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# Anti Bullying Policy for Adults

## **AIM:**

As self-esteem is the single most influential factor in determining behaviour and indeed a greater predictor of success than intelligence, we aim to provide pupils, staff and parents with opportunities to develop a positive sense of worth. In this way we shall endeavour to prevent and not just control bullying.

## **DEFINITION OF BULLYING:**

Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological conducted by an individual or group against others, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity in the school community.

A once-off incident is not considered to be bullying.

### Informal Procedures for dealing with an incident of Bullying/Harassment Behaviour

Any adult in the school community who believes he or she is being bullied should explain clearly to the alleged perpetrator that the behaviour in question is unacceptable. If the complainant finds it difficult to approach the alleged perpetrator/s directly, he or she should seek help or advice, on a strictly confidential basis from a contact person. The contact person should listen patiently, be supportive and discuss the various options open to the adult concerned.

Having consulted with the contact person, the complainant may request the assistance of the contact person in raising the issue with the alleged perpetrator/s. In this situation, the approach of the contact person should be by way of confidential, non-confrontational discussion with a view to resolving the issue in an informal low-key manner.

### Formal Procedures for dealing with an incident of Bullying/Harassment Behaviour

If an informal approach is inappropriate or if after the informal stage, the bullying persists, the following formal procedures should be invoked:

The complainant should make a formal complaint in writing to his/her principal, of if preferred, any member of management. The complaint should be confined to precise details of actual incidents of bullying.

The alleged perpetrator/s should be notified in writing that an allegation of bullying has been made against him/her. He or she should be given a copy of the complainant's

statement and advised that he or she shall be afforded a fair opportunity to respond to the allegation/s.

The complaint should be subject to an initial examination by a designated member of management who can be considered impartial with a view to determining an appropriate course of action. An appropriate course of action at this stage, for example, could be that neither the formal or informal approaches are appropriate or conclusive. In that case, the matter will be formally investigated by the in-school management team (Principal, Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal) and / or by the Board of Management (BOM).

#### Investigation Procedures for dealing with an incident of Bullying/Harassment Behaviour

The investigation should be conducted by either a designated member/s of in-school management team / BOM or, if deemed appropriate, an agreed third party. The investigation should be conducted thoroughly, objectively, with sensitivity, utmost confidentiality, and with due respect for the rights of both the complainant and the alleged perpetrator (s)

The investigation should be governed by terms of reference, preferably agreed between the parties in advance.

The investigator(s) should meet with the complainant and the alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses or relevant persons on an individual confidential basis with a view to establishing the facts surrounding the allegation(s). A work colleague or employee representative may accompany both the complainant and alleged perpetrator(s) if so desired.

Every effort should be made to carry out and complete the investigation as quickly as possible and preferably within an agreed timeframe. On completion of the investigation, the investigator(s) should submit a written report to management containing the findings of the investigation.

Both parties should be given the opportunity to comment on the findings before management decides upon any action.

The complainant and the alleged perpetrators should be informed in writing of the outcome of the investigation.

All individuals involved in the procedures referred to above should maintain confidentiality on the subject.