

## OSCAR Foundation Child Safeguarding and Protection Code of Conduct

At OSCAR Foundation we believe that Child Safeguarding and Protection is everyone's responsibility. Each member of our team - staff, consultants, Young Leaders, interns, volunteers - has an important role to play as we create safe, child friendly environments where every child is respected, protected, and heard.

**OSCAR Foundation requires you and all those involved in its activities promptly to report a Child Safeguarding or Protection concern if you believe a child has been abused, is being abused, or is at risk of abuse.**

This may include Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse and Exploitation, Emotional Abuse, Neglect or anything else that results in actual or potential harm to a child's health, development, or dignity. Your concern may relate to an incident in the past or present and may involve an allegation against someone such as a colleague, member of management, visitor or donor.

**Remember: No action is not an option.**

There are four key aspects to the OSCAR Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct each with *Dos and Don'ts*:

### RESTRICT

### RESPOND

### REMEMBER

### REPORT

#### RESTRICT: *Do*

- Ensure you have completed and fully understand OSCAR's safeguarding awareness training and also have read and at all times comply with the Safeguarding and Protection Policy and this Code of Conduct
- Restrict safeguarding and other risks by personally making every effort to eliminate any danger or harm to children when they are under your care or in the general care of OSCAR or a partner organisation
- Be alert to any suspicious activity in or around OSCAR's programmes and take appropriate steps
- Ensure your own behaviour sets the best example and that you are a positive role-model for children
- Respect the rights, dignity and views of every child and interact in an open, accepting way which will encourage them to tell you about any worries or fears. Take time to listen carefully especially if a child says they want to tell you a 'secret' or something that suggests he/she is at risk or has been abused
- Educate every child about his/her rights and/or issues of violation or abuse

#### RESTRICT: *Don't*

- Never pass on any personal details or sensitive information about a child or share any story that a child may tell you privately unless some safeguarding risk to the child is suspected in which case it must be reported in strict confidence to a senior manager or Safeguarding Officer
- Do not give your personal contact details to an OSCAR participant or have private contact with them via a personal social media account (Facebook, Instagram) and do not post photos, videos or

comments on social media which would violate a child's dignity or privacy in any way or cause them harm

- Never ignore the behaviour of others - whether they are colleagues, seniors, visitors or whoever - if they seem to be behaving unwisely in regard to children or not abiding by OSCAR Foundation's Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy and Code of Conduct

### **RESPOND: Do**

- Make sure you respond sensitively and treat all children equally: every child is valuable and unique
- Learn to recognise and respond to the signs of child abuse. These include:
  - Injuries, marks or bruises on a child for which there is no satisfactory or obvious explanation
  - Changes in how a child looks or behaves (for example becoming increasingly dirty, poorly dressed, quiet, tired, withdrawn or fearful) or in their attendance patterns
  - Variations in a child's eating patterns including constant hunger, weight loss or overeating
  - Parents or guardians who seem evasive or not keen to discuss concerns about their child
  - Any hints or information from any other person about the welfare or safety of a child
- **>> Remember that it is not your responsibility to decide if abuse has taken place, but it is your responsibility and duty to act on any safeguarding or child protection concerns and report them <<**

### **RESPOND: Don't**

- Never discriminate against any child on the basis of gender, culture, religion, sexual orientation, colour, physical features, disability or socio-economic status
- Do not engage in bullying or 'pushy' behaviour or allow others (including other children) to do so
- Never hit, punish or threaten any child, reduce a child to tears or humiliate them such as by teasing, laughing at them or embarrassing them
- Do not curse/swear around children, use insults or abusive language that may frighten or shame them.
- Do not smoke, consume alcohol or other harmful addictive substances in the presence of children
- Do not give preferential treatment to any child or provide individual gifts or privileges

### **REMEMBER: Do**

- Make sure the way you touch is always safe. Your reason for touching a child should be for appropriate personal care, protection from danger, play, or demonstrating empathy and affection
- Be sensitive to any indications (spoken or unspoken) that a child does not want to be touched
- Be aware of issues around "teenage crushes". You have to behave more responsibly than a younger person in such a situation and not allow anything inappropriate to develop or even be imagined
- On tours and away/field trips, ensure that at least one staff member is always with the children and that there are at least two adults of the same gender as that of the children for night duty

### **REMEMBER: Don't**

- Under no circumstances, physically or sexually assault or violate a child in any way nor engage in any sexual relationship with anyone under 18, including making sexually suggestive comments
- Never touch a child's private areas, kiss children on the lips or engage in any kind of physical contact with a child in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way
- Do not spend time with a child in any place away from others, or sleep alone with a child in a private room or provide shelter for OSCAR children in your home
- Never exploit a child for personal or financial gain nor employ or use anyone under 18 as a 'house help' or to do domestic or other work for you

### REPORT: *Do*

- Comply with all existing laws and regulations of India which promote and protect the rights of children
- Report any Child Safeguarding or Protection concern if you believe a child has been abused, is being abused, or is at risk of abuse. This may be because you have observed an incident or have suspicions about some wrongdoing. Or something may have been shared with you by the involved child or by another person such as a concerned community member, a volunteer or another child.
- Make all such reports to the Senior Safeguarding Officer based at OSCAR Foundation Head Office in Mumbai or to another Safeguarding Officer or to your manager or a senior manager, as appropriate.
- Know where to find the name and contact details of the OSCAR Safeguarding Officers and be aware of OSCAR Foundation's confidential Safeguarding Reporting Procedures
- Request from your manager or the Senior Safeguarding Officer any required further explanations or training that you feel that you or others need regarding this Code of Conduct and OSCAR Foundation's Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy, Process and Reporting Procedures
- Co-operate honestly and fully with any child abuse or safeguarding investigations conducted by OSCAR Foundation's Child Safeguarding and Protection Committee and Safeguarding Officers
- **Be aware that breaches of this Code of Conduct or other cases of child abuse or contravention of OSCAR Foundation's Safeguarding policies will result in disciplinary action in the case of staff which may include termination of employment or contract. Others such as visitors or volunteers may be asked immediately to cease their involvement with OSCAR Foundation**
- **Understand that serious breaches and cases which appear to involve criminal wrongdoing will also be reported to the relevant external authorities including police, as appropriate**

### REPORT: *Don't*

- Do not investigate or attempt to resolve on your own any safeguarding concerns, allegations or reports of abuse or trauma experienced by a child or children. Instead, use OSCAR's Reporting Procedure
- Never allow any Child Safeguarding or Protection Concerns or suspicions of wrongdoing to go unreported or delay in reporting such concerns to the Senior Safeguarding Officer based at OSCAR

Foundation Head Office in Mumbai or another Safeguarding Officer or to your manager or a senior manager

- Reporting such concerns promptly is an absolute obligation for all OSCAR team members and failure to do so may result in disciplinary action or dismissal
- Having made your report, do not mention anything or discuss the matter with any other colleagues except those authorized to deal with it such as a Safeguarding Officer
- Never feel reluctant to report concerns because the person(s) you believe to be responsible has a more senior status or position within or outside of the organization – for example they are a manager or an OSCAR donor or guest visitor. OSCAR Foundation is committed to ensuring that anyone who reports in good faith any safeguarding concern relating to another individual of any level - even if it turns out to be wrong - will not suffer any adverse results or reprisals

**Remember that at OSCAR we are working in positions of trust and have a total responsibility to keep children safe and protected**

**You are confirming your absolute commitment to these values by signing this Code of Conduct**

## **Declaration**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, declare that I have read and understood the above OSCAR Foundation Child Safeguarding and Protection Code of Conduct and fully appreciate my obligations and responsibilities regarding safeguarding issues and concerns. I also declare that no criminal case is pending against me nor have I ever been found guilty/convicted of any legal offence and/or crime. I understand that any breach or violation of the Code of Conduct or of OSCAR Foundation's Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy is likely to result in action being taken against me which may include termination of my staff or other contract or termination of my working relationship with OSCAR Foundation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **OSCAR Foundation Code Of Conduct For Visitors - Page 1**

OSCAR Foundation is a non-profit organisation dedicated to the development and empowerment of children and young people.

As such, OSCAR Foundation is completely committed to ensuring that we create a safe environment for all children who come in contact with the organisation and that we take appropriate measures to respond to any safeguarding concerns raised within the organisation or its programmes.

**It is therefore a mandatory request that we make of all those who visit OSCAR Foundation - including partners, donors, representatives of funding or media organisations, media personnel, visitors, guests and any others - to follow this protocol:**

Visits involving individual children will be conducted only once there is a consent from the child's parent/guardian/relative and the child has also been informed about the visit and its purpose.

Interaction with any child will be arranged at the OSCAR office or other similar venue.

No other location such as a hotel room or visitor's office or home will be allowed.

An OSCAR staff member will accompany you at all times.

During your visit, please abide by OSCAR's Core Values of Respect, Accountability, Excellence, Perseverance and Compassion in regard to your language, actions, dress and all other behaviour. Please maintain an atmosphere conducive to the best development of children through your word, deed and demeanour, including by listening to children and showing respect for them and their opinions.

Do not promise, suggest or even hint to children or their families/caretakers either verbally or in some other way that you might commit to any monetary or non-monetary favours, gifts or support unless you have the knowledge and permission of OSCAR management and have discussed it with them in advance.

No photographs, audio recordings, video, data or testimonials of children, family members, caretakers, OSCAR staff, OSCAR activities etc. may be taken nor later used in your internal or external communications including on the internet and social media platforms without the explicit prior knowledge and consent of OSCAR management. This also applies to images and content you might wish to download from the OSCAR website.

Notwithstanding any above consent from OSCAR Foundation, the identity of any child participant must be kept confidential and all media material featuring children must be made in an appropriate and sensitive manner.

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**Declaration**

I/we ..... from organisation  
..... agree to abide by the above protocol in every  
particular and understand that any violations will be subject to action with the possibility of being  
reported by OSCAR Foundation to relevant external authorities including the police and other legal  
entities

I/we also understand and will abide by the restrictions on taking videos / photos of children and also  
commit that these will not be used for any personal benefit or commercial purpose without OSCAR  
Foundation's prior permission

Signed:

Date: