

Ministry of Education directs all States/UT to implement “Guidelines on School Safety and Security” to ensure safety and security of children in schools

States/UTs also requested to inform status of notification of Guidelines on School Safety and Security-2021 in their State/UT

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The Ministry of Education, Government of India is deeply committed to ensuring the safety and security of children in schools and other educational institutions. To strengthen procedures, accountability and safeguard the students, in pursuance of the order of Hon’ble Supreme Court in the Writ Petition (Criminal) No. 136 of 2017 and Writ Petition (Civil) No. 874 of 2017, Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL), Ministry of Education has developed ‘Guidelines on School Safety and Security-2021’, which are in alignment with the POCSO Guidelines. These guidelines inter -alia, contain provisions for fixing the accountability of the school management in the matter of safety and security of children studying in Government, Government-aided and Private Schools. Further, the guidelines provide measures for preventive education, accountability of various stakeholders, reporting procedure, concerned legal provisions, support and counselling and safe environment. These guidelines are crucial to accessibility, inclusiveness and positive learning outcomes.

2. **The guidelines had been circulated to all States/UTs/Autonomous Bodies of DoSEL and Stakeholder Ministries on 01.10.2021.** The guidelines which are advisory in nature, detail the accountability of various stakeholders and different departments in ensuring the safety and security of children in schools. States/UTs were informed that they may incorporate additions/modifications to these guidelines, if deemed necessary, according to the State/UT specific requirements and notify these guidelines. These guidelines are uploaded on the website of DoSEL at https://dsel.education.gov.in/sites/default/files/2021-10/guidelines_sss.pdf.

The purpose of these guidelines is:

- to create an understanding among all stakeholders, including students and parents, on the need for co-creating a safe and secure school environment for the holistic development of children.
- to make different stakeholders aware about the acts, policies, procedures and guidelines already available on different aspects of safety and security i.e., physical, socio-emotional, cognitive and specific to natural disasters as well.
- to empower different stakeholders and enable clarity on their role in the implementation of this guideline.
- to fix accountability for keeping children safe and secure in schools (including while children are transported to and fro, to attend school or go back to their homes in a school transport) on School Management and Principals and Teachers in Private/Unaided Schools, and Head/in-charge Head of

School, Teachers and education administration in case of government/government-aided schools.

- A key purpose is to emphasize the 'Zero Tolerance Policy' against any negligence on the part of any individual or management when it comes to the safety and security of children in schools.

SS/AK

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