

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1. Guiding philosophy

In keeping with the school's ethos and Codes of Conduct, The Grove is committed to creating a climate in which every pupil can develop academically, socially and emotionally. In order for this to happen, the pupils need to feel safe. Attempting to remove all aspects of bullying is an integral part of our work to create a safe and secure milieu that is conducive to the desired development of each individual.

The underpinning philosophy behind the Anti-bullying Policy is that it is restorative and informed by compassion, respect and understanding.

Each and every pupil has rights, namely: to feel safe, to learn and grow, to be respected, to be valued, and to be different.

However, with rights come responsibilities, namely: to respect oneself, to respect other people and their rights and to value others as individuals. This involves supporting others and showing compassion and understanding towards them.

These rights and responsibilities should be embraced by staff, parents and pupils alike. Each person in the Grove community has the collective responsibility to create a safe, respectful school environment, and to help prevent bullying behaviour.

2. Definition of bullying

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated over time, with a continued attempt to exert dominance over another person in a forceful and/or demeaning manner.

Physical bullying: Any form of physical behaviour which intentionally harms others or their property. This includes stealing, hiding, throwing or intentionally damaging another person's possessions, as well as extortion eg. forcing others to hand over their possessions such as lunches or money.

Verbal bullying: includes name-calling, repeated teasing, insulting and discriminatory remarks, threats, sexual harassment and any other form of verbal abuse designed to harm or belittle another person.

Psychological and social bullying: includes spreading rumours, non-verbal intimidation (such as glaring or laughing at others with the intention to threaten or shame), excluding someone from the group and preventing others from befriending them, or applying pressure to peer/s to conform.

Indirect bullying: Influencing, encouraging or organising others to be involved in any type of bullying.

Cyber- Bullying: The use of e-technology as a means of bullying others, Through cellphones, computers, photographs, videos, email, internet, instant/voice messaging, websites, chatrooms, Mixit, Facebook, and all other such platforms.

Many of these behaviours occur frequently, and do not always constitute bullying. One or more of the following must be present in order to ascertain that bullying has taken place:

- an initial desire to hurt
- the desire is carried out
- the action is harmful / detrimental to mental or physical well-being of the child
- there is no justification for the action
- the action is persistent and is intended to cause harm, fear or distress.

3. Procedures to deal with bullying.

Bullying hurts and excludes people and will not be tolerated.

The school will endeavor to teach children to:

- Use assertive behaviour if bullying behaviour is directed towards themselves or others.
- Stop bullying behaviour from occurring /continuing by standing up for oneself, or for the person being targeted.
- Address the bullying behaviour rather than the person who is bullying and to tell the person on the spot that the behaviour is wrong
- Refuse to participate, even passively, in bullying behaviour. To not laugh or accept comments that make fun of or hurt others
- Report any incidents of bullying behaviour to someone who is trusted (friend, mediator, teacher, parent, counsellor, principal) and to ask for help

If a person is bullied, s/he should be empowered to:

- Stand up confidently to the bully and say "Stop it, I don't like it!"
- If this is not effective, s/he must report to someone s/he trusts and ask for help (friend, mediator, teacher, parent, counsellor, principal).

If a person knows of someone who is being bullied, s/he should:

- Report the incident to the mediators, teachers or Head of Mediation.

Once an incident has been reported, the following procedures should be followed: Procedures may differ according to sections of the school, and whether the incident occurred within class periods or for example, at break. While class teachers are responsible for more minor incidents within the classroom, more serious or repeated incidents should be reported to the Head of Mediation and the Principal.



AMEDEO
COLLEGE

YOU'RE ONE OF A KIND. SO ARE WE!

- If the incident occurs at break, Grade 7 Mediators on duty will report to the Head of Mediation who either monitors the Mediators as they resolve the conflict, or assumes the responsibility in more difficult cases. The incident is recorded in the Mediation Book. Alternatively, the teacher on duty will mediate the incident.
- If the incident has not been satisfactorily resolved by the teacher, whether within or outside the classroom, the teacher will refer the incident to the Head of Mediation. The Head of Mediation will then organise a follow-up meeting/s to address the issue.
- Ongoing or serious incidents will be reported to parents, and will be addressed by the principal
- Intervention strategies will be decided upon. These could involve individuals, a group, a grade or whole school, depending on circumstances.
- If bullying behaviour continues, the Code of Conduct Policy will be followed. Children need to be aware that bullying behaviour is viewed as an act of serious misconduct and can result in an SGB disciplinary hearing and suspension.

Furthermore, a full investigation of any allegation of bullying is required. In all cases the consequences should be determined by factors such as the severity of the bullying, the age of the pupil and prior history.

Parents or caregivers are required to work with school authorities in cases of bullying and to follow school procedures in responding to bullying behaviour. This includes reporting suspected bullying to school authorities.

4. PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

The following measures may be employed to prevent the occurrence of bullying:

- educating learners about the impact of bullying and the consequences thereof (for both perpetrators and victim/s).

COLLEGE

- encouraging a "speaking out" environment
- assertiveness training
- peer mediation programme
- Build a strong capacity for empathy and kindness towards others
- adequate supervision by staff during break times
- social skills and life skills training and/or programmes
- counselling
- Designated staff members given specific portfolio of managing mediation

This policy has been made available to school personnel and is readily accessible to parents and learners on request and on our website (www.amedeo.co.za). This policy will be reviewed and updated every two years – updated 31/05/2023.



Dougjie van der Westhuizen

Executive Principal

dougjie@amedeo.co.za