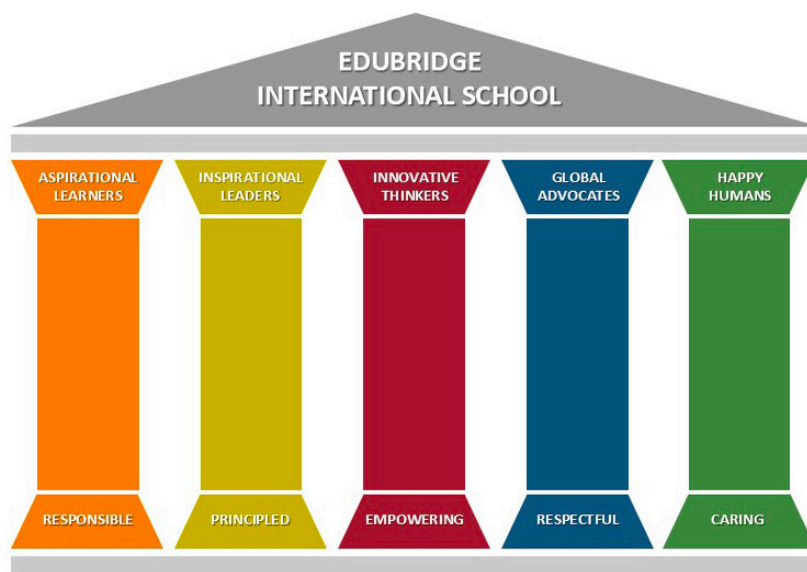




## Sexual Harassment Team Manual 2023-24



### GUIDING STATEMENTS

Our Guiding Statements are central to everything we do. That is to say, we use them as a compass to inform our aspirations, actions and decisions.

#### EIS Vision

Aspirational Learners  
Inspirational Leaders  
Innovative Thinkers  
Global Advocates  
Happy Humans

#### EIS Mission

*Providing well-being  
and high-quality learning  
in pursuit of varied success  
and a better world for all*

#### EIS Core Values

Empowering  
Caring  
Principled  
Respectful  
Responsible



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## PART 1: WHO WE ARE

### INTRODUCTION

The EIS Sexual Harassment Policy Manual is an essential reading for all school personnel. It has been developed under Indian Law and the EIS Core Values. It is underpinned by our firm belief that: “A respectful workplace environment - free of harassment - is the right of every member of Staff.” Since sexual harassment can harm employees so deeply - not to mention our students and our school as a whole - we have made every effort in this manual to articulate our Sexual Harassment Policy using clear, concise, and readily understandable language.

#### The central aims of the EIS Sexual Harassment Policy Manual

- ✧ Define our core beliefs and values about a respectful workplace environment and the rights of Staff
- ✧ Provide background information on sexual harassment and other forms of [workplace harassment](#)
- ✧ Explain how harassment can be harmful to individuals and the School
- ✧ Lay bare our policies, programmes and codes of conduct for the prevention of all forms of harassment
- ✧ Clarify the School’s complaint procedure and investigation protocol
- ✧ Specify standards of justice (‘just cause’, ‘due process’, ‘standards of proof’, etc.)
- ✧ Lay out the tiered approaches/steps/sanctions (clarifying → warning → monitoring → disciplining)
- ✧ Clarify the school’s sexual harassment training programmes
- ✧ Describe how we monitor/review/improve our harassment prevention practices to ensure best practice
- ✧ State that the SHC wants to hear from anyone who has experienced, witnessed, or heard about harassment within the EIS community

### OUR SEXUAL HARASSMENT TEAM (Internal Complaints Committee)

As a matter of policy, the SHT must: i) be at least 50% female in composition; ii) be headed by a woman; iii) include an external member; iv) have a quorum of five (5), and v) have three standby members. Standby Members are only called upon if needed to achieve quorum.

#### SHT Members for AY 2023-24

##### Quorum

Apeksha Trivady	School Counsellor, SHO
Arnaz Ranji Charna	HOS
Mario Fernandes	Faculty Member
Mansi Gandhi	Assistant MYP Coordinator
Raman Singh	Board member
Anieta Monterio	PYP Team Lead
Sanah Batta/ VLegal	External Member

##### Standby members:

Tracy Waller	DP Coordinator
Uzma Khan	EYP Coordinator
Chantelle Monterio	PYP Coordinator

### OUR TEAM STATEMENT ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Workplace harassment - including sexual harassment - is a universal problem that inflicts serious psychological harm on its victims. Harassment can diminish a person’s confidence, happiness and ability to: i) work at high levels, ii) move forward in their careers, iii) contribute to their schools’ vision and

mission, and iv) flourish as dignified human beings. As such, Edubridge International School is absolutely committed to maintaining a safe and respectful workplace environment for all. Further, this manual communicates in the strongest terms possible that harassment, in any shape or form, is an affront to human dignity and will not be tolerated by the School. As such, EIS employees must not engage in any form of harassment and should be above any suspicion of it.

### **Our commitments to a safe and respectful workplace environment**

- ✧ Upholding and advocating for the rights of every school employee and volunteer
- ✧ Ensuring our employees' best interests in all actions and decisions affecting them
- ✧ Paying attention to workplace relationships/dynamics to identify any concerns
- ✧ Handling all harassment matters effectively and in accordance with best practices and due process
- ✧ Disclosing harassment concerns to other employers through the referral process (within the law)
- ✧ Carefully screening of all prospective employees/volunteers to keep past offenders out of the school
- ✧ Providing regular training for all staff on sexual harassment and other parts of the EIS Code of Conduct
- ✧ Ensuring fidelity to best practices through regular monitoring, review and research processes

\* Throughout this document, "Staff" refers to any adult with a designated role in the school: i.e., administrative staff; teaching staff; specialist staff; support staff; outsourced staff; guest speakers, volunteers, etc.

## **OUR VALUES FOR A RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE**

**Listening** - We listen to all staff calmly and reassuringly - restating what they have said to ensure the correct interpretation and letting them know that we care about them.

**Guidance** - We are here for all Staff, sharing expertise and advice when asked for.

**Empathy** - We tell victims of harassment that it's not their fault. The victim is never to be blamed.

**Diversity** - We uphold the rights of every person - no matter their culture, ethnicity, sexuality, gender identity, socio-economic background, personality, designation or any other factor.

**Empowerment** - We give victims choices - to the extent possible - in how we move forward in handling harassment cases.

**Dignity** - We uphold the right of every person to feel listened to, cared about and respected as an important human being with intrinsic value.

**Responsibility** - We accept our 'duty of care' for all Staff in our school; protecting their health, safety and well-being.

**Advocacy** - We are committed to educating all Staff about sexual harassment and other forms of disrespect - making them aware that it's a universal problem and helping them to understand that it violates the rights of the victim by harming their physical, emotional and intellectual development.

**Protection** - We seek to be a haven for staff who may be experiencing mental illness, domestic abuse or any other hardship in their lives - listening to concerns, giving care and/or making referrals.

**Person-centeredness** - We keep the person at the centre of all investigations - upholding the right of the victim to feel safe, supported and cared for by the school.

**Awareness** - We help Staff to navigate the workplace by clarifying the: i) rights of all employees; ii) expectations of behaviour; and iii) tiered approaches to violations of conduct.

**Composure** - We model calm, respectful and constructive behaviour at all times.

**Confidentiality** - We protect the privacy of both the victim and the accused to the extent possible.

## **OUR DEFINITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

India's Prevention of Workplace Sexual Harassment Act defines 'sexual harassment' as the following unwelcome acts:

- i. physical contact and advances,




- ii. demand or request for sexual favours,
- iii. making sexually coloured remarks,
- iv. showing pornography, or
- v. any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature.

Edubridge International School interprets the aforementioned to include any unwelcome harassment based on the victim's gender - it does not need to be motivated by sexual desire. "Unwelcome" is the critical word - conduct is unacceptable whenever the person subjected to it considers it unwelcome. For a deeper dive into sexual harassment and other related topics, please see [Information on Workplace Harassment](#).









## PART 2: WHAT WE BELIEVE

### OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES (Standards & Indicators)


#### STANDARD 1: Keeping would-be perpetrators out of the school











-  All prospective personnel, volunteers and contracted workers must undergo thorough reference checks and police clearances to ensure they have no prior record of perpetrating sexual harassment.
-  Prospective personnel must be interviewed by a panel that forms a whole-group assessment of the person to increase the likelihood that somebody picks up on any 'red flags'. As part of this, candidates are asked to respond to sexual harassment questions to reveal their attitudes toward vulnerable groups.
-  All contracts must include sexual harassment clauses to deter perpetrators from signing and to avoid potential difficulties in enforcing the school's sexual harassment policies and procedures.

#### STANDARD 2: Preventing sexual harassment within the school









-  Advocating for a harmonious workplace environment built on trust and transparency, where all employees can feel safe reporting concerns to school leaders and the EIS Sexual Harassment Team.\
-  Human rights and the school's guiding statements should be front and centre in all school decisions.
-  When Staff have a strong sense of voice, choice and ownership they're more likely to report concerns and disclose sexual harassment. Thus, staff empowerment is central to the prevention of sexual harassment.
-  All EIS school leaders have a 'duty of care' (legal obligation) to take all reasonable steps to ensure the physical, emotional and psychological well-being of all Staff under their management.
-  Ensuring that all adults in the school, including volunteers and contracted workers, have read and understood the Code of Conduct for EIS Staff and the EIS Sexual Harassment Policy Manual.
-  The school has a responsibility to provide sufficient sexual harassment training to make all Staff aware of professional boundaries and to feel comfortable to report any instances of harassment.
-  Partnering with authorized POSH trainers to provide all Staff with sexual harassment training at the appropriate level (introductory → intermediate → deep dive).
-  Performing an annual review of the EIS Sexual Harassment Policy and Code of Conduct for EIS Staff

#### STANDARD 3: Case Management

-  Maintaining the highest standards of integrity: upholding confidentiality; avoiding conflicts of interest; responding ethically to complaints; seeking positive outcomes through mediation; and reserving disciplinary measures for extreme cases and/or as a last resort.

-  It is best to resolve workplace behaviour issues using conflict resolution, to the extent appropriate.
-  It is immoral to downplay or conceal cases of sexual harassment for any reason, as doing so enables the perpetrator to harm the known victim and/or others. Moreover, cover-ups hurt schools in the long run because maintaining trust is vital during a crisis.
-  We will be judged by how we respond to cases of sexual harassment more than whether or not an offender exists within the school. Our competence, honesty, integrity and openness matter.
-  The school has a fiduciary responsibility to investigate all reports of unacceptable conduct and inform the appropriate authorities whenever there is reasonable cause to believe that a crime has been committed.
-  The school must follow a carefully designed course of due process when dealing with any sexual harassment case and ensure that victims receive counselling and/or other services as needed.
-  The school should request/share relevant sexual harassment information with other schools whenever a former member of Staff applies at another organization.
-  Partnering with outside counselling agencies to give Staff access to additional support services that the school cannot provide on its own.
-  Partnering with another school to provide/receive external input when handling sexual harassment cases.
-  Conduct a reflective analysis of our handling of each sexual harassment case to determine the extent to which the school's policies/approaches were effective and adhered to.
-  Organizing a third-party audit each year (by a lawyer) to monitor the SHT's handling of any sensitive cases, and to learn from any mistakes or undesirable outcomes that may have occurred.

#### **STANDARD 4: Protecting the rights of staff**

-  Having systems to identify staff who may be suffering from any form of workplace bullying or harassment
-  Sexual harassment harms the self-value, self-esteem and self-worth of the victim, often rendering them unable to cope or thrive at work.
-  School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of staff experiencing domestic abuse. Therefore, we must take all steps to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all.
-  When a person is harassed or bullied they may show defiant or withdrawn behavior. Consequently, it is unacceptable to reprimand an employee. Instead of this, we must seek to fully understand and address the root causes of all behavioural issues.
-  Staff confidentiality must be maintained to the greatest extent possible and without jeopardizing the rights of the victim and the accused or the integrity of the investigation.
-  Victims of sexual harassment are often reluctant to disclose their experiences for fear of being embarrassed, blamed, punished, judged, not believed or upset by reliving the trauma.
-  Staff are unlikely to report concerns or disclose harassment unless the school has been proactive and effective in building a positive workplace environment that is founded on trust, transparency and respect.
-  Sexual harassers often operate within a "Matrix of Power", wherein they feel emboldened and/or above the law by the authority they hold or their relationship to someone holding a position of power.

## PART 3: WHAT WE DO (Roles/Responsibilities)

Click the following links to see how we fulfill our roles and responsibilities

[STANDARD 1: Keeping would-be perpetrators out of the school](#)

[STANDARD 2: Preventing sexual harassment within the school](#)

[STANDARD 3: Case Management](#)

[STANDARD 4: Protecting the rights of staff](#)

## PART 4: HOW WE IMPROVE

### OUR END-OF-YEAR SELF-EVALUATION

At the end of each school year, the Sexual Harassment Team conducts a self-study using the following guiding questions, to self-reflect and determine the extent to which it has fulfilled its responsibilities and achieved its aims.

1. Has the Sexual Harassment Team Manual been reviewed, updated and re-posted on the EIS website?
2. What actions are needed, based on feedback/reflections/surveys from staff?
3. Were all of our meetings conducted/documented properly?
4. Has our Sexual Harassment Team calendar been completed for the next school year?
5. Did we work well as a team? What did/didn't go well? What are our recommendations/planned actions?
6. Were all sexual harassment cases documented properly and handled with best practice/due process?
7. Did we collaborate with partner schools/external experts in the context of sexual harassment?
8. To what extent have our well-being practices been adhered to?
9. How effectively did our team fulfil its responsibilities? What went well? What didn't?
10. What specific sexual harassment training/workshops did we/should we organize?
11. What was the depth/breadth/impact of the sexual harassment training sessions for staff?
12. What assessments were done to gauge their knowledge and mind frames? What went well? What didn't?
13. What are the recommendations and planned actions of the SHO in the context of sexual harassment?
14. To what extent are the police clearances for all staff, volunteers and contracted workers up-to-date?
15. To what extent have our safe recruitment practices been adhered to?
16. Do all staff contracts include sexual harassment clauses/statements?
17. How effectively did our team fulfil its responsibilities?
18. What specific training did we run for SHT members/Staff members/Board members/SLT members?
19. What specific training is needed for SHT members/Staff members/Board members/SLT members?
20. What SHT cases occurred during the school year?
21. To what extent was each sexual harassment case handled correctly? What went well? What didn't?
22. What are our recommendations and planned actions for the HOS in the context of sexual harassment?
23. What are our recommendations/planned actions for the HOS in the context of staff well-being?

### OUR END-OF-YEAR TEAM REPORT

At the end of each school year, after completing its self-evaluation, the Sexual Harassment Team writes an annual report for the Head of School, who includes this in the Annual Report to Stakeholders. The Staff Well-being Report includes the self-study results, which are written as i) commendations ii) recommendations, and iii) planned actions. These are submitted to the HOS for inclusion in the Annual School Report.

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### Period of Review: October 2023 - February 2024

Name of the Reviewer	Role
Ms Apeksha Trivady	Whole school Socio-Emotional Counsellor & DP Psychology & TOK Teacher
Ms Lajya Nayak	Whole school Socio-Emotional Counsellor & DP Psychology Teacher
Ms Sunita Agarwal	Well-being Coordinator
Extended Leadership team	All Coordinators, Head of School

