

THE CHARTER SCHOOL

TRINS Group of Institutions | Kochi, Kerala

Affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), New Delhi

CBSE Affiliation No.: 931311

CONSTITUTION OF THE INTERNAL COMMITTEE (IC) Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) at the Workplace Academic Session 2026–27

Constituted in compliance with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 and CBSE Affiliation Bye-Laws (Rule 14.28). This document supersedes the 2025–26 IC Constitution and reflects a legally compliant restructuring of the committee.

1. PREAMBLE AND LEGAL BASIS

The Charter School (TCS), affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), is committed to providing a safe, dignified, and inclusive environment for all students, teachers, non-teaching staff, contract staff, visitors, and other stakeholders. In furtherance of this commitment and in strict compliance with the POSH Act, 2013, the school constitutes the following Internal Committee (IC) for the academic session 2026–27.

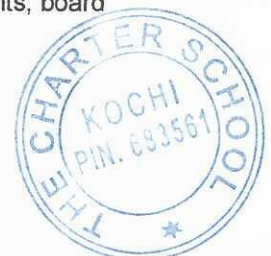
The IC is also constituted in accordance with:

- Circular No. CBSE/Admin.1/14(6)/2004 (dated February 16, 2004) and subsequent circulars on safe school environments.
- CBSE Affiliation Bye-Laws – Rule 14 (Misconduct / Duties of the School). Under Rule 14.28 of the current CBSE Affiliation Bye-Laws, schools must prevent gender-specific violence and comply with the POSH Act, 2013 (for staff) and the POCSO Act, 2012 (for students).
- National Education Policy 2020 – provisions on safe and equitable educational institutions.
- Vishakha Guidelines (Supreme Court of India, 1997), as codified in the POSH Act.

2. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This IC has jurisdiction over all sexual harassment complaints arising within or connected to the school premises or any school-related activity, affecting:

- All teaching and non-teaching employees (permanent, contractual, part-time, or ad hoc).
- Students of The Charter School (Grades 1–12) in any school-related context.
- Visitors, parents, guardians, vendors, or third-party personnel on school grounds.
- Any activity conducted off-premises under school authority (field trips, sports events, board examinations, inter-school activities, etc.).



3. REVISED IC CONSTITUTION (2026–27) — CORE INTERNAL COMMITTEE

The Core IC has been reduced to four (4) members in line with POSH Act best practice. This satisfies all statutory requirements: a female Presiding Officer, ≥50% female representation (75%), and a permanent External Member. Senior management has been removed from the IC and reassigned to the POSH Oversight & Support Council (Section 6).

S. No.	Name	Designation	Statutory IC Role	Key Responsibilities
1.	Ms. Sreekala	Examination Officer, TCS (Mid-Senior Female Employee)	Presiding Officer	Chairs all IC proceedings and hearings; ensures compliance with POSH Act, 2013 and CBSE norms; oversees inquiry timelines; approves final reports and recommendations to management. Her mid-senior (non-Head-of-School) position removes direct institutional pressure on complainants.
2.	Ms. Ansa Basheer	HR Manager, TCS	Internal Member	Manages HR records, employee documentation, and interim relief logistics; liaises between the IC and school management; facilitates service-related actions arising from IC recommendations.
3.	Mr. Joji Mathew Daniel	P.E. Coordinator, TRINS Group of Institutions	Internal Member (Male Representative)	Provides male employee representation; assists with inquiry logistics; contributes to gender-sensitisation programmes organised by the Support Council.
4.	Ms. Maya Menon	Founder, Mind Empowered (NGO)	External Member — Permanent (Mandatory under Section 4(2)(c))	Provides independent, impartial oversight of all IC proceedings; brings expertise in gender rights and victim support; ensures inquiry is free from institutional bias; must be present at every hearing for legal validity of proceedings.

4. POSH OVERSIGHT & SUPPORT COUNCIL (NON-IC)

The following personnel, formerly listed as IC members, are constituted into a separate POSH Oversight & Support Council. This body does not participate in the formal inquiry process and has no investigative or adjudicatory role. Its functions are limited to:

- Campus-wide gender-sensitisation, awareness programmes, and preventive education.
- Providing confidential counselling and psycho-social support to aggrieved parties outside the inquiry room.
- Receiving and implementing the final recommendations of the Core IC (management function).
- Fulfilling mandatory POCSO reporting obligations through the school counsellor.
- Drafting and updating the school's POSH Policy and related communications.

S. No.	Name	Designation	Role in the Oversight & Support Council
1.	Ms. Sheela Chacko	Head of School, TRINS Group of Institutions	Serves as the employer / management authority that receives final IC recommendations and ensures their implementation; chairs the Oversight Council.
2.	Ms. Priya Promod	Principal, The Charter School	Ensures school-wide policy compliance; coordinates POSH awareness in the academic calendar; receives IC's annual report on behalf of management.



S. No.	Name	Designation	Role in the Oversight & Support Council
3.	Ms. Sameera Basheer Kavapurayil	Vice Principal, The Charter School	Supports campus-level implementation of IC recommendations; assists with interim relief measures (transfers, leave grants) on management instruction.
4.	Ms. Najia Ashraf	PGT Psychology, The Charter School	Provides confidential psychological support and psycho-social first response to aggrieved parties outside the formal inquiry room; bridges referral to external professional support.
5.	Ms. Tina Ann Varghese	School Counsellor, The Charter School	Primary contact for student complainants; provides trauma-informed counselling; fulfils mandatory POCSO reporting obligations (Section 19) in consultation with management.
6.	Ms. Sindhu Deepak	Academic & Career Counsellor, The Charter School	Supports students and staff in understanding reporting processes; contributes to preventive education, gender-sensitisation, and awareness programmes.
7.	Mr. Ishaque	Accounts Manager, The Charter School	Manages financial and administrative aspects of IC operations (meeting logistics, training budgets, record maintenance); non-voting support role.
8.	Dr. Seema Girija Lal	External Legal / Subject-Matter Expert	Available as a legal resource to the Oversight Council for policy review, annual report drafting, and legal questions; may be invited to IC proceedings at IC's discretion as a non-member expert witness or advisor, but does not vote.

5. MANDATE OF THE CORE INTERNAL COMMITTEE

5.1 Complaint Handling and Inquiry

- Receive written complaints within seven (7) working days of the incident (Section 9, POSH Act).
- Complete inquiry within ninety (90) days of receipt of complaint (Section 11).
- Provide opportunity of being heard to both complainant and respondent.
- Submit inquiry report with findings and recommendations to management within ten (10) days of completion.
- Forward complaints involving cognisable criminal offences to appropriate authorities.

5.2 Interim Relief

- On written request, the IC may recommend: transfer of the aggrieved person or respondent; grant of leave up to three months (in addition to entitled leave); any other appropriate relief.

5.3 Confidentiality

- Maintain strict confidentiality of the identity of complainant, respondent, witnesses, and all inquiry contents.
- Disclosure in violation of confidentiality provisions is subject to penalty under Section 16 of the POSH Act.
- Members of the POSH Oversight & Support Council must not be briefed on active inquiry details.

5.4 Reporting and Documentation

- Maintain a register of all complaints received, proceedings conducted, and actions taken.
- Submit an Annual Report to management and, where applicable, to the District Officer (Section 21, POSH Act) covering: number of complaints received, disposed of, and pending; and nature of action taken.
- Management shall include IC Annual Report details in CBSE affiliation submissions.

5.5 IC Meetings and Quorum

- The IC shall meet at least once per quarter (minimum four meetings per year).
- Quorum: at least three of four members, including the Presiding Officer and the External Member. Holding a hearing without the External Member is a statutory violation.



- Minutes shall be recorded at every meeting, signed by the Presiding Officer.

6. STUDENT SAFETY AND POCSO COMPLIANCE

The POSH Act, 2013 primarily covers employees. All complaints involving a student (person under 18 years of age) additionally invoke the POCSO Act, 2012. The School Counsellor (Ms. Tina Ann Varghese), as the designated contact in the Support Council, must report to the police / SJPU within 24 hours of receiving information about a POCSO offence (Section 19, POCSO Act, 2012). This obligation cannot be waived or deferred.

- The Core IC shall be notified immediately of any POCSO-related report. The inquiry under POSH may proceed in parallel, but the POCSO reporting obligation takes precedence.
- Student complaints may be made orally to any trusted teacher or IC/Council member, who shall reduce it to writing and submit to the IC without delay.

7. COMPLAINT FILING PROCEDURE

7.1 Who Can File

- Any aggrieved woman employee or student.
- Where the aggrieved person is unable to file, their legal heir, guardian, or authorised person may file on their behalf.
- In the case of a student, a parent, guardian, or any staff member with knowledge of the incident may file.

7.2 Mode of Filing

- Written complaints submitted to the Presiding Officer (Ms. Sreekala) or any IC member.
- A sealed complaint box and a confidential complaint register shall be maintained at the school office.
- Electronic complaints may be submitted to a dedicated, confidential IC email address managed by the Presiding Officer.

7.3 Timeline

- Within three (3) months of the date of the incident.
- Extendable by a further three (3) months if the IC is satisfied that circumstances prevented timely filing.

8. CBSE AFFILIATION COMPLIANCE

- Annual reconstitution of the IC and submission of reconstitution order to the CBSE Regional Office.
- Display of Core IC member details and the POSH Policy on the school notice board and school website.
- Submission of IC Annual Report as part of mandatory disclosures under CBSE affiliation conditions.
- Maintenance of records of all gender-sensitisation activities, available for CBSE inspection.
- Compliance with CBSE Circular No. CBSE/Admin.1/14(6)/2004 and all subsequent advisories on staff and student safety.
- Inclusion of POSH awareness activities in the school's annual academic calendar.

9. CONSEQUENCES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND FALSE COMPLAINTS

9.1 If Complaint is Established

- Written apology; warning, reprimand, or censure.



- Withholding of increments, promotions, or benefits.
- Transfer, suspension, or termination from service (employees) per service rules.
- Appropriate disciplinary action for student respondents in accordance with CBSE guidelines.

9.2 If Complaint is Found to be False or Malicious

- Action may be taken against the complainant per service rules. Note: inability to prove a complaint shall not by itself constitute a false or malicious complaint.

10. DECLARATION AND AUTHORISATION

This revised constitution of the Internal Committee is hereby declared and authorised by the Principal of The Charter School for the academic session 2026–27. It supersedes all previous IC constitutions and shall remain in force until further revised or reconstituted.

Presiding Officer (New IC)

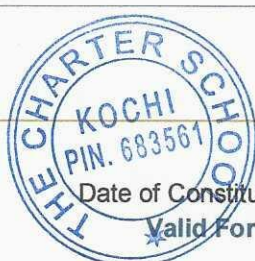
Ms. Sreekala
Examination Officer, The Charter School

Principal

Ms. Priya Promod
The Charter School

Signature & Date

Signature & Date



Priya
PRINCIPAL
The Charter School
Pukkattupady
Kochi-683 561

School Seal

Date of Constitution: ..

Valid For Academic Session: 2026–2027

APPENDIX: KEY STATUTORY REFERENCES

- POSH Act, 2013 – Sections 4, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 19, 20, 21.
- POCSO Act, 2012 – Mandatory reporting obligations (Section 19).
- Indian Penal Code (IPC) – Sections 354, 354A, 354B, 354C, 354D, 509.
- CBSE Circular No. CBSE/Admin.I/14(6)/2004 – Safe and secure environment in schools.
- CBSE Affiliation Bye-Laws – Rule 14 / Rule 14.28 (Duties and Responsibilities of the School).
- National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 – Safe and equitable institutional environments.
- Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.
- Ruchika Singh Chhabra v. M/s Air France India & Anr. (Delhi HC, 2018) – Doctrine of bias in IC composition.
- Vishakha & Ors. v. State of Rajasthan (Supreme Court of India, 1997) – Foundation of POSH jurisprudence.

