

Edenvale High School Anti-Bullying Policy (2017)

1. Introductory Statement

- This Anti-Bullying Policy sets out in writing, the framework within which Edenvale High School manages issues relating to bullying and the school's strategy to prevent bullying 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 school, or bullying behaviour that occurs elsewhere.
- In accordance with The Child Act, The Protection from Harassment Act and The Sexual & Related Offences Amendment, the School Governing Body Edenvale High School has adopted the following Anti-Bullying Policy. This policy fully complies with The Schools Act.

2. Scope

- ***To what will the policy apply?***
The policy addresses bullying behaviour, harassment and sexual harassment.
- ***To whom will the policy apply?***
This policy applies to all members of the school community including teaching staff, Tutors, learners, parents, guardians, ancillary staff and visitors, in accordance with the Employment Equity Act.
- ***When will the policy apply?***
This policy deals with negative behaviours and attitudes **which arise or occur during school hours**, which affect the progress and sense of emotional well-being of learners, or other people at the school. The policy will also outline the necessary steps to be taken when a bullying/harassment incident is reported.

The only time periods/activities included in this policy are as follows:

- School time (including break times)
- School extra-curricular activities
- School tours/trips
- Social networking/media and cyber technology sites such as Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp and other texting media, **accessed during the times mentioned above**, which are deemed to have a negative impact on school life.

Bullying behaviours such as cyber-bullying which break the law should be referred to the South African Police Service, who may refer it to Children's Court. This is the responsibility of the Parent / Guardian of a learner who is the victim of bullying.

3. Rationale

Edenvale High School believes that each learner has the right to an education free from fear and intimidation. Bullying is not tolerated. Bullying can be a secret activity and difficult to detect. In order to ensure that no learner should suffer in this way, communication between home and school is very important. The vast majority of learners in this school are unaffected by bullying behaviour, however when it occurs, its effects can be devastating and as such, it is a priority issue identified by the staff, learners and parents.

4. Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

At Edenvale High School, we aim to develop the full potential of every learner in a learning environment where fairness, understanding, success and discipline are pursued.

This policy is based on encouraging learners to strive for excellence at the level of their full potential.

5. Mission Statement

At Edenvale High School, we serve our community by rendering a quality education, providing well-maintained facilities, creating a safe and healthy environment and facilitating intellectual growth. Our mission will be achieved by means of: Participating, transparent management and governance, and sound educational principles and strategies.

6. Goals / Objectives of the Anti-Bullying Policy

- To create a school ethos which encourages all to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in confidence.
- To affirm the right of all within the school to live a life free from bullying.
- To raise awareness of bullying as an unacceptable form of behaviour with school management, teachers, learners, parents/guardians.
- To create a school ethos that acknowledges, accommodates and respects a diversity of persons in the school community across the grounds covered by equality legislation.
- To ensure that the Life Orientation Department raises awareness of the factors associated with bullying behaviour, as well as developing appropriate knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- To take practical actions to prevent incidents of bullying behaviour e.g. to ensure comprehensive supervision and monitoring measures, through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.
- To put into effect procedures for reporting and recording incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To put into effect procedures for investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To develop a support structure by means of the School Counsellor, for those affected by bullying behaviour and those involved in bullying behaviour.
- To work with, and through, the various local authorities in countering all forms of bullying and anti-social behaviour.

7. The following definition of bullying behaviour has been established:

Bullying behaviour is *deliberate and repeated* aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against any person.

Bullying may take the forms of verbal bullying (attacks of a highly personal or sexual nature, which may be directed at a learner's family, culture, race or religion, or the spreading of malicious rumours), physical bullying, gesture bullying (non-verbal threatening gestures which convey intimidatory or frightening messages), isolation, exclusion, extortion (demands for money, possessions or equipment, or forcing a learner to steal), intentional diminishment, or cyber-bullying (the use of web-pages, e-mails and especially text messages to abuse, intimidate or attack a learner).

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's Code of Conduct.

However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

It is not bullying when:

- (1a) Learners of about the same age and strength have the occasional quarrel or conflict.
- (1b) A member of staff offers constructive or fair criticism of a learner's behaviour or work performance.

For the purposes of this policy, the term bullying encompasses harassment and sexual harassment, defined as follows:

- **Harassment:** Any form of unwanted conduct in relation to any of the grounds named in the equality legislation that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for the victim.
- **Sexual harassment:** Any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for the victim. All members of the school community, including external facilitators, are subject to this code, particularly the following relationships:
 - Learner to learner;
 - Learner to any staff member;
 - Staff member to learner;
 - Parent to staff member;
 - Staff member to parent; and
 - Staff member to staff member.

8. Types of Bullying

The following are some examples of unacceptable behaviour. This list is not an exhaustive list. Similarly unacceptable behaviours may be considered as bullying.

8a General Bullying

- ✓ Harassment based on any of the grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying, etc.
- ✓ Physical aggression and damage to property.
- ✓ Name calling, jealousy and spreading vicious rumours.
- ✓ The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidation, belittling and gestures.
- ✓ Graffiti, sniggering, sarcastic remarks and extortion.
- ✓ The “look”, staring, degrading remarks re body shape.
- ✓ Putting down a learner for working well and achieving.
- ✓ Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear.
- ✓ Invasion of personal space.
- ✓ A combination of any of the types listed.

8b Homophobic Bullying

- Name calling /using graffiti, e.g. “gay”, “queer”, “lesbian”, etc.
- Spreading rumours about a person’s sexual orientation.
- Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation.

8c Racial Bullying

Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background.

8d Relational Bullying

This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:

- Whispering in company so as to exclude another.
- Malicious gossip.
- Isolation & exclusion.
- Ignoring, turning others against a learner.
- Excluding from the group.
- Actively taking someone’s friends away.

8e Cyber-Bullying

- Applies only to the use of electronic devices including cell phones during school hours, school extra-curricular activities, school trips or events.
- Silent telephone/mobile phone calls.
- Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls.
- Abusive text messages.
- Abusive email.
- Abusive website comments/blogs/pictures e.g. Facebook, Twitter and others.
- Any misuse of Information and Communication Technology.
- Video recording without the person's permission
- Taking/sending inappropriate / explicit photographs by electronic device.
- Creating sites about a particular person.
- Spreading rumours.
- Breaking confidence.
- Abusing social network sites including Whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Viber, YouTube, Tumblr, or any other media sites, including those developed subsequent to this policy during school.
- Abuse of social media will only apply outside of school hours during school outings and events. As of 2017, phones are banned from use by learners during school hours and as such, EHS will not investigate any matters relating to child pornography, 'sexting' or cyber-bullying which take place outside of the times specified in this policy.

8f Sexual Bullying / Harassment

- Unwelcome sexual comments or touching.
- Unwelcome sexual texts or emails.
- With respect to learners, unwelcome sexual content in texts or emails will only be dealt with if they occur during the times addressed in this policy under Point 2, 'Scope'.

9. Signs and Indicators of Bullying

Learners who are being bullied may develop feelings of insecurity and extreme anxiety and thus become more vulnerable. Self-confidence may be damaged with the 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. Bullying may occasionally result in suicide. It is therefore important to be alert to changes in behaviour, as early intervention is desirable.

The outcomes of bullying and harassment on the victim are often manifest in various ways, listed below.

Psychological

- anger
- anxiety
- distress
- frustration
- depression
- panic
- indifference
- fear
- attempted suicide
- shame and feelings of worthlessness
- loss of trust in friends and their inability to support and protect

Behavioural

- increased irritability and nervousness
- unexplained changes in mood
- increased aggressiveness
- may believe that they deserve to be bullied
- becoming withdrawn
- excessive tearfulness or sensitivity to criticism
- substance abuse
- becoming obsessive
- nightmares

Physical Manifestations

- chest pains
- pattern of minor illness
- insomnia
- stomach problems
- eating problems
- fatigue and lethargy
- headaches
- sweats
- inconsistent explanations for cuts and bruises

Social, Interpersonal and School Related

- anxiety about travelling to and from school
- mitching
- late home from school without any plausible explanation
- fear of using school toilet during breaks
- fear of being out of sight of adults
- becoming isolated in class
- becoming withdrawn
- reluctance to discuss the problem
- unwilling to go to school
- lack of creativity and initiative
- beginning to bully small/younger learners
- possessions missing or damaged
- increased and excessive requests for money
- deterioration in school performance and motivation
- loss of interest or concentration in school
- unusual concerns about physical appearance, attributes, mannerisms etc.

The relevant staff members for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows, in order of succession / severity:

- a) The teacher to whom the report is made
- b) Grade Tutor
- c) Senior Tutor
- d) School Social Worker
- e) Deputy Principal
- f) Principal

In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved in keeping with reference to school policy.

All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. In that way, pupils will gain confidence in reporting. This confidence factor is of vital importance.

It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.

Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.

When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.

10. Education and Prevention Strategies to Prevent Bullying Behaviour

Staff, 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 school, of bullying behaviour that occurs elsewhere.

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber bullying and identity based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:

10a Publishing and Publicising an Anti-Bullying Policy

- Excerpts from the Anti-Bullying Policy will be visible throughout the school in corridors and classrooms.
- The policy in its entirety will be published on the school web-site: www.edenvalehigh.co.za, displayed under the 'Resources' tab on the school communicator and form part of the school Code of Conduct.
- The Anti-Bullying Policy will be promoted at various occasions, e.g. enrolment and parents' evenings.

10b Supervision and Monitoring

- Bullying “black spots” within the school will be identified and monitored during break times.
- Staff will be vigilant and follow the procedures as outlined in this policy as incidents arise.
- A questionnaire will be given to learners during the school year. This will give learners an opportunity to voice concerns. Each learner is encouraged to write something down.
- Social networking sites will continue to be banned from learner use during school time. The Anti-Bullying Policy operates in conjunction with the school’s Internet Acceptable Use Policy.

10c Learner Involvement

- Senior learners will continue to assist Grade 8’s through EHS mentoring programmes, thus assisting newcomers to settle in.
- The RCL will support the creation of a positive school atmosphere through the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

10d Inclusion in the Curriculum and links to Curriculum Delivery

- Social, personal and health education are covered by the Life Orientation curriculum, which facilitates learners developing skills and competencies to care for themselves and others and to make informed decisions about their health, personal lives and social development. The issue of bullying is an area of focus for the Life Orientation Department.

The school’s procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:

(See Appendix – Incident Report ‘ROB’ Document)

11. Reporting Procedures for Learners:

11a Who to Tell?

- Parents.
- Any staff member with whom the learner feels comfortable.
- Friends who will speak on your behalf.
- School Social Worker.
- Deputy Principal.
- Grade or Senior Tutor.
- Learners’ mentors.

11b How to Tell?

- Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, e.g. after class, hand note up with homework.
- Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
- Email the school
- Get a parent or friend to tell on your behalf.
- Parents can inform the school.
- Witnesses can inform appropriate person.
- Administer a confidential questionnaire to all learners during the year.

It is important to note that records of all incidents of bullying and action taken to resolve them will be kept.

11c Noting and Recording

- All incidents of alleged bullying will be recorded on an incident form (Appendix 1) and given to relevant Grade Tutor.
- The relevant Tutor/Senior Tutor will then decide on what action is to be taken.
- The Principal and Deputy Principal are responsible for maintaining files for security and confidentiality for at least five years after they leave school.
- These files may be accessed by learners/parents in the future.
- Comments made should be factual, non-judgmental and objective.

12. Procedures for Dealing with Reported Incidents

12a Procedures for Teachers

If a learner informs you of an incident of bullying affecting either themselves or a friend, follow these steps:

- Listen; encourage the learner to tell their story as this is a very important first step.
- Take notes; record all the details such as date, time, location, names of those involved, witnesses etc. Learners should write testimonials in their own words.
- Reassure; tell the learner that help is available, action will be taken to investigate and that they will not have to face this on their own.
- Satisfy yourself that no learner is in immediate danger.
- Confidentiality is respected and the learner's privacy is protected, but a teacher must not give guarantees not to tell anyone.
- Inform the Grade Tutor without delay. Complete Incident Form for recording bullying behaviour (Appendix 1)
- All serious incidents of bullying (e.g. an assault or long term exclusion) **must** be reported to the Senior Tutor straight away.

12b *Procedures for Staff Member / Tutor Investigating the Reported Incident*

- Have the learner reporting bullying write down the behaviours and how it is affecting them.
- Talk with the alleged bully about their behaviour and their experiences of incidents.
- Have the alleged bully write down an account of their behaviours and their effects.
- Challenge the bullying behaviour as being unacceptable.
- Discuss possible solutions with both parties separately/together, as appropriate.
- The School Counsellor may be involved if deemed necessary by the staff involved.
- Staff should support learners who report bullying by conducting follow-up meetings with them.

12c *Follow-up steps to be taken*

- The learners involved will be monitored on a regular basis by informal discussions.
- Counselling may be offered to all concerned.
- If necessary the parents will be invited to a meeting with staff.
- If bullying persists, the SGB will be informed.

12d Procedures for Learner to Staff Bullying

- Teacher(s) to speak to learners involved.
- Behaviour is to be explained as unacceptable, per the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Explore a working solution.
- Refer to Deputy Principal and Principal, if necessary.
- Request meeting with parents.

12e Procedures for Staff to Learner Bullying

- We recommend that learners talk to the Deputy Principal.
- The Deputy Principal will discuss the allegation with the teacher involved.
- Explore a working solution.

12f Procedures for Staff to Staff Bullying

Procedures to be followed in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct.

13. Implementation Arrangements, Roles and Responsibilities

The Anti-Bullying Policy shall indicate the individual roles, responsibilities and obligations of staff, learners and parents. These roles and responsibilities shall be clearly outlined to existing staff and shall be communicated to all new staff at induction. Learners shall be made aware of their own individual roles and responsibilities.

13a The people who have responsibility for implementing each action and their roles are outlined as follows:

- **Principal and Deputy Principals:** The Principal and Deputy Principals shall have overall control and responsibility for the implementation of the policy. The Principal will be responsible for its ratification.

Management will liaise with staff on a regular basis regarding bullying behaviour. Files of incident reports shall be kept up to date by Grade and Senior Tutors. They will also be responsible for the disciplinary action of any learner accused of bullying behaviour. Where necessary, they will be responsible for contacting parents and the relevant authorities.

- **Life Orientation Department:** The LO Department will be involved in developing awareness of anti-bullying and of the importance of reporting it to staff members.
- **Subject Teachers:** Will report any bullying behaviour to the relevant Tutor or Management. The teacher must document incidents of bullying behaviour within their classroom or outside of it e.g. corridors etc. on Form ROB. Teachers will fully facilitate promotion of the Anti-Bullying Policy and be constantly vigilant of any bullying behaviour with the children under their care.
- **School Counsellor:** The School Social Worker shall be responsible, along with the LO Department, for highlighting awareness of anti-bullying initiatives and of bullying behaviour within the school and related activities. He/she will also have the responsibility of reporting incidents and dealing with the counselling of the relevant learner/s, or referral of learners for external therapy.
- **School Governing Body:** Shall have the overall responsibility for implementing the Anti-Bullying Policy. They will facilitate the promotion and awareness of it throughout the school. The SGB confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.
The SGB confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the grounds specified, i.e. gender, including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, pregnancy and race.
- **Learners:** Learners will have the responsibility of complying with the Anti-Bullying Policy. The learner will also have the responsibility of reporting incidents of bullying that they are subject to or have witnessed. The learner will also have the responsibility to participate actively in anti-bullying initiatives. The learner along with parent/guardian will have the responsibility of signing the Anti-Bullying Policy and returning to the school and therefore agreeing to be bound by it.
- **Parents/Guardians:** The parent or guardian will have the responsibility of upholding the recommendations within the policy and accepting the sanctions held within it. Where incidents of bullying are occurring to their child, they will have the responsibility of reporting this to the relevant Grade Tutor / School Social Worker / legal authority.

15. Ratification, Communication and Review

This policy will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and will be made available on the School Communicator, under the 'Resources' tab. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education, as and when requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the School Governing Body once in every school year.

On-going review should be in line with any changing information or guidelines (e.g. from the Department of Education, legislation and feedback from parents/guardians, learners, staff members and others).

The policy will be revised as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation and within the framework of school planning.

The following evaluation tools may be used to review and evaluate the Anti-Bullying Policy:

- Random surveys;
- Staff meetings;
- Parent meetings;
- Feedback from Grade 11 timentors; and
- Feedback from the RCL body.

ACCEPTANCE OF POLICY

The Edenvale High School Anti-Bullying Policy (2017) was adopted by the School Governing Body on the

_____ day of _____, 2016.

SIGNED:

Dr L Harmer
Principal, Edenvale High School

Mr L. Trentini
Chairman, School Governing Body

Next date of review: _____

APPENDIX 1 – INCIDENT REPORT : REPORT OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR (ROB)

EDENVALE HIGH SCHOOL TEMPLATE FOR RECORDING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR			
1. Name of learner being bullied and Grade:			
Name and Surname:		Class	
2. Name(s) and grades of learners engaged in bullying behaviour			
Name and Surname:		Grade:	
3. Source of Bullying concern (tick relevant box)		Learner concerned	
		Another learner	
		Educator	
		Other	
4. Name and contact details of person(s) reporting bullying concern			
Name and Surname:		Contact details:	
5. Location of incident(s) (tick relevant box)		Playground	
		Classroom	
		Toilets	
		Parking lot	
		Transport	
		Sportsgrounds	
		Other	
6. Type of bullying concern (tick relevant box)			
Physical aggression		Cyber-bullying (WhatsApp)	
Damage to property		Cyber-bullying (Facebook)	
Isolation/exclusion		Cyber-bullying other	
Name-calling		Intimidation	
Other (Specify)		Malicious gossip	

7. Brief description of bullying behaviour:		
8. Details of action taken		
Date:	Action:	
9. Feedback given to the person reporting dates and time:		
Date:	Action:	
10. Senior Tutor, Counsellor and Deputy Principal Informed:		
Date:	Name and Surname	Signature

11. Minutes of Meeting Re: Bullying		
Attendance:		Date: <input type="text"/>
Issues discussed:		
1. The seriousness of bullying.		
2. First warning as we cannot punish on hearsay.		
3. Enough evidence.	Punishment	
4. Punishment for Bullying: 20 Demerits and two day suspension.		
5. Notification of parents of involved learners.		
6. Possibility and consequences of civil charges against you.		
7. Other issues:		
12. Acknowledgement of meeting held and issues discussed:		
Name and Surname:	Signature:	Date: