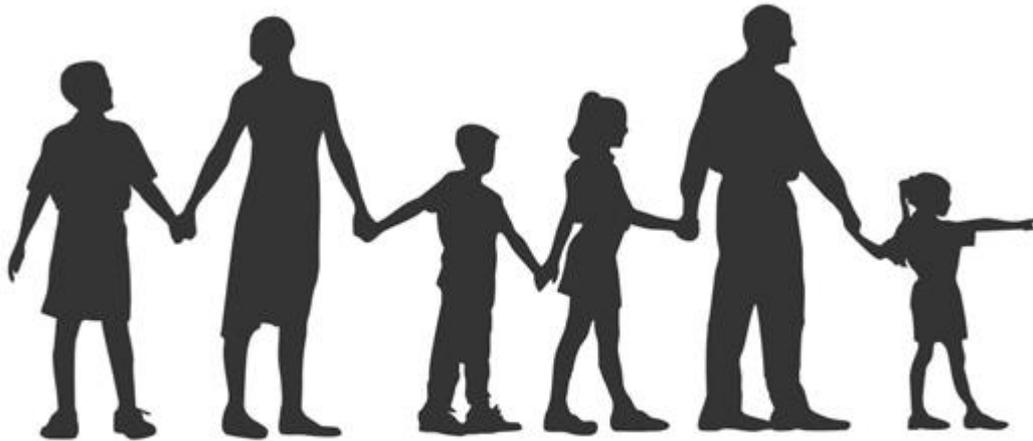




CURRO

Thatchfield

Bullying Policy



Lead our children to a quality life

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1. Introduction:

Curro Thatchfield Independent School strives to uphold love, loyalty and respect as their core values. Curro Thatchfield DOES NOT tolerate any form of bullying. Curro Thatchfield strives to provide a safe environment where caring for each child is our priority. No person has the right to hurt another through bullying. Staff, students and parents will work together to conduct this work. Curro Thatchfield's staff, parents and students will speak out when any form of bullying occurs.

2. What is a Bully?

Definition of a bully:

In reference to the Oxford Dictionary: *"A person who uses strength and power to harm or intimidate someone who is weaker, typically to force him or her to do what one wants."*

"Olweus Prevention Bullying Programme", an international prevention program defines bullying (following on their website www.olweus.org) as "when he/she is exposed repeatedly and over time to negative actions on the part of one or more persons and he/she has difficulty defending himself/herself."

Bullying is aggressive behaviour that is unwanted and entails negative actions. It involves a behaviour pattern that occurs over a period. Bullying implies an imbalance in power between two parties.

<u>REMEMBER:</u> Children who are being bullied may not remain silent!

3. Type of Bullying:

Type of Bullying	Behaviour
1.Verbal and written	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name calling • Teasing or belittling someone's possessions: eg clothing, bags, family, financial assets etc. Example: you cannot play tennis well because you have a cheap racquet, you have a baby bike, etc. • Negative and rude comments, • Intimidation, • Threatening or degrading messages • Teasing and using obscene language.
2.Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inducing any kind of physical pain. • Physical pain includes: kicking, biting, boxing, slapping, throwing objects at another, being hit, shouldered, deliberately cause someone to stumble. • Taking or using another's possessions without permission. Damaging the item • Any action where someone else's privacy is breached without permission or to scratch in someone's suitcase, bag or homework book. • Show aggressive signs. • Any action that scares a child, isolate or threaten his / her personal space. For example locking someone inside or out of a venue; holding on to toilet doors or to look over or under a toilet door. • Take toys.
3. Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gossip (verbal or written). • Disclosure of personal and confidential information. • Manipulation in order to humiliate. • Lie to have the innocent person appear in a "bad" light. • Deliberate <i>exclusion</i> from the group <i>games or activities</i>. • Examples: "you cannot play along, because you're fat", "my father has three cars and your dad just two. You cannot be my friend, because all of my friends' dads drive nice cars. " <p>CYBER BULLYING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sending damaging or destructive e-mails/sms's to another. • "Hate mail" or degrading texting, BBM, Twitter, Facebook or Whatsapp messaging. • Taking photos at school to distribute.

4. Prevention of Bullying

All cases of bullying must be reported.

4.1 The role and responsibility of Curro Staff:

- Curro Staff should set an example to act and communicate in the correct manner.
- Curro Staff must conspicuously supervise during school activities and break time.
- Be on time for class instruction.
- Disclose positive actions, behaviour, language and attitude both inside and out of the classroom.
- Teach and emphasize to students that a person's character is more important than physical appearance, talents and material possessions.
- To continuously build the characters of the students at Curro Thatchfield and to focus on good/sound character traits.
- Continuous focus on the development of social skills between students.
- To constantly update the students on the expected standard of behaviour, with school and classroom rules constantly presented to students. Class rules should be short and precise, a clear guideline for acceptable behaviour.
- Curro Staff must continually equip students with knowledge about how to identify a bully, how to act and how to report bullying, whether they are the victim or an observer of the behaviour. (Have class discussions with students to raise awareness about bullying. This can be done in the form of stories, read or told. Puppets can be used to convey a specific message and role play to depict a situation, giving information on the subject.
- This can take place during the register period, assembly, hymn singing, during life orientation periods, KDA, sport activities and the distribution of pamphlets etc.
- Be vigilant for any signs that may be related to bullying.
- Report all incidents so that the behaviour can be investigated and monitored.
- Report all incidents and document it.
- Staff may not ignore a bullying allegation and may not accuse the students of storytelling. Each student's complaint must be handled independently and objectively.
- Support and assist the students ensuring they are not exposed to further situations of bullying behaviour.
- Report incidents of bullying to parents.
- To help children to develop positive strategies to address the situation.
- To use the Curro Care Committee and the services eg Educational Psychologist where necessary.
- Teachers should teach, guide and encourage the students to deal with the situations on their own and in a positive manner. In this way we are building their self-esteem and teaching them important skills for the future.
- To not accept bullying in any form whether it be verbal (emotional) or physical.
- To support learners who are being bullied.
- To help bullies change their behaviour.
- To be aware that sometimes bullying happens on the way to and from school.
- The teacher should always keep record of any bullying behaviour.
- It is also important that Curro staff be able to distinguish between the different behaviours (age appropriate bickering/fighting, innocent behaviour and conscious bullying).
- In the case of having more than one bully, the staff will address the learners separately.

4.2 The role of Curro Students:

- Curro students must be an example to each other, showing love and treating others with respect at all times.
- Curro students should not involve themselves in any form of bullying.
- Curro students should report any incident where bullying is observed, to the class teacher or to a teacher the learner trusts.
- Curro students must show respect for each other.
- Curro students must support a bully victim.
- Curro students may, if they choose to be anonymous, report in writing, any form of bullying.

5. Disciplinary Actions:

- Bullying should immediately be brought to the attention of - (following the channel as follows)
 - 1) Teacher
 - 2) Phase Head
 - 3) Operational Head
 - 4) Executive Head
- Parents are contacted when child has performed any act of bullying.
- The Curro Code of Conduct will be followed to call student to responsibility.

6. Supporting the victim:

- Any child may be the target of a bully.
- The victim is often singled out as a result of psychological traits and characteristics rather than physical appearance.
- Some children are singled out for physical reasons, such as being overweight or for having small physical defects. Sometimes for wearing a pair of glasses, race or religion, child's family's financial position and their possessions etc.
- **If you're a student who is bullied:**
 - Immediately tell an adult what happened and try to explain the situation as clearly as possible. You can tell your own teacher or anyone else you trust. **Do not be silent.**
 - If you are shy, uncomfortable or frightened - tell a friend and ask if he/she will tell an adult at school for you.
 - Do not blame yourself for what happened.

Remember:

- **Ignore the bully and walk away**
- **Do not get angry and fight back**
- **Remember to immediately tell a staff member.**

6.1 Signs to look out for when a child is being bullied:

- The consequences of being a victim, might lead to the child **developing fear and anxiety for the school and not wanting to go.**
- Change in Behaviour
- Learning difficulties may develop
- Academic performance may deteriorate,
- Child has trouble concentrating ,
- **Change in personality** as the child may become depressed or irritated.

- **Sleep patterns** change.
- They **lose interest in certain activities**.
- Seem anxious and **avoids friends**.
- Show signs of **separation anxiety** when he/she is dropped off at school.
- **Bedwetting**.
- Starts to **chew nails**.
- **Presents unreasonable demands in an attempt to regain control**.
- **Leaving school** during school hours.
- **Eating disorders**, eg. the consumption of large quantities of food or candy or a decrease in appetite.
- **Suicidal tendencies**.
- When the student goes home **battered or with unexplained injuries** and **changes in physical appearance**
- Bruises , scratches,
- Broken or dirty clothes
- **Signs of vandalism**
- Broken pencils,
- Shredded books
- Smaller children start to fight with brothers and/or sisters and use language not typical of their age.

7. The child that bullies:

- A bully can come from a background where there is little or no reassurance from the parents, parental involvement is limited and there is no consistency at home.
- These children could be exposed to extreme physical punishment (whipping physical) and emotional outbursts.
- These students may be exposed to violence at home, either by parents or older siblings or even via the media (tv, video games etc).
- He/she often blames others when something goes wrong.
- He/she shows tendencies towards aggressive or violent behaviour when trying to express their anger.
- He/she has a tendency to break school rules.
- These learners may show poor academic progress at school.
- He/she may try and challenge any form of authority in every possible way.
- The student often needs to win at all costs, is dishonest or acts unfairly towards others.
- He/she will take revenge if they feel harmed or hurt.
- Before formal counseling is necessary, the bully must be guided to change his/her behaviour, and be made aware of the fact that bullying always has negative consequences.
- Often children who bully are children who do not know how to show empathy. (Some children need to be taught how to empathise with others. Empathy is not always a natural/given character trait).
- Children who bully always want to be in control, even at the expense of others and their feelings.
- For every bully there are usually a number of children, although they themselves do not bully, who watch and encourage the bully's behaviour.
- Although it does not always mean that a child is a bully, parents should be aware that it is a possibility if their child speaks in an aggressive and derogatory manner about other children. Attention also needs to be given when the child has money, toys or other items that does not belong to them.
- Students who witness someone being bullied and does not report it or try to stop it, can also be guilty of bullying.

7.1 Bullies need to acquire the following skills:

- To accept responsibility for their own behaviour.
- To take responsibility for the consequences of their own actions.
- The situation should make them feel uncomfortable (my behaviour got me into trouble and I want to avoid it next time).
- To change their behaviour in order to avoid trouble.
- To find other ways to satisfy their needs.
- To learn the difference between teasing and bullying.
- To take responsibility for the impact of their actions on others.
- To trust others.
- Establish and build relationships with supporting adults.

Empathy is the ability to place one's self in someone else's shoes. It is the ability to understand and to feel how others feel. The dictionary defines empathy as: "identifying yourself mentally with another person and understanding him or her."

Sympathy is the ability to understand or share what the other person is feeling, but empathy is being able to feel it for yourself.

8. The role of the Curro Thatchfield Parent:

- To teach your child from an early age, to take other people's feelings into consideration and to show respect towards others, no matter what race, language, gender or appearance.
- Maintain an open channel of communication with your child.
- Create daily opportunities for your child to confidently communicate with you.
- Do not encourage your child to fight back.
- Parents of pre-schoolers: Listen to your child interacting with adults and how he/she plays with other children. Act immediately if you see the way in which he/she speaks or plays with others is unacceptable. Get early guidance if you are unsure about how to deal with it. This allows you to prevent future social unacceptable behaviour such as bullying.
- Be a positive example for your child:
 - When you can't say something good about someone else, keep quiet.
 - Do not discuss other people or situations in front of your child.
- Use the correct communication channels and discuss the matter with your child's teacher.
- Give your full co-operation to the school or kindergarten in understanding your child's behaviour and learn to address the situation.
- Consult a counselor if necessary or if it is recommended by the school, whether your child is the victim or perpetrator.
- Do not try to handle it yourself, for example, do not contact the parents of the bully, but work together with the school.
- Trust the school.
- **Encourage good and positive friendships and make an effort to get to know the parents.** Invite potential friends to your home for a play date, make it fun and help your child to be surrounded by good friends.
- **Talk to your child regularly**, talk about bullying and what it is.
- Practice how to ignore the bully in a dignified way and to walk away from him/her. (If the victim does not respond, it does not benefit the bully and he or she will probably stop the bullying).
- Help your child to be confident without having to resort to bullying. Teach your child to look the bully in the eyes and say something like: *"I do not care what you say. I have better things to do than to listen to you."*
- In the case of cyber bullying: Use a blocker or banned functions. Be involved and know what is on your child's tablet, computer or phone.
- Often praise your child.
- Emphasize his or her strengths and help him/her to realize that he/she is special .

Bullying is always a very bad and traumatic event for any child and his behaviour changes as a result of the trauma. Note therefore that the child is traumatized.
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8. Information for parents – My child the bully:

- **Boundaries and discipline provide security.** It should not be confused with punishment of a physical nature that promotes bullying rather than preventing it.
- It is necessary that parents of children who tend to bully, learn ways of effective discipline.
- It is also important that parents teach children how to **resolve conflict without bullying.**
- This means that parents will learn to resolve their **own conflict** in a constructive way so that children do not experience violence in their own homes.
- Bullying can be prevented by **parents who model** how to deal with people and by getting along with others. Children learn empathy and how to be respectful towards others and friends.
- Children who receive **positive attention** from their parents are less likely to bully.
- On the other hand, children who feel that their parents do not love them, because they do not spend time with them, are more likely to bully.

- Set aside enough quality time with your child.
- It also helps if parents make their children feel good about themselves by **supporting** them when they take part in an activity of their choice - sports, art, or whatever.