

# BERGVLIET PRIMARY SCHOOL

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- 1. NAME OF POLICY**
- 2. EFFECTIVE DATE**
- 3. DATE OF NEXT REVIEW**
- 4. REVISION HISTORY**
- 5. PREAMBLE**
- 6. INTRODUCTION**
- 7. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY**
- 8. OBJECTIVES**
- 9. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS**
- 10. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**
- 11. WHAT IS BULLYING**
- 12. ASSOCIATED SYMPTOMS**
- 13. TYPES OF BULLYING**
- 14. IMPACT AND INDICATORS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**
- 15. MEASURES TO DISCOURAGE BULLYING**
- 16. MEASURES TO EMPLOY WHEN BEING BULLIED**
- 17. TIPS TO FOLLOW WHEN BULLIED**
- 18. PREVENTATIVE MEASURES**
- 19. EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION AND MONITORING OF PUPILS**
- 20. RECORDING AND REPORTING**

## 1. ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

<b>2. EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	<b>01/08/2024</b>	<b>3. DATE OF NEXT REVIEW</b>	<b>01/08/2025</b>
<b>4. REVISION HISTORY</b>	*		
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## 5. PREAMBLE

The Western Cape Education Department recognizes that social distinctions, exclusions and restrictions that were historically effected along the lines of race, class, sex and creed had a negative impact of nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of fundamental freedoms of the people of this country to pursue their rich and meaningful lives. The Department further recognises the fact that certain practices including cultural, patriarchal, traditional, customary and religious practices may have impaired the dignity of women and children; thus undermine the equality between women and men.

It is for the reasons outlined above that South Africa has the highest prevalence of violence in the world; including bullying. Bullying, like violence, undermines the social and economic development of a people and reinforces intergenerational cycles of poverty and inequality between races, sexes and classes of a nation. This policy aims to realize the vision of the Western Cape Education Department for the inculcation of non-violent and anti-bullying behaviour of its learners and for how it intends to realise this, guided by a constitutional mandate and international commitments on human rights and dignity which incorporates, in particular, the acceptance of the individual personal safety of women and children.

Bullying is more than what it seems. Far from being a simple teasing, banter or joking it is more severe in numerous ways that can in the long run impair the personal relationships of a child into adulthood by accelerating their development for anxiety, depression and even schizophrenia. Of primary importance is the child's wellbeing, happiness and his/her feelings of safety and protection from victimization and discrimination. Home circumstances and background should be

taken into considerations. Bullying takes place within and around the school's premises. The harsh negative parenting or family violence is intractably linked to both the victim and the bully. Bullying can greatly impair the child's self-esteem and causes truancy on his /her part thus becoming further isolated and harming their chances of developing their social and economic skills.

Due to a protracted history of conflict and violence in this country bullying has become and institutionalized in our schools thereby leading to under-reporting and being misunderstood. It is compounded by the fact that children may be uninformed about their rights, not recognize that bullying is a wrong behaviour or fearful of what the outcome against the perpetrator(s) may be if they stand their ground and report it. The intention of this policy is to equip the staff and school managers to be vigilant of incidents of bullying, be capable of how to manage bullying and assist parents to desist from acts that may border on the scourge of bullying.

## **6. INTRODUCTION**

The role of the school is to provide an appropriate education for all its pupils. A stable, secure learning environment is an essential requirement to achieve this goal. Bullying behaviour, by its very nature, undermines and dilutes the quality of education. Research shows that bullying can have short and long-term effects on the physical and mental well-being of pupils, on engagement with school, on self-confidence and on the ability to pursue ambitions and interests.

School-based bullying can be positively and firmly addressed through a range of school-based measures and strategies through which all members of the school community are enabled to act effectively in dealing with this behaviour. While it is recognized that home and societal factors play a substantial role both in the cause and in the prevention of bullying, the role of the school in preventative work is also crucial and should not be underestimated. School-based initiatives can either reinforce positive efforts or help counteract unsuccessful attempts of parents to change unacceptable behaviour

Parents and pupils have a particularly important role and responsibility in helping the school to prevent and address school-based bullying behaviour and to deal with any negative impact within the school of bullying behaviour that occurs elsewhere.

## 7. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The overall purpose of this policy is to ensure that the school community of Bergvliet Primary School collaborates with all internal and external stakeholders to attain an anti-bullying atmosphere that seeks to affirm the dignity of all learners and strengthen the learning chances of all children.

## 8. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Western Cape Education Department Policy on Anti-Bullying behaviour all its schools are as follows:

- Build capacity for all learners, non-teaching staff, educators, school managers, governors and parents of what constitutes bullying and what the policy prescribes in respect of bullying.
- Strengthen Parental involvement.
- Empower learners on how to deal with bullying amongst themselves and be aware of protocols to follow when reporting bullying.
- Outline roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders in the pursuit of bullying-free environment at school.
- Put clear protocols for the reporting, recording and management of bullying incidents.
- Eliminate all forms of bullying in our schools.

## 9. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

### DEFINITIONS

No.	Term	Explanation
1.	Assault	Is any physical, psychological or emotional attack on someone that is intended to cause some unpleasantness or offense.
2.	Bullying	Is any written, visual or verbal interaction or physical act, gesture or omission engaged with the intention to create a substantial and justifiable risk / threat or undesirable result.
3.	Embarrassment	Is any act that is intended to cause someone to feel nervous, stupid or ashamed in a social situation because what of transgressors know or think about the victim.
4.	Fighting	It is an act whereby people hit, kick, bite or cause

No.	Term	Explanation
		any harm be it physical, emotional or psychological on the person of someone.
5.	Harassment	Is the unwanted conduct that is persistent or serious and demeans, humiliates or creates a hostile environment or is calculated to induce submission through threats or adverse results that are related to gender or sexual orientation or race etc.
6.	Ill-Treatment	Is an improper or unfair behavior towards someone with the intention to impair his / her rights and respect as human being.
7.	Intimidation	Is an act of deliberately causing someone to feel frightened that their person is in danger with the sole purpose of making them submit to your will to do what you want.
8.	Mocking	Is an act / a remark that is aimed at making someone or a group of people to look stupid or useless such a senselessly laughing at them or imitating them or saying unkind things about them.
9.	Neglect	Is an act that fails to give or provide for someone whom you are responsible for their upkeep or upbringing such as deprive them of love, attention, support and care with the result that such failure could lead to their eventual harm or damage.
10.	Sexual Harassment	Is the unwanted sexual attention that is persistent or serious and degrades, humiliates or creates a hostile environment or is calculated to induce submission through threats or adverse consequences.
11	Racial Harassment	Is the unwarranted attention that is persistently taken by someone or group of people towards someone in order to humiliate, tease, taunt,

No.	Term	Explanation
		threaten or exclude them socially based on their colour of their skins or racial traits.
12.	Unfair Discrimination	Is the direct or indirect unfair denial of opportunities or imposition of an undue burden to a person or group, on the basis of their gender, race, disability, orientation or combination of differences.
13.	Taunting	Is an act of passing cruel remarks or shouting profanities that are intended to upset or make them angry.
14.	Teasing	Is an act in which someone says something to you with the purpose of poking fun to embarrass or annoy you in an unkind but friendly manner.
15.	Violence	Is the involvement of extremely painful and harmful force with the intention to cause temporary or permanent physical, emotional or psychological damage, destruction or death to someone

## ACRONYMS

No.	Term	Explanation
1.	WCED	Western Cape Education Department
2.	WCPG	Western Cape Provincial Government
3.	HoD	Head of Department
4.	MEC	Member of Executive Council
5.	SACE	South African Council of Educators
6.	SAPS	South African Police Services
7.	SBST	School Based Support Team
8.	SGB	School Governing Body
9.	SMT	School Management Team
10.	SSC	School Safety Committee

## 10. APPLICATION AND SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to all the learners, staff members (both teaching and non-teaching) as well as the governing body members of Bergvliet Primary School.

## **11. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**

All schools are required to have in place a code of behaviour. This requires that this code must be prepared in accordance with guidelines issued by the WCED and the schools are required to have an anti-bullying policy within the framework of their overall code of behaviour

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996), as amended.
- Children's Act, 2005 (Act No. 38 of 2005)
- Child Justice Act, 2008 (Act No. 75 of 2008)
- Employment of Educators Act, 1998 (Act No. 76 of 1998), as amended.
- Public Service Act, 1994, Proclamation No. 103 of 1994, as amended.
- Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act, 2013 (Act No. 7 of 2013)
- Sexual Offences and Related Matters Amendment Act, 2007 (Act No. 32 of 2007)
- South African Council for Educators Act, 2000 (Act No. 31 of 2000) as amended.
- South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996), as amended.
- National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act No. 27 of 1996).
- Film and Publication Po

## **12. WHAT IS BULLYING**

A number of organizations or professional people define bullying

As “unacceptable behaviour that is used by an individual or group, relentlessly over time with the intention to hurt another person physically or emotionally”

OR

“a deliberate action intended to harm someone who does not have the power to stop it”. Bergvliet Primary School adopts a comprehensive definition adopted by the Western Cape Education Department in its School Safety Policy Exemplar as: “any written, visual or verbal communication or physical act, gesture or omission engaged with the intention to create a substantial and justifiable risk / threat or



undesirable consequence.”

Bullying, like harassment or discrimination, is hurtful, immoral and unlawful because it interferes with someone’s right to safety and to be valued as an integral part of a social group. Bullying has the following **key features** such as causing hurt or distress; becoming a repeated and targeted action; involves the use of power in an unfair and imbalanced manner. When bullying is undertaken by the older, bigger and strong person on persons of the opposite trait it is termed “bullying Down” whereas when it is enacted by someone who is physically smaller and frail it is termed “bullying up”.

### **13. ASSOCIATED SYMPTOMS**

Bullying can be associated with symptomatic characteristics such as, though not necessarily limited to:

- Fear of going to school.
- Display of anger and always letting out uncontrollable tears.
- Strong expression of feelings of depression.
- Low self-esteem.
- Frequently toying with the idea of suicide.
- Psychosomatic symptoms such as headaches and stomachaches.
- Bedwetting and sleeplessness.
- Lack of eagerness to “join other groups”.
- Truancy, misbehavior and uncontrolled aggression.
- Requests for extra food or money.
- Decline in academic performance.
- Unexplained body cuts, bruises and torn clothing

### **14. TYPES OF BULLYING**

Bullying can take many forms, and it assumes many shapes depending on issues such as technology and other forms of disability etc. bullying has three components based on the victim, the bully (perpetrator) and by-standers. Bullying can be classified into:

Physical Bullying	Involves harming the physical person of the victim including hitting, pushing, slapping, tripping, pulling or shoving, kicking, biting, punching or any use of violence.
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Emotional Bullying	Involves the humiliation of the victim through name-calling, using insults, being unfriendly, using exclusion tactics, issuing taunts.
Verbal Bullying	Includes the use of threats, ridicule, making racial or sexual slurs, teasing or use of sarcastic remarks.
Non-Verbal Bullying	Involves the writing of hurtful messages, letters or graffiti, distribution of harmful pictures or videos about someone to damage their reputation or spread of malicious rumor's.
Social Bullying	Includes making gossip or purposeful exclusion of someone from a group or intentionally destroying their friendship circles.
Cyber Bullying	The use of internet, mobile phones or other electronic technological platforms such as e-mails or facebook, whatsApp or instagram or I-pads, cameras, video games to harass, spread rumors, damage people's reputations or distribute harmful videos or pictures that are intended to harm them.
Prejudicial Bullying	This form of bullying could be based on the fear of sexual-orientation, racial orientation or disability with the intention to victimize them on such basis. It includes the passing of inappropriate notes, jokes, pictures, taunts or rumors of sexual nature or uninvited touching or forced sexual behaviour named <b>sexual bullying</b> . Other discriminatory methods involve unacceptable behaviour based on differences of cultures or beliefs in the form of race, colour, disability, personal appearance / health condition, poverty or religion and is named <b>homophobic bullying</b> .

Although all of these actions mentioned above should be considered serious and adults should always intervene when called to mediate the situations they may not always be regarded as bullying unless they are part of an ongoing pattern of behaviour against the victim.

## 15. IMPACT AND INDICATORS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

### Impacts of bullying behaviour

Pupils who are being bullied may develop feelings of insecurity, humiliation and extreme anxiety and thus may become more vulnerable. Self-confidence may be damaged with a consequent lowering of self-esteem. While they may not talk about what is happening to them, their suffering is indicated through changes in mood and behaviour. Extreme cases of bullying may result in suicide. It is, therefore, essential to be alert to changes in behaviour as early intervention can be very effective.

Pupils who witness bullying may also be affected and may suffer in similar ways to those who are bullied. For example, pupils who witness identity-based bullying and share that identity can experience anxiety and feel under threat themselves.

Pupils can also feel guilt or distress at not being able to help the person being bullied.

There are also consequences for individuals who engage in bullying behaviour. Pupils who become involved in such behaviour can be at higher risk of depression. Other possible long-term consequences may include an increased risk of developing an anti-social personality, anxiety disorders, a likelihood of substance abuse and law-breaking behaviour in adulthood and decreased educational and occupational attainment.

### **Indicators of bullying behaviour**

The following signs and symptoms may suggest that a pupil is being bullied:

- (i) Anxiety about travelling to and from school e.g. requesting parents to drive or collect him/her, changing travel routes, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school
- (ii) Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, truancy
- (iii) Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school
- (iv) Pattern of physical illnesses e.g. headaches, stomach aches
- (v) Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour which may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays
- (vi) Visible signs of anxiety or distress e.g. stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting
- (vii) Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers
- (viii) Possessions missing or damaged
- (ix) Increased requests for money or stealing money
- (x) Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing
- (xi) Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her.

There may be other signs depending on the individual and his/her circumstances. The above signs do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied but if repeated or occurring in combination, these signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the pupil.

### **16. MEASURES TO DISCOURAGE BULLYING**

Appropriate measures that could be implemented by schools across the province include, but not limited, to the following:

- Promoting and strengthening responsible parenting.
- Verbally reinforce positive behavior.
- Put learners in a positive state of mind
- Education and awareness.
- Peer mediators.

- Restorative justice
- Employ appropriate disciplinary measures including all types of suspensions or expulsion.
- Mounting of appropriate signage to promote anti-bullying environment.
- Printing of anti-bullying policies in learner diaries and school website.
- Promoting bullying-free environment in assemblies, school talks, LO periods, award evenings, SGB and parent nights meetings.
- Promoting a bully-free environment in staff handbook, school safety policy and occasional school publications.
- Undertaking annual learner and educator and or boarding facilities safety surveys.
- Conducting online learner assessment surveys of personal safety.
- Conducting exit learner surveys.
- Implementing effective pastoral support and or school safety officer for learners.
- Incorporating anti-bullying guidelines in the school's code of conduct for learners.
- Incorporating anti-bullying guidelines in the training programme for boarding staff.
- Employing chaplains / safety officers and counsellors with specialist skills in helping victims of bullying as well as identified bullies and by-standers.
- Establishing a trained RCL team who will support the school's anti-bullying policy and to assist learners who would feel free to report and inform the management about any bullying activities in the school.
- Establish and support a "peer-mediators forum" to deal with grievances that learners want handled rather than the intervention of the school's staff.
- Train staff to detect bullying behaviours.
- Instruct the staff to adopt classroom management techniques that discourage opportunities for bullying behaviours.
- Employing staff who model tolerance, empathy and acceptance of individual differences.
- Encouraging staff to take their supervision duties seriously so that there is a pervasive sense of staff presence when on duty.

- Review the school's anti-bullying policy annually without failure in order to ensure that it remains effective and relevant.
- Enforce that the school management prepares annual report summarizing quantitative and qualitative data and records and surveys to be publicized every last term during parents' meetings.

**Suggest that PREVENTATIVE MEASURES come before the response to bullying disclosures and interventions by parents and learners**

## **17. MEASURES TO EMPLOY WHEN BEING BULLIED**

The most important thing a parent can do when their child is being bullied is to provide love and reassurance and to support them in their quest to solve the challenge. A child's report about bullying should always be taken seriously, but take comfort in the fact that the need for their child's bully-free environment is also what they aspire for. Every parent should create a culture of openness with their children because if that is not the case children can be reluctant to divulge the truth. Parents should at all times endeavour to use intermediaries to find out what is happening in their children's lives such as involving siblings, grandparents, acquaintances, family doctors, child psychologists, counsellors or friends.

There are a number of measures parents can employ to reduce the chances of their children being bullied, which include among other things:

- Improving the emotional quotient of children who have been brought up without the company of other children such as siblings or friends, or who spent a lot of time playing alone in front of television or computer screens.
- Encourage their children to tell someone when they are bullied.
- Institute good management behaviour at home to monitor the presence of cyber bullying, and ensure children know and can identify forms of bullying.
- Reminding children not to share personal details, passwords, security access codes with anyone including their closest friends.
- Advise their children to save and report information of cyber bullying to authorities if they suffer from any form of bullying.
- Occasionally googling their children's names on the internet about their online personalities.
- Encourage their children to conduct themselves properly in "cyberia" and not to despoil their digital footprints and promoting the use of computer or

- online functions in an open family area in order to promote effective online monitoring.
- Effectively partner with the school so as to promote constructive culture, and cooperate fully with the school instead of adopting a “**helicopter parenting**” attitude (protective) that seeks to alienate the school further. This will assist parents to avoid prematurely judging the school and avoiding the facts.
  - Parents should be patient and allow the school to duly investigate allegations of bullying against their children, as it must be seen to apply procedural fairness towards the victim and the bully.

## **18. TIPS TO FOLLOW WHEN BULLIED**

South Africa has an entrenched past of systemic bullying of one racial group by another, and our communities have since mimicked this disgusting behaviour. As a result there could be reluctance on the part of the victim to report bullying because of the fear of being labelled a “sissy” and going against the unwritten code of manhood or womanhood. Other learners may not want to report this unruly behaviour because they might think it could only make matters worse. It then takes courage to challenge the bully and expose them for who they are, and partake in making our lives better by getting rid of bullying behaviour in our communities. When you are bullied as a learner remember the following:

- Report the matter to a responsible adult whom you trust such as a LO educator, SBST coordinator, Safety Officer, HoD, the deputy principal, house matron, family doctor, local nurse or the principal and lastly your parent or guardian.
- When you are bullied try to calm down and not show your anger or fear, because that could spur the bully and give him / her a sense of satisfaction.
- Always strive to use non-offensive humour as the bully can be blunted by a good laugh at yourself, and attempt to review your body language. Body language can make you sense the mood and development of conflict therefore early detection should assist you to avoid confrontation early.
- Avoid the school’s hotspot areas as they are high risk spots that can spur the bully.
- Surround yourself with good friends.

- Always contain your emotions and avoid retaliation as this can inflame the situation.
- Maintain good self-esteem and get involved by contributing richly to the school's academic and sporting culture.
- Try and maintain good physical fitness as it can assist with building resilience and self-worth in your character.

## **19. PREVENTATIVE MEASURES**

The school's learning philosophy should be to actively encourage learners to have respect for one another and people's property. Good and polite behaviour should be regularly acknowledged and rewarded by the school and staff in general. The school will at all cost endeavour to implement the following measures to prevent bullying behaviour within its premises; namely:

### **Treating bullying themes in its LO classes.**

- Engage learners in school talks.
- Establish Anti-Bullying Teams.
- Undertake Anti-Bullying Week.
- Involve learners to participate in e-Safety Days through debates, poems, story writing competitions, discussion classes and role plays.
- Install suggestion boxes.
- Administer Learner Safety Survey questionnaires.
- Implement Kind School Award ceremonies.
- Launch "Keep Safe" apps on the School's website.
- Adopt a school pledge against bullying.

## **20. EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION AND MONITORING OF PUPILS**

It is the responsibility of school management in conjunction with staff and pupils to develop a system under which good supervisory and monitoring measures are in place both to prevent and deal with bullying behaviour. Good supervision and monitoring systems also facilitate early intervention. Such measures might include appropriate supervision of school activities on a rota basis. The identification of "hot-spots" and "hot-times" can be very beneficial in preventing and dealing with bullying in school. All pupils and in particular senior pupils can be seen as a resource to assist in countering bullying.

Student councils, where applicable, and other school clubs and societies can also be very important in this regard. Non-teaching staff should also contribute and be part of the process to counter bullying behaviour in schools. In addition, strategies and measures need to be developed to involve all parents.

The school's anti-bullying policy must confirm that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour.

### **Supports for staff**

The School Governing Body must ensure that members of school staff have sufficient familiarity with the school's anti bullying policy to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy when required. Supports for staff should be appropriate to the individual's role and should enable staff to recognise bullying, implement effective strategies for preventing bullying and where appropriate, intervene effectively in bullying cases.

## **21. RECORDING AND REPORTING**

When a bullying incident occurs within the school's premises the staff, including support and management, must report all incidents truthfully and consistently without fear, favour or prejudice. Bullying is a very serious form of misconduct that must be reported directly to the principal or his / her delegate. The school can never postpone to investigate allegations of bullying, but must immediately verify and investigate such incidents and report the result to the Disciplinary Committee of the SGB. Once the case has been finalized the principal must ensure that the incident is immediately reported to the District by completing an incident report form at the back of the school safety policy exemplar.