

CENTRAL BOARD OF SECONDARY EDUCATION
2, COMMUNITY CENTRE, PREET VIHAR, DELHI - 110092

NO.D(A)/PA/SCHOOL SAFETY/04

26th July, 2004

Circular No: 28/2004

To

All the Heads of Institutions affiliated to the Board

Subject : Safety in schools –Req.

Dear Principal,

As you are aware, the school in any city is a place of vital importance. It is a place of vibrant activity. Thousands of small children assemble for many hours of the day for active interaction. It is important that the schools should own the moral responsibility for safe housing of the students during the period of their stay in the school. It is said that accidents do not happen, but they are caused. Advanced planning, effective implementation strategies, development of right attitude for safety, coordination and cooperation with agencies working in this area are important for ensuring the safety in schools.

The Board, on its part, has stipulated certain conditions in the Byelaws of Affiliation with regard to the nature and housing of the building and safety measures to be taken in the schools. Though these are periodically supervised during the time of inspection, the schools should take up the responsibility of continuous verification of these rules as well as other rules prescribed by the local authorities to ensure the safety of the children being housed in these buildings.

In a school environment, there are several areas where safety concerns exist. It is not possible to identify and list them as most of them may be school specific and need the attention of the school managers and local authorities. However, there are certain broad preventive measures which are common and necessary for all schools. They have been given in the form of a questionnaire and the schools will do well to do some introspection in these areas and take necessary steps. These have to be addressed not necessarily because they exist in the rules book, but all of us have a genuine and humane concern for the younger generation of the country. It is a moral obligation the schools owe to their primary stakeholders.

Some of the issues the Board would like to bring to the immediate attention of the school authorities are:

Fire Safety Management

1. How safe is your school from fire hazards? Does your school have a fire safety certificate? Is it current and validated periodically?
2. Do you have adequate fire fighting systems in place to meet any emergency?
3. Are you in touch with local fire fighting agencies for mock drill training to a crisis management group?
4. What emergency steps are in place in the school for fire safety management?
5. Is there a trained management team available in the school for initial fire hazard management? Are you in touch with the local fire safety authorities for training and retraining the people?

Structural Safety

1. Does your school have any temporary structure or any class-room/other room which has thatched roofing and which is inflammable? Are you aware such inflammable structures are not permissible under the rules?
2. Is your school situated in old or dilapidated buildings? Has it been brought to the notice of the local authorities or management so that adequate steps are taken for relocating the school?

3. Has your building been certified as safe for housing the students by the local authorities?
4. Are there any cracks in the school structures and are steps being taken to repair them?
5. Is your school located near any rail track? Has the impact of such locations being examined by the local authorities for the safety of the students?

Earthquake Management

1. Is your school situated in the earthquake risk zone?
2. Have necessary steps been taken during construction of the building for earthquake safety for the building?
3. How safe is your construction to face a natural disaster of this kind? Do you need to make modifications in consultation with local authorities?
4. What emergency steps are in place in the school for disaster preparedness?
5. Is there a trained disaster management group available in school for initial response? Are you in touch with the local disaster management authorities for training and retraining them?

Flood/Cyclone Management

1. Is your school situated near seashore or a river?
2. Have you any contingency plans to meet floods, cyclones, cloud bursts and heavy rains?
3. Is there a transport mechanism in place for emergency transport of students or do you have any contacts for their arrangements?

Landslide Management

1. Is your school situated on hilltops or where there is a possibility of landslide?
2. What is the frequency of such slides and is your building safe according to the local authorities?

Management from Industrial Products

1. Is your school located near an industry or a chemical factory producing fatal chemical products? Are you aware of the nature of products? Is your school safe from any eventualities from the leakage of chemicals in this area?
2. Do you have first aid and other medical systems in place to safeguard your students? Are you aware of the procedures to be adopted in case of any emergency?

Electrical Safety

1. How safe are the electrical systems in your school? Are they being checked periodically?
2. Have you ensured limited access to the area of electrical installation only to those who are required?

Stampede Management

1. What is the possibility of any stampede outside your school during any emergency? How would you ensure that students and others do not become victims of a stampede?
2. How safe are the staircases in your school? What alternate mechanisms would you adopt to manage a stampede in the staircase?

Safety from Constructional Hazards

1. Does your school have any ongoing construction?
2. Have you obtained necessary permission from the local authorities for the same?
3. Have the constructions been planned during the lean time of students' presence in the school?
4. Have you put barricades and signboards in the construction area prohibiting the movement of students?
5. Are there water storage sources for such constructions and have they been covered to prevent small children from any possible mishap?

Safety in the Playground

1. Is your playground safe for the students to play games? Are they being maintained well?
2. Who ensures that there are no hazardous materials like rusted nails etc., on the ground that will physically hurt them?

3. Do you have a swimming pool? Have you taken adequate precautions for the safety of the students? Are lifeguards available to help the students?
4. What management systems you have in place to meet any emergency?

Water Safety

1. Is the drinking water safe in the school plant? Is the water source well protected?
2. Is the water provided to the students tested by the local authorities periodically?
3. Do you ensure safe potable water always?
4. Do you have a water management system in the event of a fire? Is there access to such sources?

Laboratory Safety

1. Are the laboratories in your school positioned as per rules?
2. Is there space for free mobility for students in case of an emergency?
3. Are the chemicals and instruments kept safely beyond the access of others?
4. Is there a first aid box available in your lab?
5. Do you have an exhaust facility for the gases?
6. Have you displayed the first aid procedures for the students in the laboratory?
7. Is your school team trained to meet any emergency in the laboratory?

Transport Management and Safety

1. Is your school owning/ running buses on lease for students?
2. Have you complied with the rules and regulations stipulated by the local transport authorities?
3. Are your teachers' delegated responsibilities for transport management?
4. Are your drivers trained and have a regular license?
5. Do they ensure whether the students are cautioned to keep a safe distance before starting the bus?
6. Are there speed governors in your school buses?
7. What controls do you exercise on contractors/ lessees for the safety of the mode of transport?
8. Have your students been trained in orderliness in buses? Have they been exposed to traffic rules?

Trauma Management

1. Do you have a trauma management team to meet any accident or disaster?
2. Do you have the contacts available for trauma management?
3. Are you or any senior persons in the school aware of the telephone number of the hospitals, ambulance and the fire stations near your school?
4. Do you have a small school nursing room?

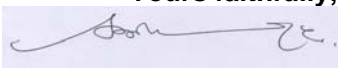
Safety of the Challenged

1. How many physically challenged students are studying in your school?
2. Are you aware of their limitations and procedures to help them in the event of any emergency?
3. Are there any designated official in the school who is entrusted with the exclusive responsibility of their needs in any emergency?

The above questionnaire needs to be answered by each and every school. The Heads of institutions would discuss the issues in the school managements and take appropriate steps in this regard. They should also discuss these issues in their staff meetings to bring greater awareness among the staff and to increase their sensitivity to these issues.

Kindly acknowledge this letter.

Yours faithfully,



**(G.BALASUBRAMANIAN)
DIRECTOR (ACADEMIC)**

