



Dear Hillside Families,

We do not witness a lot of bullying at school, but must admit that it does occur and we take steps to recognize and address any and all incidents.

The policy and methods employed are provided below. Please review, discuss the topic and guidelines with your children and feel free to reach out to me or another staff member if you have questions and/or concerns.

Bullying Policy

Bullying exists in all schools and we recognize the detrimental impact it has on children and young people's lives. All of us working with students need to challenge behavior and attitudes which lead to bullying before incidents do arise. When incidents do arise, it is important there are proper procedures in place to ensure the appropriate action is taken. The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure a consistent approach to all allegations and incidents, including due process for the accused.

WA State Definition of Bullying

(2) "Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, including, but not limited to those that are reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic in RCW 9A.36.080(3), or other distinguishing characteristics, when the intentional written, verbal, or physical act:

(a) Physically harms a student, school employee, or volunteer or damages his or her property; or (b) Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education; or the providing of that education; or (c) Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational or work environment; or (d) Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Guidelines Include

- Responsibilities
- Investigating and dealing with an incident or allegation
- Disciplinary and support procedures
- Report Form

Responsibilities

Director

Director will ensure that school board members, staff, students and parents are aware of policies and procedures for dealing with incidents.

Recording of the action taken, during and after the investigation of an incident, should provide evidence that the school is following the guidelines and responding appropriately. By monitoring incidents within the school trends and patterns of bullying incidents can be examined and acted upon.

Staff

All staff have a responsibility to report any bullying incident to the Director. All staff need to be aware of what constitutes a bullying and/or racial incident and promote positive behavior throughout the school. All those working with students must challenge behavior and attitudes to meet Hillside's code of conduct prior to incidents arising.

Investigating and Dealing with an Incident

Exploring and recording allegations of bullying

Six important questions to ask in a sensitive way.

- What happened?
- Who was/ is involved?
- Where did it take place?
- Does the incident indicate that bullying was taking place and, if not bullying, what was the nature of the difficulty? (How to Identify Bullying Handout appendix 1)
- What is required to try to resolve the difficulty?

Assessing the nature of an incident

When trying to assess the nature of an incident and the type of responses needed, the following factors should be taken into account.

- Has the student who is experiencing the distress been subjected to repeated incidents of unacceptable behavior? If "yes" over what time period has the behavior been occurring?
- Is there evidence that the behavior is planned/premeditated?
- How does the student perceive him/ herself in relation to those allegedly involved?
- How distressed is the pupil and what effect is the situation having on his/her self-esteem, feelings about school, motivation, relationships with peers, physical well-being etc.?
- Which students are involved in the alleged incident?
- What is the age of the student concerned?
- What seemed to trigger the difficulty?
- Where did/ do the alleged incidents take place?
- Is there background to the alleged incident(s)?
- When was the alleged incident first reported? Who reported it and to whom?
- Are there any witnesses and how do they perceive the alleged incidents?
- What explanations do they give for the alleged difficulty?

Procedures for dealing with incidents

If the investigation shows the need for disciplinary action to be taken against the perpetrator(s), the following measures should be taken.

- Explain the incident will be recorded.
- Make it clear that the type of behavior exhibited is totally unacceptable in any circumstances.
- Explain to the perpetrator that his/ her actions have an adverse effect on the victim and help him/her to consider the consequences of what he/ she has done.
- Involve other members of staff who work with the perpetrator and victim.
- Contact parents/ caregivers of victim and perpetrator
- Where appropriate discuss the issues with parents/ caregivers and inform them of action taken. Wherever possible seek their support.

Further Action

- Actions by the perpetrator may lead to exclusion from school and the nature of the incident will be identified on the exclusion form.
- The School Board of Directors should be consulted if advice on how to proceed is required or if parents exercise their right to take further a complaint or incident.
- Staff involved should take preventative measures to ensure that similar incidents do not re-occur.

Disciplinary and Support Procedures

Disciplinary procedures against the perpetrator(s) are intended to change or modify the behavior. These strategies may include:

- Positive behavior strategies
- Setting of positive behavior goals
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Daily conduct sheets
- Peer mediation
- Class, group or individual discussion with staff about the effects of bullying, discrimination, or racism
- Loss of recess
- Involvement of other professional assessments such as Educational Psychologist or Consulting school counselor
- In school suspension
- Out of school suspension

Support for the victim(s) is essential -- both immediately following the incident and during the agreed period of review.

Strategies may include:

- Peer support
- Mentoring or buddying system
- Staff and/or parent support
- Outside professional support

Recording of Incidents

All incidents of bullying / racism **must** be investigated according to the guidelines given. As part of the investigation procedure, notes should give a factual account of what happened; name of those involved (including witnesses) and what they said; and record the outcome/ action taken. The notes will provide the background information for compiling a yearly log. The note-taking should avoid giving personal opinions and observations.

The recording form is not intended for use in every incident. Rather, the professional judgment of the Director must be used to decide the appropriate response to each incident.

However, the best guide is the victim. If he/she feels that an incident of bullying/ racism has taken place, it must be taken seriously and investigated. What might seem trivial to an adult can cause serious psychological damage to a child or young person and to his/ her feelings of safety, self-esteem and value within the community. If on initial investigation, the accusation of bullying appears to be confirmed, the incident must be recorded.

Incidents must be recorded on the form when any of the following factors are present:

- Bullying or racist behavior
- Perpetrator have on one or more previous occasions been made aware of the unacceptable nature of their behavior
- The behavior is premeditated or calculated
- The safety of the victim(s) has been threatened
- There is a clear intent to bully or harass

Immediately following the recording of an incident, a copy of the form should be forwarded to the Board of Directors.

Time scales for Investigations

All reported incidents must be investigated immediately. The maximum time to carry out a full investigation is three working days. (A delay may sometimes be unavoidable e.g. reporting of the incident at the end of a school day or a student or staff member is absent) A letter will be go home stating that the matter has been/ is being investigated and inviting the parent to contact the school. A similar letter will go home with the alleged perpetrator.

Whenever possible, the school should attempt to phone parents/ caregivers to alert them to what has happened before sending the letter home.

Record of Bullying Incident

Name of person investigating incident: _____

Date incident reported: _____

| | Perpetrator 1 | Perpetrator 2 | Perpetrator 3 |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Name | | | |
| Age | | | |
| Gender | | | |
| Ethnicity (if known) | | | |

| | Victim 1 | Victim 2 | Victim 3 |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Name | | | |
| Age | | | |
| Gender | | | |
| Ethnicity (if known) | | | |

Type of Incident:

Written (graffiti, notes, written threat, ridicule through drawings, etc.)

Verbal (eg name-calling, threatening, sarcasm, discriminatory comments during classes, etc.)

Physical (eg pushing, shoving, fighting, tripping, etc.)

Using Technology (eg anonymous phone calls, offensive/ threatening text/ emails)

Damage to Property (eg theft of bags, clothes, money; tearing clothes; ripping books, etc.)

Isolation (eg. Shunned, rejected, left out of activities/ groups, etc.)

Incitement (e.g. encouraging others to bully, behave in a racist, discriminatory, or sexist manner; wearing discriminatory insignia; distributing racist or other discriminatory literature)

Extortion (e.g. using threats in order to obtain money, property, etc.)

Other Please Specify: _____

Please indicate if there is/ was any suspicion that the incident may have been influenced by any of the following. (You may tick more than one box)

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|--|----------------------|--|----------|--|
| Race | | Socio-economic class | | Gender | |
| Disability | | Sexual orientation | | Religion | |
| Other (specify) | | | | | |

When did the incident occur?

Date of incident _____

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|--|--------------|--|------------|--|
| Before School | | During Class | | Lunch | |
| Between Class | | Break Time | | After Care | |
| Other (specify) | | | | | |

Where did the incident occur:

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|--|--------------------------|--|--|--|
| In classroom | | In School Grounds | | | |
| Before/ After club | | On School Transportation | | | |
| Other Area: | | | | | |

Who reported the incident?

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|--|------------------|--|-------------------|--|
| Victim(s) | | Member of Staff | | Parent/ Caregiver | |
| Visitor to School | | Other Student(s) | | Other (specify) | |

Please indicate the investigative procedure carried out:

| | | | |
|---------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| Investigated incident | | Interviewed students/ others involved | |
| Contact Parents of victim | | Interview parents of perpetrator(s) | |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------------|--|
| Interviewed witnesses | | Other procedures (specify) | |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------------|--|

After investigation was the allegation of bullying substantiated?

Yes No

If 'yes' please continue on to the next section. If 'no' please go to end of form.

If allegation was substantiated, please indicate action taken against perpetrator(s):

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------------|--|----------------------------------|--|-------------------|--|
| Verbal Reprimand | | Recess Time Out | | Written Punishment | | Final Warning | |
| Red Card Report/ Think Time | | Peer Mediation | | Exclusion from class or activity | | Letter to Parents | |
| Other: | | | | | | | |

Please indicate what action was taken to support victim(s):

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|
| Support from Staff | | Letter to Parents | |
| Support from other students | | External agency involvement | |
| Other: | | | |

Please indicate the level of parental involvement:

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--|---|--|
| Parents informed by phone | | Parents involved actively in discussions etc. | |
| Parents informed by letter | | Other (specify) | |

Please indicate if any of the follow-up preventative work was done as a result of the incident:

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|
| Whole school intervention training | | Group work | |
| Whole Class | | Individual | |
| Circle time | | Review of policy and procedures | |

Other (specify):

Please indicate when you intend to review the effectiveness of the action taken:

| One week | | One month | | Six months | |
|----------|--|-----------|--|------------|--|
| | | | | | |

Any other comments:

Signed by Director/ Head Teacher: _____

Date: _____