



DSK Anti-Bullying Guidelines

The DSK creates a pleasant environment where everybody is able to develop academically, socially and emotionally, and feel safe, respected and welcome.

Concerning the expected behaviour of students, we refer to our Code of Conduct.

In order to provide a climate for such behaviour, we do NOT ALLOW bullying at our school!

Definition of bullying (according to the Anti-Bullying handbook of Berlin):

1. A conflict has intensified.
2. Of the two parties in conflict, one person is mostly considered as inferior.
3. This person is frequently attacked
4. and bullied over a period.
5. This person seldom has the ability to extricate him/herself from the situation by him/herself.

Not every conflict constitutes bullying:

- Ordinary conflicts develop and pass. With bullying repeated hostility ensues, mostly against a single child; a permanent conflict develops.
- Single, even multiple violations do not necessarily entail bullying, but prolonged and systematic attacks do.

Conflict resolution:

- Should a conflict between students arise, the class teacher (or a subject teacher who is directly involved) initially tries to mediate between the two parties in order to resolve the conflict. At his/her own discretion the class teacher can involve the grade head and/or the counsellor.
- Mediation by the students' mediation team can also be requested to assist in conflict resolution.

- However, when mediation is used, no typical victim-perpetrator model should exist where one participant finds him/herself in a weak and hopeless position. (see below: Bullying is one-sided).
- The aim of the resolution is that the conflict be ended as soon as possible and in a manner satisfactory to all those involved; also to avoid escalation. Not all conflict is synonymous with bullying.
- Should a definite aggressor be identified, s/he must be given an ultimatum to cease any kind of aggression. Should this not happen, there will be an investigation to determine if the behaviour is indeed bullying and which consequences are to follow.
- Every incident must be documented.

Characteristics of bullying:

Bullying is one-sided

- Bullying is a one-sided relationship.
- Characteristics are power versus powerlessness, as well as the capriciousness of the person who has the upper hand.

Bullying is deliberate

- Bullying is the deliberate and malicious assault on the social reputation and the emotional well-being of the targeted person.

Bullying damages

- Self-confidence
- Learning motivation
- Health
- Human dignity

Bullying is the desire

- to cause distress
- to abuse power

Bullying does not cease by itself.

(compare: The Anti-Bullying handbook of Berlin)

Different kinds of bullying:

Physical bullying:

All kinds of behaviour which cause physical harm, e.g. hitting, kicking, shoving, obscene gestures etc.

Material bullying:

All kinds of blackmail/extortion and the taking or damaging of another person's property.

Verbal bullying:

All kinds of verbal behaviour that hurts or humiliates another person, e.g. insults, name-calling, discriminatory remarks (regarding religion, race, gender, subject choice, appearance, skills etc.), repeated teasing, threats, sexual harassment or mocking.

Psychological bullying:

All kinds of rumours; exclusion of a person from a group; isolating someone as a result of hindering others to befriend that person; to mock someone.

Cyber bullying:

Material, verbal or psychological bullying happens through social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, etc.

(Look at Social Media guidelines)

When bullying is suspected, the following measures are to taken:

1. The affected learner, his / her parents, friends, or any other witnesses should inform the class teacher, any of the school counsellors or any other teacher of their choice.
2. The teacher to whom the suspected bullying has been reported will then approach the grade head and school counsellor(s) to discuss the case and the next steps to be taken.
3. The class teacher / grade head will contact the parents of all learners involved, to inform them that grade head / class teacher / subject teacher will have a one-on-one discussion with their child to gather more information about the suspected bullying. If any witnesses voluntarily come forward, their parents are to be informed in the same manner.
 - 3.1. All witnesses will remain anonymous.

- 3.2. No child will be forced to come forward as a witness.
- 3.3. Parents are to be informed at least 24 hours prior to the one-on-one discussions, in order for them to have a chance to discuss the situation with their children at home first.
- 3.4. The school counsellor(s) will not be involved in the initial discussions with the children, where information regarding the suspected bullying is being gathered. The counsellors need to remain a safe space for the children and maintain a relationship of trust.
4. After all information has been gathered, the grade head, class teacher, any other teacher(s) involved, and the school counsellor(s) will meet to integrate the information and discuss if this is a genuine case of bullying.
5. If it is found that the circumstances meet the criteria as a genuine case of bullying, the following steps will be carried out:
- 5.1. The parents of the learners involved will be informed of the outcome of the investigation. No information regarding how the 'bully' will be disciplined may be given to parents of the other learners, including those of the victim.
- 5.2. The learner(s) who have been found guilty of bullying will receive a written reprimand, which will include an invitation to the learner's parents for a meeting. At this meeting, it will be discussed how the parents and school can work together to support the learner in order to prevent further bullying behaviour.
- 5.3. Learner(s) who are found guilty of bullying will be instructed to provide the victim with a written or verbal apology.
- 5.4. The learner(s) will also be required to attend a minimum of two counselling sessions with the school counsellor(s).
- 5.5. The subject teachers of the learner(s) will also be informed, so that they can monitor the situation in class and offer support where necessary.
- 5.6. If the bullying behaviour continues after these interventions have been put into place, the learner(s) and his / her parents will be required to attend a disciplinary hearing. At this hearing, the disciplinary procedure/consequences will be decided upon.
6. If it is found that the circumstances do not meet the criteria as a case of bullying, the affected learners will be required to attend a session with the school's mediation team, in order to try to

solve the conflict. If the mediation session is not effective, the learners will then attend a mediation session with the school counsellor(s).

Self- and Private-defence regulations:

- Self-defence refers to the defence of yourself when under an attack, whereas private defence is the defence of a third party who is under attack.
- Learners have the right to defend themselves and others against any form of physical attack.
- Physical self-defence should only be used in cases where it is absolutely necessary and where there is no other way for the learner to escape the attack. The first method of self-defence should always be to remove themselves from the situation and inform a teacher of the incident immediately.
- If there is no option other than to use physical force to defend themselves, the method of self-defence must be objectively reasonable under the specific circumstances. e.g. if a child is being held against a wall and can't escape other than by using physical force, a reasonable method of self-defence would be to push the attacker away and remove themselves from the situation.
- Self- or private-defence may only be implemented if the physical attack has already started, or is about to start, i.e. the learner may not use physical force or any other form of defence under the assumption that a physical attack may possibly take place later.
- The defence should only be directed at the attacker, not at their accomplices.
- Once the attacker has ceased their attack, the learner implementing defence should not continue further, but rather remove themselves from the situation, i.e. a learner may not run after the attacker to continue the defence, as they are no longer under threat.
- A learner who makes use of self- or private-defence will also be found guilty and punished accordingly, if it is found that they provoked the attack to take place, or chose to use physical force when there was a way for them to escape the attack without doing so.

By means of these guidelines we would like to create a social and respectful environment in which everybody can flourish.

Updated: January 2020