Dear Parents, Teachers and Students,

As a socially responsible institution, we are committed to providing a safe, secure and non-threatening environment for the students under our care. In view of the recent law—Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012—, we wish to generate awareness among our stakeholders of our seriousness about enforcing the same in our school.

As we all know, India is home to the largest child population in the world, and almost 42 per cent of its total population is under eighteen years of age. The health and security of the country’s children is integral to any vision for its progress and development. One of the issues marring the vision for the country's children is the evil of child sexual abuse, and a special law— the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012— was passed by Parliament in May, 2012 to address it. The Act received the President's assent on 19th June 2012 and was notified in the Gazette of India for public information on 20th June, 2012. The Act has come into force on the 14th of November, 2012, along with the rules framed under the Act.

The Act is gender-neutral and defines a child as any person below the age of eighteen years. It provides precise definitions for different forms of sexual abuse, sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography. The Act provides for stringent punishment graded as per the gravity of the offence, with a maximum term of rigorous imprisonment for life for certain offences, and fine.

In keeping with the best international child protection standards, the Act provides for mandatory reporting of sexual offences. It also prescribes punishment for a person if he provides false information with the intention to defame any person, including a child. Most importantly, the Act provides for child-friendly procedures for reporting of offences, recording of evidence, investigation and trial.

At Apeejay School, NOIDA we are committed to provide an "abuse free" environment. Some of our endeavors in this direction are:

- Formulating a ‘Discipline Committee to look into complaints of ‘abuse’ and deciding the course of action.
- Generating awareness on the issue through talks in the morning assembly, street plays by the students etc.
- Making special Power Point presentations, screening movies /videos to address sensitive issues like gender sensitivity, peer pressure, misuse of technology/Internet etc.
- Regular counseling sessions/workshops are conducted by the Principal, Vice Principal, faculty members and counselors.
- Viewing bullying of any type seriously and ensuring immediate and prompt action to quell it by the Discipline Committee in consultation with parents.
- Encouraging an open and friendly student-teacher environment so that the former find teachers approachable and can report abuse without fear or hesitation.
- Holding monthly Parent –Teacher Meetings to provide an excellent opportunity for parents-teachers interface, whereby the concerns raised by parents on such issue are given utmost priority.
- Ensuring the presence of a guard in the school bus, until the last child is dropped home (irrespective of the child’s gender).
Keeping the above in perspective, we seek your support in reporting and preventing any such abuse, and helping implement the provisions of the Act in letter and spirit.

With warm regards,

S.C. Tiwari
(Principal)