

Coalhurst Elementary School

At a Glance: Bullying Protocol

DEFINITION: repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by an individual in the school community where the behaviour is intended to cause harm, fear, or distress to one or more other individuals.

CONFLICT

- Equal power friends
- Happens occasionally
- Accidental
- Equal emotional reaction
- Not seeking power or attention
- Remorse
- Effort to solve problem

VS.

BULLYING

- Imbalance of power
- Not friends
- Happens repeatedly
- Purposeful
- Strong emotional reaction on part of victim
- Seeking power, control
- No remorse - blames victim
- No effort to solve problem

Most children experience conflict of some kind while at school or participating in

activities. It is a normal part of life and learning to deal with it in healthy ways helps kids master important social skills. In contrast, bullying is not normal or a rite of passage, and does not make kids tougher up. Being able to identify the difference is important in knowing how to respond.

Interventions

Staff and parents play important roles in shaping culture. However, meaningful and lasting change requires students to be active participants in both preventing and solving problems. They need authentic opportunities to share their ideas regarding safety, inclusivity, leadership and responsibility to and within the school community. This involvement helps create a sense of ownership and encourages students to advocate for themselves and others, personally and collectively.

Each occurrence of bullying will involve some level of intervention depending on the frequency and severity of the behaviour. In every case, those assigning sanctions will exercise fairness, common sense and appropriate discretion. Where possible, responses to bullying will include interventions that address: **RESTITUTION, RESOLUTION, and RECONCILIATION.**

RESTITUTION

Restitution = "fixing" what you did. Material damage is usually easier to fix than personal damage. Property may be replaced or repaired but emotional pain is harder to mend. An apology can be requested but can't be forced and is often insufficient. Accepting responsibility, admitting wrongness and beginning to mend relationships, are parts of restitution.

RESOLUTION

Resolution = how to keep an incident from happening again. Determine:

- what happened
- what the instigator did (incident was not an accident & harm was intended)
- what was the cause (anger, jealousy...)
- what can be learned

The process of resolution also includes understanding the consequences of the instigator's behaviour - the impact on the other person, the consequences to relationships, and impact on the instigator.

RECONCILIATION

Reconciliation = process of healing with the person harmed
Objective = for both parties to live together within the school community.

Unless there is an attempt to develop remorse and empathy, healing doesn't occur and the bullied person gets no relief or support. A plan must be developed and a commitment made to honour it, make restitution and live up to those resolutions.

Procedures

When system staff observe an act of bullying it is expected they will take immediate, appropriate steps to intervene. All reports of bullying will be investigated fully and take into account knowledge of previous student behaviour. Reviews may involve: interviews with students, parents and staff, perusal of school records, contacting previous schools, and identifying relevant family issues.

- students contact the teacher, counsellor or other staff member
- complaints of discriminatory, harrassing, and bullying language and behaviours are taken seriously, documented and dealt with in a timely manner
- confidentiality will be maintained by all parties, as agreed, relative to further action
- concerns may be communicated with a professional staff member or principal. Professional staff will inform the principal
- where possible, the concern should clearly outline the cause or issue and describe the incident, date(s), witnesses
- principal or designate will investigate and apply appropriate interventions

Code of Conduct

The code of conduct focuses on helping students learn how to resolve issues peacefully, develop empathy, and contribute to welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments that respect diversity, and foster a sense of belonging and a positive sense of self.

FOR DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES IN THE PALLISER REGIONAL SCHOOLS DISTRICT, PLEASE VISIT:

www.pallisersd.ab.ca/about-us/documents

THE SCHOOL ACT SETS OUT THE GOALS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALBERTA'S ECS-12 EDUCATION SYSTEM. THIS DOCUMENT CAN BE ACCESSED AT:

education.alberta.ca/legislation-and-regulations/school-act/