Anti-Bullying-Guidelines DBSAA

At the German Embassy School, we believe that every student deserves a safe, respectful and inclusive learning environment. Our vision emphasises the importance of promoting a positive school culture where the whole school family feels valued, treated fairly and supported. Accordingly, we endeavour to avoid conflict of any kind at best, or at least to recognise, address and resolve them at an early stage. Cases of marginalisation and bullying can also occur at our school. In order to meet these challenges, we take both prevention and intervention measures. The focus is on supporting those affected and their families. All members of the DBSAA are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying or suspected harassment without delay. With the help of the DBSAA's anti-bullying guidelines, we want to create transparency for the entire school family. The guideline explains what bullying is and how we deal with it as a school.

1. Bullying: What does it mean?

1.1. Definition

Bullying is a physical, verbal or social behaviour in which a person is deliberately and repeatedly harmed over a long period of time. Bullying occurs when the following characteristics apply simultaneously:

- **Systematic behaviour:** The perpetrator intends to cause harm or fear to the target person.
- **Repetition:** The harmful behaviour occurs repeatedly, at least once a week.
- **Duration:** Bullying takes place over several weeks and months.

Accredited German School Abroad: Kindergarten, Primary, Secondary I & II, IB School: mixed language „International Baccalaureate"

DAS
Deutsche Auslandsschulen International

KMK
KULTUSMINISTER KONFERENZ

WDA
Weltverband Deutscher Auslandsschulen

ib

Schulen: Partner der Zukunft

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- **Power imbalance:** The perpetrator has power over the victim and shows it.
- **No mutual provocation:** The victim does not provoke the bullying.
- **Isolation in the group.**

1.2. <u>Categorisation of conflicts</u>

The categorisation of bullying is subject to narrow limits. Spontaneous mutual disputes and differences of opinion do not fulfil the characteristics of bullying. Dislike of a person or isolated incidents of aggression or violence do not fulfil the criteria. The DBSAA takes these incidents seriously and actively helps all parties involved to find a reasonable solution. In these cases, the class teacher (or the social worker or another trusted teacher) mediates between the two parties in order to resolve the conflict. Mediators[1] can also be requested to support conflict resolution.

1.3. <u>Bullying thrives on group dynamics</u>

Bullying is a collective phenomenon within a class or group. It shows that the normative structure of a group has shifted over a longer period of time. In the case of bullying, the pupils take on certain roles that lead to the power structure and bullying being maintained. If this particular group structure is interrupted by intervention measures, the bullying can be stopped in most cases.

- Perpetrators take the initiative to actively bully someone and take on the leadership role in the   group.
- Bystanders (followers) orientate themselves towards the behaviour of the perpetrator
  and support them.
- Reinforcers watch the bullying, laugh or cheer on the perpetrators, thereby or cheer on the perpetrator, thereby exacerbating the situation.
- Defenders clearly side with the victim and support them.

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[1] From year 3 to 9, there are mediators in every class. Either the class representatives form the mediators for their class or there are two volunteers from the class. If a conflict arises within the class, the pupils can resolve the conflict with the help of the mediators. The school aims to ensure that pupils learn to resolve conflicts independently and on their own responsibility.

- Outsiders are pupils who stay completely out of the bullying situation and do not get involved.
- Victim: Which pupil becomes a victim is not due to certain personality traits. Anyone can become a victim. It always depends on class behaviour and the norms within a class.

1.4. <u>Why is bullying happening?</u>

The motives and causes of bullying at school are complex. Examples include: acting out feelings of power, increasing status within the group perceived provocation of the perpetrator by the victim, boredom victim, boredom, fun, revenge or even frustration and own bullying experiences; low self-esteem and valorisation of one's own personality (attention, wanting to be the centre of attention). Furthermore bullying in schools can also stem from a discriminatory ideological background.

1.5. <u>Forms of bullying</u>

Bullying manifests itself in different forms. It is not only about physical verbal attacks. The following types of bullying can occur:

- **Physical**: e.g. hitting, pushing
- **Verbal**: e.g. verbal abuse, teasing
- **Non-verbal**: e.g. body language that attempts to hurt someone
- **Material bullying**: e.g. blackmail, appropriation or destruction of the property of others
- **Social bullying**: e.g. spreading rumours, destroying relationships
- **Cyber bullying**: especially in social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Signal, etc.: hurtful, humiliating statements and the spreading of false information and rumours by means of posts, photos or videos; threats, blackmail and harassment in connection with possible anonymity

1.6. Bullying in different age groups

Bullying occurs most frequently between the ages of 13 and 15. Around the 9th grade, the number of incidents typically decreases, among other things because some older pupils have acquired strategies to protect themselves from bullying and bullying occurs less frequently.

In kindergarten and primary school, the severity of bullying is generally less pronounced as children are less systematic in their behaviour. In secondary school the establishment of perpetrator and victim roles is much more pronounced. The more subtle forms of bullying generally increase with age.

1.7. Consequences of bullying

The consequences of bullying can be severe. In addition to offence and reduced performance, victims of bullying usually suffer from pronounced physical and psychological complaints. As already mentioned, bullying has an impact on the entire classroom dynamic. Complaints and effects are listed below:

Victim

- ✓ Sleep disorders
- ✓ Anxiety at school
- ✓ Tinnitus
- ✓ Anxiety reactions
- ✓ Nightmare
- ✓ States of exhaustion
- ✓ Reduced performance
- ✓ Suicidal tendencies
- ✓ Headaches
- ✓ Self-esteem crisis
- ✓ Concentration disorders
- ✓ Social Anxiety
- ✓ Nervousness
- ✓ Gastrointestinal disorders
- ✓ Eating disorder

Bullying also has an impact on the entire class.

The whole class

- ✓ Drop in performance: negative class climate affects the whole class
- ✓ Loss of trust in educational staff if there is no help and support does not take place
- ✓ Ability to empathise is lost
- ✓ Sense of responsibility is lost

2. <u>Our approach to bullying at the DBSAA: prevention and intervention</u>

2.1. <u>Prevention measures</u>

Through our prevention measures across all age and target groups we want to work in an educational and transparent manner. It is important to us to strengthen social interaction at our school and to build strong, trusting relationships within the class group, but also beyond this at grade and school level between pupils and with teachers and educational staff. A reliable and fair framework, as set out in the respective class rules, provides the best protection.

Among other things, we have training programmes in which social skills are promoted and trained. They are an important part of social learning at the DBSAA:

- **Lubo-Programme**[2] in preschool: programme for the early promotion of social-emotional competences; implemented by a primary school teacher.

- **Weekly social learning lessions in primary school:** can be accompanied by the social worker.

- **CHILI-Project** [3] in grades 5 to 9: programme for violence prevention and conflict resolution; it starts individually where school classes set their goals; implemented by the social worker.

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[2] Lubo from Space!" is a tried-and-tested and scientifically evaluated program for preschool groups, among others. The children are prepared for their imminent entry into school. The aim is to improve the children's perception of themselves and others. In addition, they should be enabled to know their own emotional world, regulate it and thus actively solve problems.

[3] Children, young people and adults learn how to argue fairly and how conflicts at school and in the workplace can be dealt with constructively. At the same time, the project promotes and strengthens the participants' communication and social skills.

- **Class Council** [4] at secondary school: promotion of democratic cooperation and participation in the school, implemented by the class; introduction by the social worker and the class teacher.
- **Social learning lessons** individually tailored to the class in primary and secondary school by the social worker.
- **Psychoeducation** in grades 5 to 10 [5]: Lessons on mental health topics; Conducted by the school psychologist and social worker.

The following events are also organised:

- Further training for teachers and educational staff, such as conflict resolution strategies in working with children and young people, dealing with challenging behaviour, the No Blame Approach as a bullying intervention.
- Class conferences to discuss academic performance, social-emotional behaviour and support needs in order to be able to respond individually to students.
- Pedagogical day with school-relevant training topics such as emotional and social learning strategies, dealing with ADHD in the classroom, school climate.
- Parent workshops to make parents alert and sensitise their actions.

2.2. Intervention measures

The DBSAA works with the No Blame Approach [6] and/or other educational measures. The use of intervention measures is decided individually

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[4] The class council is the democratic forum of a class. In weekly meetings, the pupils deliberate, discuss and decide on topics of their own choosing, such as current problems and conflicts in the class, joint planning and activities. Assigning fixed roles, such as moderator or timekeeper, makes a decisive contribution to the success of the class council. The process is clearly structured, making it easier to concentrate on the content of the joint discussions.

[5] The lessons take place for the classes a total of five times per school year and last one lesson per class and date. The topics for the lessons were tailored to the needs of the respective class levels, but the pupils selected their favorite topics through an online survey.

[6] This process-oriented intervention measure was developed in England in the early 1990s and is used in many international schools around the world.

in each case of bullying, depending on the situation. In the following the general steps to be taken in the event of suspected bullying are described below.

2.2.1. General steps: victim-oriented screening

Guided by the social worker, the first step is to clarify whether there is a case of bullying.

The following steps take place:

1. **Collection of observations and information:** the social worker, in cooperation with the respective class teacher, the reporters (e.g. friends and legal guardians), the victim and other pedagogical staff (e.g. Nami staff), collects all relevant information about actions, situations and behaviors of individual students that contribute significantly to the case.

   Furthermore:

   - Information and exchange of information with the legal guardians (if the case has not already been reported by them).

   - If necessary, information and exchange with the school psychologist.

   - If necessary, involve the school management; in any case, the school management is involved during a bullying intervention or other planned steps.

2. **Conversation with the victim**: In most cases, the social worker has a conversation with the victim, together with the class teacher in order to find out about the victim's mental state and to provide emotional support (e.g. support from the school psychologist or the social worker) and to obtain further information. At the same time, the next steps are explained to the victim.

1. **Check whether bullying has occured:** On the basis of the screening steps 1 and 2 the social worker, in consultation with the class teacher, the school psychologist and, if necessary, other educational pedagogical staff, will decide whether bullying has occurred. If this is confirmed, a joint decision will then be made as to which measures will be taken (no-blame approach or other educational pedagogical measures).

Steps 1 to 3 can be clarified within one day, but it usually takes a few days however, it usually takes a few days to reach the final decision. In any case we ask the parents/guardians for patience and trust in the work trust in the work of the school.

i.   **No Blame Approach**

When implementing the No Blame Approach, no blame is assigned to the perpetrator. The focus is on what can be done to make the victim feel good again and to restore a positive classroom dynamic. To this end, the structure of a group or class is taken into consideration. A **support group** should form a protective circle around the victim. The support group consists of the perpetrators, bystanders or followers and pupils who have attracted attention in the classroom through constructive social behaviour and behaviour in the classroom and whom the victim trusts. The support group is there to actively help the victim for 14 days to improve the situation and thus exert a positive dynamic in the classroom.

A crucial point in the No Blame Approach is that the perpetrator and bystander are integrated into the support group so that they can actively contribute to the resolution process and reflect on their actions at the same time. Under no circumstances are they condemned during the intervention. Similarly, the perpetrators and bystanders are not discussed in individual meetings about the situation as a case of bullying. Discussions take place within the support group.

Another important point is the involvement of parents and guardians when implementing the No Blame Approach. The legal guardians of the victim are informed immediately, even before the intervention is carried out. The perpetrator's legal guardians are not informed when the No Blame Approach is implemented. The children are given the opportunity actively participate in the solution process without being blamed by their parents or at least feeling blamed and having to explain themselves to their parents.

In the conversation with the support group, it is made clear how the victim currently feels. The perpetrators usually realise that they are mainly responsible for the situation that has arisen. The experience of the

No Blame Approach shows that the children are very aware of their own role in the in the situation and cooperate more constructively when the parents are not involved in the process.

Steps for implementing the No Blame Approach

1. **Conversation with the pupil affected by bullying**

   The aim of the conversation is to build trust with the victim and to tell the victim that the difficult situation can be ended. Official consent must also be obtained, that the intervention will be carried out. During the conversation, it must be clearly worked out once again which students are contributing to the difficult situation in order to take consistent action against the bullying. The social worker selects the support group (6-8 people) together with the victim.

2. **Conversation with the support group**

   The social worker talks together with the selected students. No details about the incident are given, only how the victim feels and that everyone can work together to ensure that the pupil enjoys going to school again. Together with the group, ideas are collected as to what each individual can do. Everyone makes a suggestion and therefore shares responsibility in the solution process. Ideas could be, e.g.: having lunch together, playing games during the breaks, joint group work, actively asking 'How are you doing today?', arranging playdates, choosing teammates in PE lessons. The support takes place for 14 days.

   Involvement of teachers: at the beginning of the 14 days, all teachers in the victim's class are informed that the No Blame Approach is taking place. All teachers specifically observe the classroom dynamics and any incidents. They work closely with the with the social worker.

   Involvement of the legal guardians: the guardians of the victim are also closely involved. They should observe their child during the 14 days and talk about what happened. events. The close monitoring helps to decide on further courses of action.

3. **Follow-Up Interviews**

After 14 days, the social worker talks to each child individually - including the bullied person - about how the situation has developed in the meantime. Individual discussions make the students directly responsible and strengthen sustainability.

4. **Evaluation and next steps**

Is based on the follow-up discussions, observations by the teachers and information from the parents/guardians that the bullying has not yet been stopped, it will be determined whether the No Blame Approach should be continued and/or what should be adapted if necessary. This is done with the involvement of the school management and all people involved in the bullying case.

ii. Measures outside the No Blame Approach

If the No Blame Approach is not in the interests of the class community and protection of victims, other measures will be taken. People involved are the class teacher, the social worker, the school management and, if necessary, the school psychologist. In any case the legal guardians of the victim and the perpetrator will be informed of the incidents. Measures can be taken on both the victim and perpetrator side: social-emotional support from the social worker or school psychologist, one-to-one discussions, group or class discussions if necessary. In close consultation with the class teacher and school management, the <u>following educational measures</u> can also be taken:

- Individual meetings with the social pedagogue or school psychologist with a focus on focus on 'self-empowerment'; at least 3 appointments (empowerment of the offender)
- Exclusion from events
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Exclusion from lessons
- Threat of expulsion from school
- Exclusion from school

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