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NCPCR framed guidelines to regulate the private play schools for children in the age group of 3-6 years

Upholding the spirit of Constitution and Right to Education Act, 2009 and based on the National ECCE Policy 2013, NCPCR has developed *Regulatory Guidelines for Private Play Schools* to, bring inclusiveness and uniformity in all private educational institutions imparting pre-school education and prevent violation of child rights against children in the age 3-6 years, NCPCR has framed regulatory guidelines for such private educational institutions.

The crucial role of quality pre-school education was recognised through 86th Constitutional Amendment, which introduced Article 45 that states, “*The State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years*”. Consequently, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 recommended that- “*With a view to prepare children above the age of three years for elementary education and to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years, the appropriate Government shall make necessary arrangement for providing free pre-school education for such children.*” Presently, this provision is being implemented and fulfilled by MWCD through ECCE ensuring the right of children to pre-school education.

Reaffirming the commitment towards the right of children to care, nutrition, health and education in early childhood, Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) has introduced National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy in 2013. The National Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy, 2013 is a landmark in pre-school education that is being provided in educational institutions under different names such as play schools, pre-schools, nursery schools etc. The Policy highlighted educational needs of children between 3-6 years and importance of education component in early years. In India, the ECCE services are delivered through public, private and non-governmental organizations. Specifically, the early childhood education (ECE) is provided to millions of children in 3-6

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years of age through government run Anganwadis under ICDS and Rajiv Gandhi National Scheme for Working Women; the private channel is largely remains unregulated and is operational under varied names such as play groups, play schools, pre-schools, nursery schools etc. The stand-alone private educational institutions imparting pre-school education are largely unregulated. However, National Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy, 2013 has made provisions for such private educational institutions that provide pre-school education to children in the age 3-6 years.

Also, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) included pre-school education under 4th 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.*

The aim of the guidelines framed and recommended by NCPCR is to remove ambiguity in such private educational institutions in India and achieve national as well as international commitment of pre-school education.

The guidelines have been submitted to Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD), State Departments of WCD, NIPCCD, Chief Secretaries of all States/UTs and all State/UTs Commissions for Protection of Child Rights.

