



## PRE-PRIMARY AND PLAYSCHOOL Policy on Bullying

### Statement of Intent

All pupils have the right to learn in an environment free from humiliation, oppression or abuse. Children need to feel safe and secure in the school environment. To this end, this policy has been developed and implemented in an attempt to confront the serious issue of bullying on a continuous and consistent basis.

### Policy Statement

SAHETI will not tolerate the bullying of any member of the school community and SAHETI as a school is a "bully-free zone".

### Definition of bullying:

*"A learner being exposed, repeatedly and over time, to intentional injury or discomfort inflicted by one or more learners. Bullying also implies an imbalance of power or strength in which one child is victimized by another" Olweus (1993). Bullying is thus deliberate, unprovoked, hurtful behavior by one or more children against another repeated over a period of time and meant to cause harm.*

This may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Physical - hitting, kicking, taking belongings, slapping, tripping, pushing, hair-pulling, biting. Making obscene gestures, facial expressions or deliberately ignoring. Theft or damaging of possessions.
- Verbal - name calling, insults, mimicking, racist remarks or threats.
- Emotional - excluding victims from playgroups, sexual insults, use of force to obtain belongings.

Bullying usually has five common features:

- It is deliberate hurtful behavior;
- It is often repeated over a period of time;
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves;
- It is difficult for those who bully to learn new social behavior;
- The person who bullies, has, and exercises, power inappropriately over the victim.

### Disciplinary Procedure and Actions:

Bullying will be treated with the utmost sensitivity and discretion. The assistance of a professional team will be enlisted and the situation will be closely monitored. Every endeavor will be made to enhance and restore the pupil's confidence and to minimize the possibility of the situation recurring.

#### Step 1

- Any child may report a bullying incident or the teacher may observe it within the classroom or on the playground.
- All parties involved will be given the opportunity to express the circumstances.
- At this point, discussion is limited to the teacher who may consult with her H.O.D or Principal at her discretion.
- Parents will be notified.
- Depending on the severity, the principal may at this stage make a referral to the school psychologist. At this stage parental consent will be obtained from both parents and the parents will be called in to give a developmental history to the psychologist.
- The teacher will dramatize a story depicting a similar incident to the whole class and generate discussion in this way.
- If a group dynamic is observed, the Pre-Primary School psychologist may organize an educational workshop should this be deemed necessary.

#### Step 2

- Should the behavior continue from the same child/children, parents will attend a formal meeting with the principal, Pre-Primary psychologist as well as the class teacher.
- All observations recorded by the teacher will be discussed.
- All incidents will be treated with the strictest confidentiality.
- The minutes of the meeting will be recorded.
- Should it be deemed applicable and beneficial, the respective learner will be required to attend a few sessions with the Pre-Primary School psychologist in order to attempt to modify the behavior.
- These sessions will be initiated once parent's consent has been granted in writing.
- These cases will be monitored closely and documented to ensure that repeated incidents do not occur.

*The Bullying Policy forms part of the general Code of Conduct of The School and consequently the School reserves the right to implement this policy at any pint to address any form of behavior which goes against SAHETI'S values and which may contravene the rights listed in the human rights charter contained within The South African Constitution.*