

# CityKidz Pre & Primary



## BULLYING POLICY



## **ANTI-BULLYING AND ANTI-RACISM**

The community of CityKidz Pre & Primary School will not tolerate unkind remarks or actions, even when these are not intended to hurt. To stand by when someone else is being bullied is to support bullying. Learners should support one another by reporting all instances of bullying to a staff member or prefect.

Racist behaviour is any physical, verbal and/or indirect action which is motivated by the intention of demeaning the racial characteristics, culture and/or ethnicity of the victim.

Any instance of bullying and/or racist behaviour represents a serious threat to the school community in terms of our ability to provide and sustain a positive learning environment where all members feel safe, respected and valued, can enjoy learning and achieving and reach their full potential.

For victims such behaviour causes unhappiness and distress and can adversely affect their self-esteem, motivation, concentration, school attendance, general health and consequently their ability to thrive and achieve.

Those who witness bullying and/or racist behaviour may also suffer emotional stress and if unchecked, the perpetrators could become increasingly vulnerable to repeating problematic behaviour patterns in the future. It is therefore vital for CityKidz to express a zero tolerance approach to such behaviours and have clear procedures which promote prevention and provide mechanisms for dealing promptly and appropriately with any related issue.

Bullying is categorized as a Major Offence in the CityKidz Learner School Code of Conduct.

Disciplinary measures outlined in the CityKidz Behaviour Bank Policy for such an offence will be instituted against the offender. Refer to the Policy as to the procedure and consequences.

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- a) To create and maintain a physically and emotionally safe and secure environment where all members of the school community can thrive and learn in a climate of mutual respect and understanding.
- b) To ensure the school can maximise its ability to prevent and deal promptly and appropriately with any form of bullying and/or racist behaviour.
- c) To ensure that bullying behaviours, racist assumptions, attitudes and actions will be immediately challenged.
- d) To identify clear guidance, procedures and processes through which any issues pertaining to bullying and/or racist behaviour can be addressed.
- e) To maximise opportunities through which perpetrators or victims of bullying and/or racist behaviour can be identified and receive appropriate levels of support, challenge and sanctions where necessary.
- f) To aid, support and educate all staff, parents and learners in the maintenance of a safe and nurturing environment, which encourages the development of coping skills necessary for successful human interaction.

- g) To provide a process for discovery, evaluation, monitoring and remediation of hurtful behaviour.
- h) To provide an easily accessible process by which learners can report hurtful behaviour and receive adult support.
- i) To provide a process wherein the learner being hurt or bullied receives: support education in learning alternative behaviours or discipline consequences should the hurtful behaviour continue.

## DEFINITION

Bullying behaviour is deliberately hurtful behaviour which is repeated and persistent over a period of time and where victims often experience difficulties in protecting themselves. The four main types of bullying include:

- a) Physical harassment shall be defined as any conduct, which threatens or harms a person physically, e.g. hitting, kicking, theft, etc.
- b) Verbal harassment shall be defined as threats, gestures or verbal attacks on persons including attacks at one's racial, ethnic or religious background, physical or mental ability, appearance as well as any form of teasing.
- c) Indirect spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups
- d) Cyber bullying is where the perpetrator/s of bullying uses information technology such as a computer or mobile phone in order to directly or indirectly intimidates, threaten and/or demean a victim.

## TO THE LEARNERS

It is your right and responsibility to report bullying, whether it happens to you or to someone else. To remain silent is to condone (allow and accept) bullying. Speaking out is the greatest weapon we have against bullying.

### Remember:

- a) It is your right to be respected
- b) It is your right to feel valued
- c) It is your right to feel happy
- d) It is your responsibility to respect others
- e) It is your responsibility to value others
- f) It is your responsibility not to destroy the happiness of others
- g) Are you in a conflict situation (fighting) or are you being bullied?

### There are three ways for you to check if a behaviour is bullying. Ask yourself:

- a) Is the behaviour malicious? (mean and unacceptable - see Definition of
- b) Bullying)
- c) Is it deliberate / intentional?
- d) Is it persistent? (Happening over and over.)
- e) If this is the case, even if only one of these is true, then you can follow the bullying procedure.

If the above is NOT true, but you are fighting, unhappy or struggling to get along with someone, try to remember the following three things:

- a) Remember that each person is unique (different from you) special and worthwhile.
- b) Be aware of yourself and your feelings and your reactions as well as being aware of the impact of your words and your actions on others.
- c) Show respect to yourself and others at all times.

Hopefully, if each of you have remembered these three points and are putting them into practice, the conflict will dissolve within a day or two. Remember you need to take responsibility for yourself.

**Procedure to follow when you have established that you ARE being bullied:**

- a) All reported cases of bullying will be taken very seriously.
- b) Remember it is your right and your responsibility to report bullying.
- c) Clarify all the details in your mind e.g. what has been happening, when, how often, etc.
- d) Report the bully (bully box, tell your teacher.)
- e) Go to your class teacher or the HOD Guidance and ask them to assist you in filling out a Behaviour Bank Behaviour report.
- f) If you feel you have followed the Behaviour Bank Procedure and are not happy with the outcome, please speak to Principal.

**BULLYING PROCEDURE**

This procedure is to be followed once it has been established that this is a case of bullying / harassment, (see Definition of Bullying) or if a learner specifically requests it.

- a) Learner places a letter in the Behaviour Box outside the staff room or reports the bully to the class teacher or the HOD Guidance.
- b) Fill in the Behaviour Bank Report together with the learner.
- c) Offer nurturing care and support to this learner during the process.
- d) Call in the learner who is behaving hurtfully and, with respect and care, make them aware of the report against them.
- e) Allow them an opportunity to present 'their side of the story', while listening in an unbiased way.
- f) Fill in the Behaviour Bank Warning Form and assist the learner in understanding the consequences of hurtful behaviour.
- g) Explain the learner Response choice on this form.
- h) Offer some assistance in helping the learner find alternate, more socially acceptable behaviours that they can adopt.
- i) Instruct the learner to write a letter of apology to the learner who has been hurt and ensure that it is given.
- j) Send a copy of the Behaviour Bank Report and the Behaviour Bank Warning

- Form, plus a copy of the apology letter to the Principal
- k) Continue to monitor the situation for the next two weeks.
  - l) NB. If a person reporting bullying behaviour experiences any increase in the bullying and/or any other related harassment as a result of reporting the bullying, this will be investigated immediately by the HOD Guidance and then the Principal and a consequence, as outlined in the Disciplinary Consequences on the Behaviour Bank Policy will be administered.
  - m) Offer counselling and assistance to both parties.
  - n) Give a second Behaviour Bank Warning Form to the hurtful learner, which will need to be signed by the parents.

## **COUNSELLING**

During the course of the year, classes may be addressed by the Life Orientation and Life Skills Teachers on issues such as self-esteem and friendships. These teachers will also be available for additional class room interventions as and when requested by the class teacher.

Should a child need extra support the HOD Guidance will refer the parents to a relevant professional outside of the school environment. The HOD Guidance is there for initial and backup support and for short-term assistance.

## **WHAT PARENTS CAN DO!**

### **BE AWARE - TAKE CARE – RESPOND**

These tips can help parents understand the problems their children may face when harassed at school. Parents and educators must stay vigilant, look for these warning signs, and attempt to address problems quickly. Learners must feel safe at school; parents and other adults can help learners who suffer at the hands of bullies.

Do you have the contact details of the Principal, Head of Department Guidance or that of the class teacher?

**Check the following:** These are some of the warning signs victims of bullying might display.

- a. Sudden decreased interest in school (wants to stay at home);
- b. Sudden loss of interest in favourite school activities;
- c. Sudden decrease in quality of school work;
- d. Wants the parent to take her to school instead of riding the bus;
- e. Seems happy on weekends, but unhappy, preoccupied, or tense on Sundays;
- f. Suddenly prefers the company of adults;
- g. Frequent illnesses such as headaches and stomach aches;
- h. Sleep issues such as nightmares and sleeplessness;
- i. Comes home with unexplained scratches, bruises, and torn clothing;
- j. Talks about avoiding certain areas of the school or neighbourhood;
- k. Suddenly becomes moody, irritable, or angry and starts bullying others (e.g., siblings, children in neighbourhood)

- l. Seeks the wrong friends in the wrong places (e.g., drug users, gangs, etc)
- m. Talks about being sad, anxious, depressed, or having panic attacks;
- n. Wants to stay home on weekends;
- o. Talks about suicide

Remember: For behaviour to be labelled as bullying, it has to be persistent (Repeated over time) and intentionally designed to hurt or frighten your child. Remember the bully has power and control over your child!

- a) Assure children that you will immediately investigate and report the situation with the class teacher, HOD Guidance or Principal;
- b) Check if your child needs to avoid certain areas on school property at certain times;
- c) Suggest that your school increases supervision in the high-risk areas where the child has to go or more closely monitor the child's interactions with other learners;
- d) Encourage your child to talk to an adult, such as a supportive teacher, every day to provide an update on the mistreatment;
  - I. Stay calm;
  - II. Be sensitive to the fact that your child may feel embarrassed and ashamed;
  - III. Find out what happened, who was involved, and when and where it happened, and keep a record of this information;
  - IV. Express confidence that you, the adults at school, and your child will be able to find a solution.
  - V. Ask your child to express his/ her thoughts and feelings about what happened;
  - VI. Explain that bullies seek to hurt and control. So your child must not let them know he is hurt by their behaviour.
  - VII. Let your child know that it is normal to feel hurt, fear, and anger;
  - VIII. Avoid being a "fix-it" dad or mom by calling the bully's parents. Most of the time, this action is not effective. However, not all parents of bullies respond in a protective manner.
  - IX. Don't tell your child to retaliate. It's against the rules, and retaliation frequently makes the bullying worse and more persistent.
  - X. Don't tell your child to ignore the bully. Most of the time, ignoring doesn't work;
  - XI. Teach your child to be assertive, but not aggressive;
  - XII. Don't promise that you will not tell anyone;
  - XIII. Ask for a copy of the school's policy.
  - XIV. Involve your child in activities inside and outside school. Involvement in activities he or she enjoys increases the chances of high-quality friendships;
  - XV. Monitor your child's whereabouts and his friendships;
  - XVI. Watch for signs of depression and anxiety in your child, and do not hesitate to seek professional counselling;
  - XVII. Don't give up.

**Refer to the Behaviour Bank Addendum in addition to this policy.**