



Cedarwood School

Prep Switchboard: 011 465 9830 / 011 467 4657
Emergency: 071 609 7253

College Switchboard: 011 467 4889
Emergency: 072 617 5291

113 Dunmaglass Road, Glenferness | www.cedarwoodschool.co.za

BULLYING POLICY

This policy must be read in conjunction with the POPIA Manual.

Purpose of this policy

The purpose of this policy includes that prohibition of every form of bullying or harassment which within the school environment. Bullying or harassment which is initiated at a location that is not on the school premises is not covered by this policy. Cedarwood School expects pupils to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other pupils and school staff.

Background

It is now widely accepted that bullying is prevalent in all schools; that it is extremely harmful to the health, well-being and academic progress of a substantial minority of pupils and, moreover, actions taken by the school and by parents can significantly reduce its occurrence.

Bullying however, is a problem that is often overlooked or ignored, because teachers and parents are often not aware that it is going on, or, if they are aware of it, they do not know how to deal with it. The situation is made more difficult by the fact that pupils who are victims of bullying are afraid to report it for fear that things will get worse for them.

The situation becomes increasingly more difficult when adults hold the misplaced belief that if bullies are ignored, they will stop bullying, or the view that it is an inevitable part of growing up that will pass without their intervention. There are even those who subscribe to the view that bullying is good for children and builds character.

Bullying, as research and experiences has shown, is something that cannot be ignored and should not be tolerated. The consequences for the bully and the person being bullied are far too serious.

To this end we value our school community in which everybody feels respected and safe, and where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted. Everybody has a right to enjoy his/her time at school. The Cedarwood family will not tolerate bullying in any form!

1. WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is actual hurtful behaviour directed by more powerful individuals or groups against those who are less powerful. It is typically repeated, often enjoyed by the bully or bullies, but never justified. It is experienced as oppression. The four criteria used to identify bullying are:

- 1.1 Hurtful
- 1.2 Deliberate
- 1.3 Persistent
- 1.4 Refusal to stop

2. PROCEDURES:

Staff are to inform pupils on a regular basis about the following:

2.1 TO PREVENT BULLYING:

- 2.1.1 Respect yourself and others
- 2.1.2 Work to create a pleasant school environment for all. Refuse to be involved in any bullying situation.
- 2.1.3 Learn to tolerate and accept individual differences
- 2.1.4 Support the school policy against bullying.

2.2 WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE BULLIED

- 2.2.1 Always take the report seriously
- 2.2.2 Encourage to report the bullying immediately
- 2.2.3 Use the bully box by putting a note into the box if you are finding it difficult to report the incident. Your note will be followed up and the necessary action will be taken. (Remember to write your name and grade).
- 2.2.4 Tell the bully to stop.
- 2.2.5 Take courage. Seek help. Talk about it to someone you trust. (Teachers, Heads, School Counsellor or your peers).
- 2.2.6 Report it to a member of staff, school counsellor or a leader. The school does not tolerate bullying. Feel confident that any incident can be resolved satisfactorily. Once the incident has been reported to a staff member, he/she will assess if the complaint constitutes bullying, against the bullying criteria. Should the behaviour against you meet the criteria, (i.e. the behaviour is hurtful, deliberate and persistent and continues even after you tell the person to stop), an investigation will take place.

2.3 PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW IF SUSPECTED BULLYING

- 2.3.1 Care enough to do something about it, whether it affects you personally or not.
- 2.3.2 Early intervention can defuse a situation before it gets out of hand
- 2.3.3 Report it to a member of staff, school counsellor, leader or monitor.

2.4 CRITERIA OF INVESTIGATING AND REPORTING BULLYING

- 2.4.1 All investigations and reports will be treated in the strictest confidence. The issue will be dealt with delicately but very seriously.
- 2.4.2 Teachers will write up a written report if the behaviour reported to him/her, or the behaviour observed by him/her meets the criteria for harassment and bullying (i.e. the behaviour is hurtful, deliberate and persistent and continues even after the person has been told to stop). The alleged offender may then be referred to the Head of Phase/Deputy Head/Head for support and screening of the situation. The information describing the behaviour is shared by the Head of Phase/Deputy Head/Head with the alleged offender. The alleged offender is then asked to make a decision regarding his/her future behaviour and will be recorded. In each case, incidents will be investigated thoroughly, with all parties involved being able to express their views.
- 2.4.3 Once the investigation has been completed, each case will be treated on merit. Where necessary, disciplinary procedures will be implemented.

2.5 DEPENDING OF THE SEVERITY:

- 2.5.1 You will be removed from the bullying situation.
- 2.5.2 Your Class teacher/home group teacher/school counsellor/social worker/head of phase/deputy head/head will be involved depending on the nature and severity of the incident(s).
- 2.5.3 You will be required to make a decision regarding your future behaviour in the form of a contract that you and your parents will sign.
- 2.5.4 You may be asked to sign a No Contact contract.
- 2.5.5 You may be involved in a mediation process.
- 2.5.6 You may be asked to complete a Social skill training programme with the school counsellor or school social worker.
- 2.5.7 You will be dealt with according to the rules and transgression policy of Cedarwood School.
- 2.5.8 In serious cases, your enrolment at Cedarwood School may be reviewed.

2.6 DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

Bullying is categorised as a major offence. Disciplinary measures outlined in the Enrolment form, listed under Cedarwood School's Code of Conduct will be instituted in the alleged offender is found guilty.

3. CEDARWOOD RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING TO PARENTS

- 3.1 Encourage your children to discuss bullying as much as possible. Read through this policy thoroughly with your children.
- 3.2 Watch for signs of distress e.g. unwillingness to attend school, frequent apparent illness.
- 3.3 Advise your child to follow the procedures outlined above.
- 3.4 Do not encourage your child to retaliate.
- 3.5 Contact the school if your child's effort to deal with bullying does not appear to be working. Let your child know that this is the appropriate action.
- 3.6 Bullying that take place after official school hours or outside of school related activities should preferably be handled by the parents.

RECORD OF CHANGES

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Page no, heading, brief description of changes</u> | <u>Entered by</u> |
|----------------------|---|-------------------|
| 22 Aug & 1 Sept 2015 | None | D van Wyk |
| 23 Aug 2016 | None | R. da Cruz |
| 13 September 2017 | Grammar and spelling changes | R. da Cruz |
| 15/05/2018 | Grammar and spelling changes | Management |
| 18/07/18 | None | P Kotze |
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