

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

We consider bullying to be deliberate, premeditative and ongoing, physical, psychological and/or verbal abuse, or any premeditated and deliberate act designed to hurt another, brought about either by one person or a group. We are also mindful of the fact that in the case of bullying both parties need to be considered and our approach to bullying at Village School flows directly from that of social development, which intends to give the children growing responsibilities for themselves and their actions and is based on respect for their rights and the rights of others.

We acknowledge that there can often be a fine line between the term bullying; what is considered 'normal' behaviour with children; and the perceptions of individuals at a certain time.

We also acknowledge that very young children are still learning how to adopt appropriate social behaviours and need lots of guidance rather than punitive outcomes for anti-social behaviours.

PROCEDURES

Once an act is considered by the teachers to be a deliberate act of bullying, we adopt the following procedures:

- STEP 1. Talk to both parties separately so that the children can give their points of view in a non-threatening context and the teacher can hopefully work out what happened. *
- STEP 2. Set up a discussion between the two parties with a staff member present
- STEP 3. If the truth of the situation is in question, bring in witnesses to help ascertain this. However, if that is impossible to determine still continue to the next step.
- STEP 4. Involve both parties in setting up and agreeing with a solution for the problem, and/or consequences for actions
- STEP 5. Monitor both these children and check that the situation is improving and not recurring.

*In the case of a much older child bullying a young child, setting up a discussion may be too intimidating for the victim. Instead the teachers will give the perpetrator a consequence and follow up with discussions to ascertain why this behaviour is happening. The teachers will monitor the safety of the younger child to ensure the bullying doesn't continue.

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Further steps may need to be taken if bullying reoccurs.

STEP 6 Exclude the offending party for an appropriate period of time, from situations where the bullying has occurred, either by enforcing separate breaks and lunches or removing the offender from the home group room.

STEP 7 Communicate with the child's parent as to the reason for this exclusion and enlist their help in overcoming the behaviour.

STEP 8 After an appropriate period of time, determined by the teacher as well as observation that no other bullying behaviour has occurred, allow this child to resume normal contact and closely watch for signs of recurrent bullying.

As a last resort when bullying reoccurs/persists we will:

STEP 9 Meet with the child and parents to determine a period of suspension.

STEP 10 Advise parents to seek counselling for their child.

STEP 11 Follow up any recurrent bullying once the child has returned to school by immediate suspension or where appropriate, requesting that the child is withdrawn from the school.

PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES TO BE USED

Preventative actions taken by the teachers include:

- Discussions during morning meetings
- Role plays with the children
- Issues raised at the children's whole school meetings
- Implementing formal resilience programs
- Big Friend/ Little Friend program
- Well-Being practices
- Duty teachers
- Teaching conflict/resolution strategies

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