLY GIRL STUDENTS ALLOWED. If anyone else uses this toilet please inform a teacher**	
	5. These rules should not be limited to strangers. School authorities must stress to parents and staff the areas where they should wait to pick up their children. Remind them that this is for their children's own safety and warn staff clearly about this too.	
	6. If CCTVs are installed in schools, regular checks that they are working. In case a CCTV is temporarily out of order, then school staff/security are informed and vigilant. Remember CCTV placement must also comply with children's privacy.	
2. Health workers and systems established in case of illness, emergency, epidemic or injury.	1. School doctor or nurse need to be available (if not on campus within about two kilometers of the school). School doctors and nurses references checked and if they are situated on school campus, then references are checked as well as the Child protection policy is signed.	
	2. Emergency contact forms and Medical forms and Parental consent form signed by parents so that if medicine has to be administered in emergency, this can be done. (Refer to section on Records and Documentation	
	3. School staff must be briefed on a very specific protocol so that early signs of illness/injury are not ignored. School must decide a protocol: parent permission	

	before administering medicines OR pre-signed form with parental approval to administer medicine in emergency OR whatever the school/parents agree on. Having a doctor be part of this planning is helpful.	
	4. Transportation facility from the school (in case the closest hospital is far) and attendant who would accompany child appointed and references checked. Protocol in case this attendant is absent. In case of sexual abuse case (under POCSO), school understands the law around support person and female police and follow the steps in accordance with the law.	
	5. Parents need to be informed immediately of any medical emergencies. Appointed staff member will coordinate as per pre-decided protocol.	
	6. In case of seasonal epidemics and communicable diseases, high-risk times of the year – information on preventive steps can be disseminated with help of parent volunteers.	
3. First aid supplies stocked and checked (for quantity, expiry dates) and teachers trained on basic first aid.	**It is compulsory for schools to have:** 1. First aid box. (Develop a list in consultation with a doctor). Parent volunteers should use the list to inspect that this is well stocked, also checking on expiry dates.	
	2. Key staff or all staff to be trained on first aid. (More than one teacher to be trained so that one is available on the campus at all times), Training by local medical professional as part of staff training/orientation.	
	3. Medicines given should be checked with parent and if not possible given and recorded in a medical register.	
4. Ventilation is adequate.	1. The school premise and classrooms are well ventilated, with sufficient doors and windows.	
	2. The orientation of the buildings in the school is such that proper air circulation and lighting is available with open space all around the building as far as possible.	
	3. Teachers are given clear messages about zero tolerance toward punitive action like locking children into any closed space for any length of time. (Violation of Right to Education Act)	
5. School routes are safe for children walking to school As well as for children coming by a School Bus (includes training and monitoring of attendants)	1. Regular groups (monthly) with randomly selected adolescent children/younger both girls and boys to understand if there are any school route concerns (bus/walk/other). Probing for risks that children may not recognize as dangerous or bring up, specifically. For instance: Does any unfamiliar adult, other than the bus driver or attendant ever get on the bus? Send information home to parents (using whatsapp or informal methods) to have similar discussion at home with children and report back to school safety committees in case of doubts.	
	2. Safety planning sessions on harassment/stalking/violence on school route and if	

	possible a visit by police to reassure children to report, help them recognize risks around stalking and silence and tell a trusted adult as early as possible. Sessions for both parents and children.	
	3. If there are any dangerous spots, where road crossing or flooding is flagged, school safety committees should put in writing to traffic police or civic authorities or relevant officials. But in the interim, parent volunteers can be engaged to rotate duties and help with activities like road crossing at school time, etc. "Walk pools" where parents rotate the duty of walking children to school can also be planned.	
	4. Meeting between local officials (recorded) to discuss any risks that are flagged on school route: like lighting, difficult road crossing, and any other dangerous situations that are identified locally like a flooded area, open man hole, etc. When required this information to be shared with police/traffic police/civic authorities/panchayat and other relevant officials, this group of parent volunteers must be supported in following up to push for action by officials.	
	5. School bus companies, attendants are vetted. Reference/verification checks are filed (refer to record and documentation section of tool). Selection of bus companies, bus drivers and attendants should be discussed with parents and school authorities. (If police attend this it is useful too). School administration rationale for choice should be understood ad supported. Orientation to drivers, attendants about appropriate behavior in the bus, while driving and while children get on and off. Parent volunteers on school safety committee to get on the bus as a surprise spot check or talk to a group of bus children on a monthly basis. Children encouraged to report any doubt. Run this protocol by local police.	
6. School campus mapped and any UNSAFE areas flagged. Recommended that a floor plan be used and children also participate. Mapping should cover unsafe spaces or times of day/year.	1. School construction must happen only during holidays or after school hours in emergency. If work is going on and there are several outsiders on campus the area must be supervised.	
	2. Terraces, balconies, should be appropriately fenced with a reasonably high wall of Access to and presence in the balconies and on terraces should be supervised by some responsible adult for younger children	
	3. If areas are temporarily unsafe, relevant areas marked as UNSAFE with signage and announcements to children and parents, to keep children away from the area. For example fire ways balcony, open drains/parapet walls. There must be written and oral specific communication about this.	

	4. Disability-friendly entry/exit/access to spaces/facilities but also accessible classrooms, toilets, playgrounds, laboratories etc.	
	5. During mapping, isolated or vulnerable areas to be flagged. Like playground during class hours, toilets, gate, or steps to library. A supervision and monitoring routine to be worked out, with volunteers or staff. In the supervision/monitoring plan include playground so that one adult is around to supervise and catch risky situations as well as science labs which might need specific instruction and alertness.	
	6. Map the drop off and pick up time, planning harm preventive measures like ensuring parents/guardians provide a list of authorized persons will be allowed to pick up the children. Parents must always be contacted in case of suspicion/doubt. Parents must keep school authorities informed immediately if there are situations where individuals are specifically disallowed to pick up their children. In order for this to happen, communicate point person they should call or give information in writing.	
7. School bathrooms separate, privacy and security monitored.	1. Schools must have separate toilets for girls and boys. 2. Privacy and safety is key. Toilets must have doors and locks. Checks to ensure broken locks/doors/windows are fixed if necessary. (Include in monitoring plan). 3. Ensure that children let administration know is staff n /adults ever use separate bathrooms Parent volunteers to rotate and during school rounds, check on bathrooms or talk to children.	
8. Water and food accessible, safe and hygienic	**Adequate water tanks installed based on the number of students and staff.** 1. Water: Cleaning calendar established and communicated. If there are open tanks, then the area is marked as UNSAFE during this cleaning day and children are kept away	
	2. Food: Inspection of quality of food getting served at mid-day meal based on **Safety and Hygiene Specifications.** • Inspection of kitchen hygiene • Inspection of water storage tanks and septic tanks should be properly covered with bold indication marks. If there are wells in or around the school premises, they should be fenced, clearly marked and children made aware of the need to stay away from them • Cleaning of underground/overhead tanks and water-coolers must be done periodically. Date of cleaning and next due date of cleaning should be clearly displayed on the tank • Proper outlets for waste water and ensuring there are no stagnant water puddles in the school premises in order to prevent mosquito breeding	

	• Ensure that safe drinking water is available to students. It should be stored in clean utensils, always covered. • Dustbins for garbage disposal in school premises and in each classroom.	
9. Electrical safety audit done regularly	Electric Safety checking of electrical system by electricians at regular intervals, all electric wires must be insulated and joints covered.	
10. Fire Safety Audit and Emergency Preparedness	1. Each school should follow fire safety norms as laid down by the fire department. Water, fire-extinguisher, and sand buckets must be easily accessible, available and operational. This includes regularly ensuring fire extinguishers are within the expiry date.	
	2. Fire safety audit-checking for possible sources of flammable items within school	
	3. School buildings be insured against fire and related calamities.	
TOTAL (of 10)		
Please add additional checklist criteria that might be relevant in your school context		

EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL SAFETY

Score your school out of 2, using this list if 10 criteria to identify strengths and challenges.
Develop a customized school safety policy using recommendations and building on these as per your own school needs.
Every school should develop their own Safety and Inclusion Policy that focuses on preventing, reporting and responding to adverse childhood experiences: Abuse, violence, bullying, harassment or discrimination. Prevention activities can be volunteer-run by parents and children to a large extent. Developing some kind of school calendar around this is advised. Campaigns, workshops, after school clubs or school exhibitions that highlight empathy, empowerment and safety will help. However in cases where there is an apprehension/allegation or complaint that harm has in fact occurred, it is recommended that this is handled by school authorities and not parent bodies, so as to respect privacy of children and their families**.**

Criteria	Recommendations	Score
1. School safety committee develops/ reviews a Safety and Inclusion Policy (could be titled differently)	1. Policy developed/reviewed with larger group of parents, teachers, experts and children, signed, made known to all staff and parents at orientation/discussion. Parents might need to be reassured that there will be no repercussions in the classroom for any complaints made. This could be done by school authorities in an open forum so that the message is consistent across staff and teachers.	
	2. Policy is communicated in age appropriate way to students, building the message of early reporting and reassuring children that action will be planned and taken	

2. School principal/ administration appoints subcommittee/ group to work on emotional/ social safety	**School establishes a Safety and Inclusion committee including** • Staff members • Teacher representatives • Parent representatives • Children representing student body • Counselor/Experts (if not the committee, linkages and referral systems are set up so committee can reach out for advice or planning) • Officials like police or child welfare committee members (may not be on the committee, but contact person is identified and accessible) • Complaints Committee that sits regularly to review children's complaints. (Could choose internal authorities or external ombudsman)	
3. Recognizing early warning signs of any harm/abuse/ violence/ adverse experiences	**School communities are encouraged to be alert to early warning signs of harm. This communication could be designed by parent and volunteers and presented in creative ways to:** a) staff b) parents and c) children Building a module on recognizing emotional and social distress/trauma could be built into teacher orientations or provided during the year as a training module. Such campaigns and modules can be developed with Mental health experts, child protection organizations or if parent experts exist in house, they can provide inputs. This needs to be planned and scheduled into school calendar	
4. Apprehension of Harm/ Allegations and Complaints	1. Take specific steps to ensure a safe open environment where parents, children staff feel safe to bring up concerns. This could include a combination of messages to parents, mentions in parent handbooks, signage in the school or in the school bus, Whatsapp message campaigns and periodic announcement in class.	
	2. Prompt and appropriate action on complaints helps build an atmosphere where people feel heard and reassured.	
	3. Parents, children and staff are clear on how to complain: Complaint boxes, office hours of certain staff members or other simple methods might be decided by the committee and communicated across school	

	4. Complaints Committee that can meet regularly or in case of specific complaints: Ideally complaints committee to include only authorities/experts. Parent volunteers to be avoided as there might be conflict of interest. Confidentiality of complainant and others involved in the complaint is maintained. Consider external ombudsman	
	5. Legal response to complaint/apprehensions known and understood by school administration, especially on POCSO, domestic violence or missing children in the context of legal obligations for mandatory reporting done.	
	6. Complaints logged along with action taken Action taken on complaint is shared with child or in some cases family. At the same time confidentiality respected so that private information about families/children is not exchanged.	
5. Bullying, Violence, Harassment, Prevention, response and reporting protocols established, known and active.	1. Committee defines bullying and this is discussed with parents, staff, teachers, children – understanding it in the context of RTE, JJ ACT, POCSO, ragging, anti-discrimination laws.	
	2. Anti-bullying activities through year recommended. Designed with input from school counselors, parent volunteers, such activities could be implemented through "anti-bullying campaign week", empathy building curricula used as part of classrooms	
	3. Creative expression of messages by students at recess times or drama contests and writing and so on.	
	4. Based on school location/local practice, if required address factors like caste/gender/regional practices including families in preventing any bullying in this context	
	5. Use peer influencers effectively to participate or have a "buddy" system to children who might be isolated in the system for some reason.	
	6. In case of apprehension/allegation of complaint, complaints committee should act promptly.	
	7. Support plans should ideally be made for both the complainant and child who is bullying- short term or long term based on seriousness of issue.	
	8. Sites of potential harassment like school routes, buses, carpools, classrooms, playground should be monitored with spot checks and regular discussions with groups of children.	
	9. Social exclusion and non-physical harassment and bullying should not be ignored or construed as "consensual".	

	10. Complaints committee should ideally follow up with complainant/family after intervention also	
	11. If in-house counselor is not available, tap expert advisors (Refer to Criteria 2).	
7. In case of allegation/ complaint on emotional/ social issues, protocol established for authorities and staff.	1. Protocol in case of an allegation/apprehension or complaint about child harm is defined clearly in steps and understood by staff and parents. Children too should ideally understand how to complain and how protocols would work	
	2. Avoid re-traumatization – children should not repeat testimony multiple/details of situation times.	
	3. Complaint logged in a register where complaints, plan, action and follow up are logged	
	4. Teachers and staff should ideally have a "report and support" protocol which might include: reporting apprehension of harm to principal/management. Teachers should not be involved in further investigation. But should move on to planning with school counselor on supporting child and if necessary supporting family. (Note: Differentiate between counseling and support). Support plans should be developed through triage – principal, counselors and teachers. In the absence of counselors, pre-decide a small group of staff that might work on support plans. Parent volunteers should not be included.	
	5. Mandatory reporting understood and action prescribed in the case of POCSO and missing children. (Juvenile Justice Act)– communicated to staff and parents. (Check Resource: POCSO e-box for reporting cases online on the NCPCR webpage -http://ncpcr.gov.in/)	
	6. If teachers are given warnings, special alertness to their behavior in class towards complainant child for a period of a few months should continue.	
8. External experts are available, appointed or accessible for direct intervention or	1. Either there is an in-house counselor or the school has empanelled a few counselors and set up referral systems. Please avoid school parents being school counselors. Avoid appointing a parent of a student.	
	2. In case no mental health experts are at all available locally available/accessible, then develop a consulting relationship where expertise/advice for authorities is available through calls. Naturally this will not result in counseling but will help staff plan/provide emotional and social safety to child.	
9. Advice school authorities on emotional/social safety	3. Ensure a small group of staff who can lead support planning for children receive special training from mental health experts or social workers. While this will not make them counselors, the orientation will ensure access to support planning methodology for the school. Leverage a parent expert to train on support plan if required.	

	4. For parents and children, the safety and inclusion committee should compile a list of phone help lines, suicide help lines de-addiction centers and other related resources	
	5. Teachers/parents and authorities who are engaged with adolescents students especially should receive short training on theme like recognizing and reporting on self-harm/threats of suicide. (legal and emotional implications understood if a child threatens suicide in a classroom)	
9. Safety planning and inclusion sessions for kids around self-esteem, gender, empowerment, empathy,	There are excellent resources and experts to design curricula on this preventative measure. Tie up and plan on including this piece into school through after school clubs, parent circle meets or other innovative formats.	
10. Cyber-Safety: Alertness and regular discussion on cyber bullying and abuse ongoing	Even with a cyber-safety policy, it is important for schools to be updated on trends within their schools: 1) Having regular meetings with adolescents every few months to discuss any trends 2) Having meetings with parents to understand trends and discuss concerns 3) Participating in any inter-school staff/ child safety forum to be alerted to trends. Example: UNICEF guidelines on Blue Whale available online can be discussed at such a forum. 4) It is advisable that preventive action is not limited to rules around technology usage, but for instance addresses social aspects like ragging rituals that use violence. Discussion and support plans for groups of vulnerable children that includes victims and Those engage in gin violent/aggressive behavior	
Total		

NOTE: Reach out to us at schoolsafety.aangan@gmail.com, to help facilitate the discussion and development of your Safety and Inclusion Policy that should ideally include training modules for staff and parents on recognizing harm and responding effectively.

CYBER SAFETY

Score your school out of 2 based on school preparedness on the following ten criteria.
While ensuring safety, schools must also consider cyber safety within policy making. School children acrossallincomelevelstodayhaveaccesstotechnologyandsocialmedia.Eveniftheydon'tpersonally have access at this point, they are functioning in a world where they do need to understand cyber safety. Cyber bullying laws in India are elucidated in the Information Technology Act, read along with the Indian Penal Code enlisting punishments for specific cyber-crimes. In light of the fact that there are several trends to keep up, a small specialized group in the school should be assigned. The Ministry of Women and Child Development has launched the Cyber Crime and Prevention against Women and Children (CCPWC). While this initiative goes live from March 2018, in the interim, https://digitalpolice.gov.in/can be used to report crimes online. Schools here have the responsibility to ensure that children are aware of such a platform for reporting cases online as well as understand what is defined as cybercrime, cyber-bullying and safety.

No.	Guidelines	Comments	Score
1.	School staff assigned clearly and specifically to administer the use of Electronic and technological devices at school.	Schools need to employ special staff specifically meant for administration of use of cyber space and technology in school. Over look and implement preventive actions for increased cyber safety in school from time to time.	
		Complete internet security with all social media and networking sites blocked, and any usage required for school purpose be done with supervision by the person in charge.	
2.	Cyber safety team is part of the School Safety Team	Include parent volunteers with knowledge if possible.	
		Talk to local police about the cell/contact person you should be in touch with from a legal point of view.	
		If there is a lack of knowledge from within the school, reach out for linkages with those who can advise you long distance. Example: Schools can make arrangement with Cyber Safe India[1]; an organization specialized in assisting schools in cyber safety. The personnel are trained in cyber crime issues dealing at school level and can help train school authorities on how to keep cyber safety in check.	
3.	Safety Guidelines schools need to keep	Consider personal devices - Schools should have clear policies around mobile technology and how it is used on	
4.	Defining and raising awareness of cyber bullying or technology related actions.	1. Define cyber bullying for children and parents rather than merely "ban" technology.	
		2. Teachers trained to recognize signs of cyber-bullying related to rituals, social exclusion or discussion.	
		This could include but not limit to: ✓ Harassing and threatening messages ✓ Sending nasty SMS, IM's pictures or prank phone calls ✓ Using person's screen name or password to pretend to be them ✓ Forwarding others' private emails, messages, pictures or videos ✓ Posting mean or nasty comments or pictures ✓ Sending sexually explicit images – 'sexting'	

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[1] Cyber Safe India: http://cybersafeindia.org/we-assist.html

		✓ Intentionally excluding others from an online group	
5.	Cyber Bullying Complaints Committee	1. This Committee will be in-charge of laying out safety and prevention guidelines and outlay response plan for cyber bullying.	
		2. Contact details and roles and responsibility be clearly outlaid and communicated to all parents, students and teachers.	
		3. Outline who is responsible and able to respond for different types of cases - show where the police or government agency may/must become involved. – show when to involve parents.	
		4. Outline appropriate initial responses to a complaint to the: • Target of incident (be it student/parents/teacher/support staff/outside school community member) • Alleged perpetrators (be it a student/parent/teacher/support staff/outside school community member)	
6.	Cyber/social media/technology- related behavior, outside school campus involving school parties	1. Cyber Bullying can take place in two forms outside school campus, i.e., by students on teachers and vice versa. Immediate investigation into the matter be carried out.	
		2. Schools need to carefully consider the consequences and impact of such behavior.	
		3. Don't retaliate or respond—they might use it against you.	
		4. Parents and school authorities should develop a consistent stance on cyber behavior: Have a discussion to include media like whatsapp, social media, class chats and so on. (These are issues that fall in between school and home) and school must take accountability even if devices are not used in school.	
		5. Response to incidents to be detailed out	
7.	Tracking Trends regularly through discussion with school	Regular groups with randomly selected adolescents are part of a discussion to help cyber safety team understand trends. If parents are willing the team could hold sessions with parents too.	
8.	Parent and staff develop action Plans Based on Emerging Trends Related to Social media/technology	In some cases, there are international trends around social media to consider. Like the Blue Whale Challenge. Often organizations will develop guidelines that could be useful	

		to schools or parents. LINK to Blue Whale Challenge.	
		Researching these regularly will help schools act preventively.	
		There is also some technology related behavior that might include a child's photographs or privacy or publicly announcing location that can be strategized about.	
9.	Communication to Parents informing help community understand Behavioral Aspects of social media behavior	Sometimes social media is used simply to extend rituals that have traditionally been used for ragging: This could include hazing, but on camera or social exclusion, planned though Whatsapp groups and so on. Helping school communities understand that cyber bullying could sometimes be a social phenomena that students might participate in unknowingly helps parents understand such complex issues.	
10.	Filters and Firewall	Establish a strong online perimeter - establish strong boundary firewalls and internet gateways to protect school networks from cyber-attacks, unauthorized access and malicious content.	
		Update content filters regularly.	
		Invest in cyber security and online safety education.	
	Total (of 10)		

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND CRISIS RESPONSE

Score yourself on these 20 criteria (0, ½ or 1) to evaluate your school's crisis response system

It is advisable to have a meeting about emergency protocols with police, civic body representatives, doctors, lawyer school management board and staff to ensure that your protocols on the following list of emergencies are effective and will be supported by officials and partners when required. Hold this meeting once and then review the emergency and crisis protocol regularly. If one larger convergent meeting is not possible, hold individual meetings with officials. While every point in this list is not relevant to every school, it is advisable to consider those emergencies which seem "terribly unlikely" as well - simply because it is better to have a planned approach.

These plans should be put into writing, communicated to all staff, and regular drills conducted in school.

S.no	Emergency Preparedness and Crisis Response	Protocol Notes (3-5 key response actions and accountable individuals and officials listed)	Score
1.	Arrests		
2.	Bomb Threat		
3.	Lost/Missing Child/Truancy		
4.	Child Marriage		
5.	Children pulled out of school known to be working		
6.	Child Sexual Abuse		
7.	Child in hazardous work		
8.	Physical Injury		
9.	Violence in school		
10.	Fire/smoke or explosion		
11.	Critical internal changes, such as unanticipated leadership transition		
12.	Disturbance or unsafe/unstable situation in school or neighborhood		
13.	Medical emergency		
14.	Death in Campus		
15.	Hazardous Materials Leak		
16.	Intruder/Stranger on Campus		
17.	Severe weather (earthquake, tornado, snow, hurricane any other local factors that are known.		
18.	Structural or utility failure		
19.	Harassment by teacher/staff -Assign person to handle complaints against staff. could be counselor or a particular teacher.		
20.	Traffic accident (car or school bus)		
	Total of (20)		