

# It's not cool to be crue/ It's cool to be kind

## TIMOUR HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL BULLYING BOOKLET, FOUNDATION PHASE JANUARY 2016

### Statement of Intent

Timour Hall Primary School is committed to providing a caring, safe, structured and friendly environment for all our children so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. The school expects that children learn to behave courteously, honestly and with integrity, and that children develop awareness of the consequences, both positively and negatively, of their words and actions. We believe that it is crucial to nurture children's ability to develop positive social skills; learn to manage their own emotions, aggression, and bullying; and empathically stand up for children who are being bullied.

We acknowledge that the potential for bullying behaviour is always present, and we have a zero tolerance policy towards it. Bullying will ALWAYS be taken seriously. We also believe that it is an opportunity to build emotional resilience and empathy and is a valuable emotional learning tool. Timour Hall Primary School has a Code of Conduct and Bullying Procedure which provides policy and guidelines in implementing action based on the severity and persistence of the bullying incidents, and the age of the children involved.

If bullying does occur, children who are involved or who have witnessed it must be encouraged to disclose it to a teacher, Learner Executive, Kindness Champion or write it up on the bully report form and post it in the bully box. The school undertakes to manage incidents promptly and effectively. In doing so we aim to be constructive, consistent, and focus on the behaviour rather than label the child. Parents are expected to encourage their child to follow the school's procedure, rather than parents take matters into their own hands. However, bullying also happens on transport to school, and we encourage parents to take this seriously and ensure that the responsible adult manages it appropriately. Parents are also urged to educate and protect their children from bullying through social media.



## Definition of Bullying

Bullying is when someone, or a group, assumes power over, or enforces their will, on another person and that person is deliberately and repeatedly physically or emotionally hurt without in any way deserving that treatment. It can be expressed in a number of forms:



**Physically** such as pushing, pinching, stealing and hiding items belonging to another child, intimidating a child to take lunch/tuck shop food or money.

**Verbally** such as unwanted teasing, name calling, spreading rumours, laughing at a child who makes mistakes, racist or sexist remarks, malicious remarks about personal appearance and family background, threatening to report a child for bullying when that child is the victim, threatening a child to prevent disclosure of the bullying, deliberately falsely accusing a child to a teacher with the express aim of getting that child in trouble.

**Emotionally** such as being deliberately unfriendly, excluding the child, encouraging/intimidating others to exclude the child, tormenting.

Preschool children are not bullies as they are not mature enough to act with malicious intent, but are rather in a process of social and physical learning, and need to be actively guided.

## Signs and symptoms of bullying

Children may not want to disclose bullying because they feel intimidated or fear that they will make it worse. A culture of silence allows bullying behaviour to flourish and is damaging to the emotional health of everyone involved. Parents and educators need to be sensitive to possible signs of abuse, and explore it further with the child. Children who are tempted to bully do so because of emotional and /or relational difficulties.

Children in emotional distress (and it may be for reasons other than bullying) may exhibit the following symptoms:

- An abrupt change in behavioural patterns such as sleeping, eating, friendships, sibling relationships, school performance, toilet routine
- Becoming anxious, withdrawn and lacking in confidence
- Doesn't want to come to school, or travel on arranged transport, or is frightened about getting to and from school

- Feeling ill in the mornings
- Displaying more serious reactions such as wanting to run away, threatening suicide and more volatile emotional reactions at home
- Becoming very secretive about social media, friendships
- Coming home with torn clothes, damaged or missing school books and equipment
- Coming home without eating what has been provided for lunch and is hungry
- Coming home with food, money or equipment which isn't theirs
- Giving improbable explanations for any of the above



## Procedure

Children in preschool and grade 1 are encouraged to tell their teacher or the teacher on duty if they feel they are being bullied. It is the teacher's responsibility to handle the issue, and if necessary discuss it further with the social worker or the Deputy Principal. The school is implementing a programme of Kindness Champions, who are empowered to interact with and assist when bullying takes place. Children can ask a Kindness Champion for help as well. Every class will have two Kindness Champions.

A bully box with Bullying Incident Report forms is outside the Social Worker's room. The child who is being bullied or anyone who witnessed a bullying incident can complete the report, and post it in the box. Young children can ask other children to write the report for them, or they can ask the social worker, a teacher, or another student to write down what happened. This report asks for the name and grade of the child doing the bullying, the name and grade of the child being bullied, what happened and when it happened. If the child does not know the name of the bully, then the school will help the child identify the child doing the bullying. If the bullying happened at break, the child can speak to the teacher on break duty, or if in class speak to the class teacher. These teachers will deal with the incident, write up the report, and place it in the box.

The social worker regularly checks the box, and records any reports into the Incident Register, and then passes these reports to the Deputy Principal, who speaks to the children, assesses the situation, and determines an appropriate course of action depending upon the age of the children, duration and severity of the incidents, and whether the child doing the bullying is repeatedly offending. These reports, with the Deputy Principal's recommendation as to course of action, are returned to

the social worker who files them, and the recommended intervention is undertaken. It must be noted that the school's Code of Conduct, Section 2.10.6.2 Level 2 offence, allows for immediate detention, and under severe circumstances, the school's formal disciplinary procedures may be invoked.

Both children may be referred for counselling or other appropriate intervention if the Deputy Principal or the class teacher feels this is warranted. Parents may also request that their child be referred to the social worker.

In all severe cases, and for children who continue to bully other children despite interventions, parents will be called in for meetings with the school's management to discuss the problem and reach solutions.

We believe it is the responsibility of the Timour Hall Primary School community: teachers, parents and children, to personally take a stand against bullying by resolving personally not to bully others, by actively discouraging bullying when it happens, and give support to those who experienced being bullied. By taking a stand against bullying and speaking up when it happens, we help to create an environment that values positive social engagement and problem solving.



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We would like to acknowledge the following sources that helped guide the development of our bullying protocol and this document

[www.kidscape.org.za](http://www.kidscape.org.za)

Timour hall Primary School Code of Conduct, Section 2.10.6.2

Rape Wise Education Support Pack

[www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/a/antibullyingpolicy](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/a/antibullyingpolicy)

Michael Oak Waldorf School Bullying Policy 2016

Rigby, K. 2003. Bullying among young children. A guide for teachers and carers. An Australian Government Initiative. National Crime Prevention Programme, Australian Government.