



BULLYING POLICY

PREAMBLE

1. It is our Constitutional responsibility to uphold the rights of our children and to respect them.
2. Michael Oak's ideal is to nurture each learner to become a healthy and socially responsible member of his/her community. To facilitate this progress, we have the following expectations:
 - that we are respectful of the dignity and self-worth of others;
 - that we behave courteously, honestly and with integrity; and
 - that we behave responsibly towards each other and the learning process.
3. We aim to develop an awareness in our community of what the consequences of our words and actions are, positive and negative.
4. We believe that behaviour is imitated and learned both at home and in society at large. Our teachers strive to be role models of appropriate behaviour for the learners.
5. Skills that support the learners in their learning process and that enhance their feelings of self-worth and confidence should be practiced in each class community and lesson.
6. We acknowledge that conflict can have potential as a valuable learning tool.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is any deliberate abuse of power, whether physical, verbal, psychological or threatening in tone or gesture, intended to threaten, frighten, injure, hurt or be disrespectful to another person.

GUIDING FRAMEWORK AND AIMS

1. We acknowledge that bullying does happen in our school but it will not be tolerated.
2. We aim to make our learners feel safe enough to share their concerns, fears and experiences.
3. We are committed to dealing with every reported incident of bullying as quickly as possible.
4. We aim to be constructive and consistent, in our approach to bullying.
5. We aim to be guided by individual situations and age appropriateness.
6. We believe that bullying can be resolved in a constructive way when all parties acknowledge their role in a conflict and its resolution.
7. We judge the behaviour, not the learner; avoiding blaming or shaming of any parties involved, while still acknowledging that they must be held accountable for their actions. We aim to offer appropriate support to all parties involved.
8. Parents are expected to follow the procedure of the school and not to take matters into their own hands.



PROCEDURE

Each section of the school has committed itself to responding to bullying in an age-appropriate way.

NURSERY SCHOOL

Nursery children are not bullies. Their behaviour is part of a process of social and physical learning. Each situation is different and is a way of establishing identity. The children do not have a mature enough sense of self to try to dominate with malicious intent.

We therefore approach hurtful incidents through the following:

1. If someone says 'stop', you must.
2. We point out that certain remarks and language can be hurtful.
3. We strive to pre-empt a hurtful situation.
4. Where hurt has occurred, we point out what has happened, in order to make children more conscious of how their behaviour impacts on others.
5. Children who are hurting each other are separated.
6. We use stories and drawings to manage the healing of specific incidents.

LOWER PRIMARY SCHOOL

In this area of the school we use the following:

1. We share remedial stories
2. We talk to the parties involved as soon as possible. In our discussions we do not allow any child to interrupt another.
3. We will call in the parents when necessary.

UPPER PRIMARY SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL

1. Any observed or experienced incident is reported preferably to the Class Teacher or Guardian, failing that to a teacher.
2. Both parties are spoken to as soon as possible.
4. Possible solutions are shared (either together or separately). An agreement is reached and accepted by both parties together.
5. Parents will receive a brief report of the process from the responsible teacher.
6. If the above process proves to be unsuccessful, the School's Formal Disciplinary Procedure will follow. This could include the requirement of professional counseling.