

Polish Abroad
Polish Abroad Saturday School
Bullying Prevention Policy

Date adopted: 19/10/12
Date reviewed: 06/12/14

Rationale

As a community we believe that each child has the right to be educated in a safe and secure environment where his moral, spiritual, intellectual, personal, social and emotional development is promoted. We aim to ensure that parents and carers are informed and reassured that their children are being educated in a safe, caring and respectful atmosphere; we believe that all staff have a right to work in a safe and secure environment. We therefore view bullying as a serious breach of discipline.

Bullying is a non-acceptable form of behaviour in that it is serious, and may have lasting effects on both the instigator and recipient personally, emotionally, psychologically, educationally and socially. Bullying is an attack on an individual's right to be safe at school and an attack on the ethos of our school community. In all discovered cases of bullying steps will be taken to correct the situation and appropriate sanctions will be imposed on instigators.

The Aims of the Policy are:

- To define what constitutes bullying behaviour.
- To raise awareness of the issue within the school community and with parents.
- To put in place a process that will enable us to deal with it effectively.

What is Bullying?

(a) Bullying causes HURT to the recipient. This hurt can be both physical and/or psychological.

(b) Five criteria which particularly distinguish bullying are:

- The hurt done is unprovoked.
- It may be a repeated action.
- The pupil doing the bullying is perceived as being stronger.
- It is often difficult for the victim to defend himself.
- It thrives on secrecy.

(c) Bullying may take one of the following forms:

- Hitting, kicking, pushing or using things to cause injury to another pupil;

- Spitting or threatening;
 - Racist, homophobic, sectarian or other offensive teasing or name-calling;
 - Taunting or disparaging a pupil, his abilities or achievements, physical appearance, mannerisms or way of talking, or his family;
 - Taking money;
 - Damaging/taking/hiding personal belongings or food;
 - Telling nasty stories or spreading rumours about a pupil or his family;
 - Sending unpleasant notes/ texts/ calls etc.;
 - Social exclusion or rejection – not talking to a pupil or not letting him join in activities;
- (d) It can be carried out by one pupil, or a group of pupils, or by staff members.

To Create an Anti-Bullying Culture:

a All pupils, parents and all staff are informed about this policy and will work together to eradicate bullying from our school community.

b All Staff will:

Have consistent attitudes to bullying.

Discuss bullying with their classes and will be alert to signs of distress or other possible indications of bullying (either direct or indirect) in the classroom or elsewhere. Promote values which reject bullying behaviour and provide positive role models for healthy relationships. Inform the designated teacher re Child Protection in cases where a complaint of bullying has been confirmed.

c All Pupils will:

Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity;

Intervene, where it is safe to do so, to protect a pupil who is being bullied;

Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying;

Give full attention to assemblies, form classes and other times and places where the issue of bullying is being raised;

Promote the notion of a ‘telling’ school, where all share the responsibility for addressing this unacceptable behaviour;

When bullied, not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.

d All Parents will:

Watch for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children which might be evidence of bullying;

Advise their children to report any bullying to a trusted member of staff;

Advise their children not to retaliate violently to any form of bullying;

Inform the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;

Co-operate fully with the school in any investigation of alleged bullying.

Pupils need to understand:

- that they have a right not to be bullied at school;

- that it is the bully who has the problem, not them, and they are not somehow to blame if they are bullied;
- that they are not alone, despite what the bully may have done or said to make them feel so;
- that they cannot - and are not expected to - deal with a bullying situation by themselves, and they need to get help;
- that they need to speak out, and should trust the teachers to take their concerns seriously and to support them;
- that they have personal responsibilities - to tell, if they become a bully's target, and to help and protect any other pupil who is being bullied.

Strategies for Intervention

These fall into two categories:

1 PROACTIVE STRATEGIES

- (a) The school seeks to develop a culture in which pupils are confident about expressing their views, and know that their views are listened to, respected and acted upon.
- (b) Everyone within the school community is made aware of :
 - i) What constitutes bullying behaviour.
 - ii) Its consequences.
- (c) Ongoing and vigilant supervision is provided throughout the school day and incidences/places of bullying are monitored.
- (d) Observation takes place during classes.
- (e) Staff take seriously all complaints no matter how trivial.
- (f) Everyone works together to promote good communications with pupils, parents and staff so that concerns can be dealt with promptly.
- (g) Staff avail of opportunities within the curriculum to develop caring and social skills and for building pupils' self esteem and self-confidence.
- (h) Form teachers, through the Pastoral programme, explore the issue of bullying in a nonthreatening context.
- (i) Some pupils are trained in peer mediation/support and in mentoring techniques and some pupils act as monitors or class prefects.

2 REACTIVE STRATEGIES:

Teaching and volunteers who receive a complaint or who observe unacceptable behaviour:

- (a) Take note of pupils involved and observers.
- (b) Report the incident to a Designated Safeguarding Officer (in line with Child Protection Policy)
- (c) Both sides are given an opportunity to relate what has happened.
- (d) Where stories conflict, observers are asked to relate what they know of the incident.
- (e) Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for what has happened and to help remedy the situation. Sanctions for repetition of behaviour are outlined.
- (f) With pupils' consent, both parties may be brought together by the Designated Safeguarding Officer to resolve the issue.

(g) Both sets of parents are informed about what has happened and may be invited to attend the school.

(h) After serious incidents, teachers and volunteers are asked to observe the pupils involved and report to the relevant designated person. Pupils may be offered counselling.

(i) Pupils are asked on a regular basis how things are proceeding - thus monitoring the situation and involving them in the process.

(j) A brief report of the incident, the action taken and any follow-up activity is kept.

SANCTIONS:

The school undertakes to investigate thoroughly any reported or suspected instances of bullying and to deploy sanctions appropriate to each case. Parents of both victim(s) and instigator(s) will be informed. The substance of the incident will be formally recorded. One or more of the following procedures may be used as appropriate, depending on the circumstances identified:

Pupil placed on formal school detention;

Pupil placed on school report;

Behaviour support programme put in place;

Targets for improvement established and monitored;

Pupils withdrawn from class and parents required to attend school to give an undertaking that there will be an immediate improvement;

Pupil may be suspended from school by the Principal.