



SOUTH POINT SCHOOL

Dear Guardians

After the School published its guidelines for online classes for students and parents, we have received several messages about the use of Zoom video conferencing facility for the purpose of conducting these classes. Concerns have been raised by parents in view of various media reports and advisory issued by the Government.

We would like to clarify our understanding of the issue. The circular issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India is an “Advisory on Secure Use of Zoom Meeting Platform” by private individuals and states that Zoom should not be used by the Government for official purposes. The detailed guidelines issued by the Government while stating that it is not safe, also stipulates certain settings that need to be enabled to prevent unauthorized entry, malicious cyber-attacks using Zoom platform etc. The release from the MHA can be accessed here <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1615008>

Use of any internet-based computer application is not without its attendant risks and pitfalls. Cyber-crime is a reality of life. Those interested in further authentic reading material on cyber security may check the website of Cert-In which is under the Ministry of Electronics and IT, Govt. of India and in particular, the section on latest security alerts at <https://www.cert-in.org.in>. We had evaluated various applications available for conducting online classes, and at present, considering factors like ease of use, functionalities, flexibility, cost etc., we have decided on Zoom. In the future we may shift to a more viable platform if found better suited.

We have taken care that all required settings, to avoid certain identified risks, are taken care of by the School, centrally for all teachers. Guardians have been issued guidelines and our teachers have also been issued guidelines as well as have undergone training sessions. The app will work even if a guardian does not register on it, but simply downloads it. This does not mean that there is a ‘zero’ percent chance of any unwanted event taking place on Zoom. But we find that there is no other application which can also guarantee ‘zero’ risk.

At South Point, between the junior school and high school, 190 teachers will take about 1175 virtual classroom sessions every week. Our sole purpose of doing the entire exercise is so that our students are not deprived of continued education and face-to-face teaching for an extended period of time, forced by this pandemic. There is no guarantee that normal classes can resume any time soon. However, it is understandable that some guardians may not be having appropriate infrastructure at home for this, or there may be others who may be skeptical about exposing themselves to insecurities of using web-based applications, or may be unwilling or incapable for health or any other reason. Such guardians should not insist upon their children participating in the online classes. We will continue to post assignments, which the children should honestly complete under active supervision of their guardians. Once the School reopens and we are in a position to resume studies, we will surely take appropriate care of all our students such that no one is left behind.

Thank you

(Principal)

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