

Child Protection & Data Protection Policy



1. Policy Statement

Apple Valley Special School is committed to ensuring the safety, dignity, and well-being of all children under its care. The organisation adopts a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, neglect, exploitation, and misuse of children's personal data. All programs and activities shall be conducted in a manner that safeguards children's physical, emotional, and psychological well-being.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- Trustees, management, and employees
- Teachers, therapists, counselors, and support staff
- Volunteers, interns, consultants, and vendors
- Visitors, partners, and CSR stakeholders
- The policy covers all children (below 18 years) associated with the organisation.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

3. Principles of Child Protection

- Best Interest of the Child is paramount
- Non-discrimination irrespective of gender, disability, caste, religion, or socio-economic background
- Right to Privacy and Dignity
- Participation and Respect

4. Code of Conduct

All staff and associates shall:

- Treat children with respect and dignity at all times
- Avoid any form of physical, verbal, emotional, or sexual abuse
- Never be alone with a child in an isolated or unobservable setting
- Avoid inappropriate physical contact
- Not use abusive, discriminatory, or humiliating language
- Not engage with children on personal social media platforms
- Violation of the code will result in disciplinary action, including termination and legal action.

5. Prevention Measures

- Staff background verification wherever applicable
- Mandatory orientation on child protection and POCSO compliance
- Clear visibility of child protection guidelines within the premises
- Safe infrastructure and supervised therapy environments

6. Reporting & Redressal Mechanism

- Any suspicion or incident of abuse must be reported immediately to the Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO)
- Confidentiality will be maintained during investigation
- Mandatory reporting obligations under the POCSO Act, 2012 will be followed
- Protection from retaliation for whistleblowers

DATA PROTECTION & PRIVACY POLICY

7. Data Collection

- Only essential data will be collected, including:
- Child identification details
- Medical, therapy, and assessment records
- Attendance and progress data
- Written parent/guardian consent will be obtained before data collection.

8. Data Usage

- Data will be used strictly for educational, therapeutic, monitoring, and reporting purposes
- No child-identifiable data will be shared publicly
- CSR reports will contain aggregated and anonymized data only

9. Photography & Media Consent

- Photographs/videos will be taken only with written parental consent
- Images will be used strictly for documentation and CSR reporting
- Children will not be portrayed in a degrading, stigmatizing, or identifiable manner

10. Data Storage & Security

- Physical records stored in locked cabinets
- Digital data protected through password-secured systems
- Access limited to authorized personnel only

11. Data Retention & Disposal

- Data will be retained only for the required legal and programmatic period
- Secure disposal (shredding/deletion) after retention period

12. Compliance & Review

- Policy complies with POCSO Act, 2012, IT Act, 2000, and applicable CSR norms
- Policy will be reviewed periodically and updated as required

13. Responsibility & Accountability

Overall responsibility for implementation lies with the Managing Trustee / Head of Institution, supported by the Designated Child Protection Officer.

Declaration

Apple Valley Special School reaffirms its commitment to providing a safe, respectful, and secure environment for all children and to protecting their personal data with the highest standards of care and confidentiality.