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STARTING A PRIVATE PLAY SCHOOL...???

RULES AND GUIDELINES IN INDIA



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“CHILDREN ARE OUR MOST VALUABLE RESOURCE”

- OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

The earliest years of a child’s life are critical. These years determine child’s survival and thriving in life, and lay the foundations for her/ his learning and holistic development. In India, according to Census 2011 data there are 164,515,253 children of 0-6 years of age¹ which is 13.58 percent of her total population.

The Supreme Court in the landmark judgments in *Mohini Jain v. Union of India*,² *J P Unnikrishnan vs. State of Andhra Pradesh*³ has recognized the Right to Education as a fundamental right. As a result, recognizing the need to provide quality education, a number of constitutional and policy provisions have been made such as the 86th Constitutional Amendment which introduced Article 21A on the Right to Free And Compulsory Education for 6-14 years old children and Article 45 to urge states to provide ECCE for all children until they complete the age of six years. Consequently, The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2010 guarantees children their right to quality elementary education. Early Childhood Education is not recognized as a compulsory provision by RTE, but RTE urges states to provide free pre-school education for children above three years. Reaffirming the commitment towards the right of children the Government of India approved the National Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy in 2013. The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) is the nodal department for ECCE. In India, the ECCE services are delivered through public, private and non-governmental organizations.

Also, The Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs) included pre-school education under forth goal to ***‘ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning’*** and has targeted that by 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.

Upholding the spirit of Constitution of India and Right to Education Act, 2009 and based on the National ECCE Policy 2013, NCPCR has developed ***Regulatory Guidelines for Private Play Schools*** to achieve national as well as international commitment of pre-school education for children in the age 3-6 years and preparing them for primary education and to safeguard their human rights.

¹ Census Info India 2011, Final Population Totals, available at: http://www.dataforall.org/dashboard/censusingindia_pca/

² (1992) 3 SCC 666

³ 1993 SCC (1) 645

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The guidelines delve into the actual details of daily operations pertaining to preschools as below:

1. One teacher and one caregiver for every 20 children.
2. A clear boundary wall demarcating the school from other structures
3. Sanitized toilets with soap, running water with towels for easy access to both normal and disabled children
4. CCTV surveillance for the rest room as well as play area.
5. Pest control to be done on a regular basis
6. Sufficient fire protection measures
7. Learning aids for the teachers based on the curriculum for each class
8. The library should have books and relevant audio visual learning material
9. Sports equipment in adequate numbers
10. The first aid kit has to be easily accessible and should always be well stocked
11. Every child should be medically examined once a quarter by doctors registered with the medical council
12. School has to maintain records pertaining to the enrolment as well as attendance along with the fees paid. They should also maintain details of the medical examination of each child and all these have to be accessible for inspection.
13. No child will be subjected to any monthly, quarterly or annual examination
14. The play areas and other structures should only be used for the children aged 3-6 years
15. Annual accounts have to be audited every year
16. No capitation fee or donation shall be demanded from any parent

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The government has also made it clear that if the above guidelines are not adhered to by the school, its certification can be withdrawn and the school would be derecognized

Government of India is also making efforts to regulate the functioning of play schools and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto in the defined legal framework and in this regard **The Play Schools (Regulations) Bill, 2017** is also laid down in the Rajya Sabha. The Bill has provided for constitution of Play Schools Education Authority, its power and functions etc.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”



- Nelson Madela

FOR FURTHER DETAILS, PLEASE CONTACT



Mr. Raj Singh Niranjn,

Advocate, Supreme Court &

Legal Advisor, International Solar Alliance (ISA)

 +91 98100 70075  rsn@tila.in

Dr. Rajni Patel, Managing Partner

 +91 98180 43057  rajni@tila.in

Ms. Payal Bondarde, Sr. Associate Advocate


 +91 85888 57374  payal@tlandia.org

Ms. Payal Bondarde, Sr. Associate Advocate,




Editor, TILA TIMES



 +91 85888 57374  payal@tlandia.org

Trans-India Law Associates, Advocates & Legal Consultants

 TILA SUITE, JA-120, DLF Tower - A, Jasola District Center, New Delhi-110025

Chamber: TILA Chamber No. 555, New Delhi Court Complex, New Delhi-110 001

 91-11-26943664,  91-11-26970075,  +91 98100 70075

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