



# Pretoria Preparatory School

Non-Profit Company  
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## **SPECIALISING IN REMEDIAL EDUCATION**

### **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

"A student is being bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself" (Olweus, 1993).

The destructive behaviour of bullying affects many children in varying degrees. Bullying adversely affects its victims in many ways, battering their self-esteem, destroying their belief in themselves and changing their personalities. They feel insecure, depressed and helpless. In some cases, victims could lash out at someone else.

To be able to deal with bullying we first need to know what it is. There are two important components that constitute bullying behaviour:

- \* Firstly, and most important, bullying is an abuse of power. A bully has power and control over a victim who feels helpless to deal with the situation.
- \* Secondly, bullying is an ongoing and repetitive pattern of harassment and abuse. Ken Rigby (1996) defines bullying as 'repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons.

It is very important to distinguish between bullying and conflict. Many children involved in conflict believe that they are being bullied.

To further understand bullying, we need to look at all the different role players and their contributions to the situation. Bullying involves the bully, the victim, bystanders who can either support the bully or the victim and those who do nothing at all.

Having sought to understand bully behaviour we need to look at ways of addressing it in the school situation. There are many interventions and prevention strategies that can be put in place in order to assist with bullying in schools. These would include educating learners, teachers and parents as well as providing policies and particular programmes.

When dealing with a particular case of bullying it is important to adopt a strategy where the children are involved in the resolution of the situation and to this end the "No Blame" approach is advocated.

The process of dealing with bullying really revolves around empowering all role players to deal effectively with bully behaviour when it is encountered.

Learners must feel empowered to disclose issues of bullying if these episodes are going to be dealt with effectively.

Dr Elizabeth Smit maintains, "Education for peace aims to empower learners with skills enabling them to play a positive role in maintaining a peaceful society. A conflict resolution programme such as mediation offers learners the opportunity to face their differences and reach their own solutions."

As parents, we should be seeking to equip our children to resolve their relationship problems themselves, with our help and guidance where necessary. In this way we empower them to deal with conflict, violence and abuse in a constructive and positive manner.

### **PPS POLICY ON A HURT-FREE ENVIRONMENT**

Pretoria Preparatory School aims to establish a community in which everybody feels valued and safe, where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted. Every learner has a right to enjoy their time at school.

The community does not tolerate bullying or harassment. Respect for others is expected.

PPS promotes an atmosphere and ethos at the school of warm loving and caring concern.

PPS promotes in each child respect and empathy for others and the environment.

#### **To prevent bullying:**

Each learner needs to:

1. Respect themselves and others.
2. Work to create a pleasant school environment for all.
3. Learn to tolerate individual differences.
4. Support the School policy on bullying.

#### **Pretoria Preparatory School opposes bullying.**

PPS expects a high standard of behaviour at all times and aims to provide a safe and caring environment for everyone.

Has a policy for detecting, preventing and dealing with bullying and educates our learners about issues related to bullying behaviour. PPS offers support to all learners through their class teachers and therapists.

#### **Bullying vs Conflict**

Bullying is any repeated behaviour intended to hurt, injure, threaten or frighten another person in such a way that the person feels that he cannot do anything about it. Bullying is a repeated abuse of power.

In conflict a learner feels frustrated and unable to communicate.

#### **Types of bullying**

- Verbal bullying is saying or writing mean things. Making derogatory comments, mocking, name-calling and spreading rumours. Verbal bullying includes:
  - Teasing
  - Name-calling
  - Inappropriate sexual comments
  - Taunting
  - Threatening to cause harm
- Emotional/Social bullying, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. Deliberately ignoring and avoiding someone. Social bullying includes:
  - Leaving someone out on purpose
  - Telling other children not to be friends with someone
  - Spreading rumors about someone
  - Embarrassing someone in public
- Physical bullying involves hurting a person's body or possessions. Physical bullying includes:

- Hitting/kicking/pinching/shoving/hair pulling
  - Unwanted touches
  - Spitting
  - Tripping/pushing
  - Taking or breaking someone's things
  - Making mean or rude hand gestures
  - Any forms of violence
- Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur through SMS, Text, and apps, or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes:
    - sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else
    - sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation
    - some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behaviour
    - Cyber: e-mailing and texting, through internet and cell phones, sending messages/ images that may upset someone.

### **What to do if you are bullied:**

There is nothing so awful that we can't talk about it with someone.

1. Tell the bully to stop.
2. State quite clearly that the behaviour is unwelcome and you don't like it.
3. Walk away and stay away from the bully.
4. Seek help.  
Talk about it to someone you trust: Report it to a teacher or therapist,  
If it happens on the playground, report it to the teacher on duty.

PPS does not tolerate bullying.

Feel confident that any incident can be resolved satisfactorily.

What to do if you know someone is being bullied:

1. Care enough to do something about it whether it affects you personally or not.
2. Early intervention can defuse a situation before it gets out of hand.
3. Report it to a teacher, a therapist or your parents.

### **HOW STAFF DEAL WITH BULLYING – THE “NO BLAME APPROACH”**

#### **Procedure:**

Each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Any incident addressed while not in class, is written up in the 'Scuffle Book', and followed up by the HODs.

Class discipline process followed in class.

Teacher or therapists deal with the issue first.

If it is not resolved by the teacher/therapist, she/he reports it to the HOD.

The school will use this approach when dealing with cases of bullying:

The HOD or the Deputy will investigate the incident thoroughly.

All investigations and reports will be treated in the strictest confidence.

1. Interview the victim and suggest strategies
2. Arrange a meeting for all involved
3. Explore the problem without allocating blame
4. Share responsibility

5. Identify solutions
6. Let the pupils take action themselves
7. Follow-up is addressed. Parents informed.

The bully will be monitored and supported in an attempt made to change his or her behaviour.

It should be noted that if the bully continues with this type of bully behaviour, more stringent sanctions will be imposed and counselling will be suggested.

**The school will do the following:**

In the Foundation Phase we run a Lego Group in our integrated day programme, that addresses social strategies for working with others and for working in a group. Through the sessions learners are prepared for interacting, understanding and controlling their emotions as well as developing strategies and words with which to deal with conflict that may occur at a later stage.

Life Skills lessons: During these lessons we explore feelings and how to deal with them and we look at how to combat bullying and conflict in the school setting.

**WHAT PARENTS COULD TRY TO DO:**

Listen to your child

Suggest certain strategies

Inform the school

Let the school investigate and report back

Allow the school to sort it out

Support your child

**ADDITIONAL THINGS PARENTS CAN DO TO PREVENT BULLYING:**

Take an interest in your child's social life

Encourage your child to bring friends home

Build your child's self-esteem

Discuss ways to respond if rights infringed

Act by informing the school

Keep confidentiality

Set an example

**HELPING YOUR CHILDREN TO REGULATE THEIR EMOTIONS**

Teach your child to identify what he/she is feeling

Show him/her how to contain the feeling

Give socially acceptable ways to deal with emotion