



LITTLE FLOWERS BABYHOUSE & PRE-SCHOOL: BULLYING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Principal Statement - Bullying is an international problem that knows no class distinction, ethnic boundaries or age.

It is the basic right of all children to receive their education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse.
It is the basic right of our employees to feel respected, safe and protected in their workplace.

Little Flowers Babyhouse & Pre-school has a responsibility to create and maintain a secure and safe environment at school for the pupils who are in our care as well as for our workforce.

To ensure this, an anti-bullying policy has been put in place. We aim to:

- ✓ to create an environment in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.
- ✓ to deliver a safe and secure environment where all children can play and learn without fear or anxiety.
- ✓ to produce a consistent response to any bullying incidents that may occur.
- ✓ to protect our staff from unacceptable forms of verbal and other abuse.

What is bullying

The most obvious forms of bullying are repeated hitting, shoving, chasing or threatening or other actions that cause bodily harm. Other, less easy to define forms include name-calling, teasing, telling lies, excluding, destroying another's belongings and verbal abuse.

Please remember that **biting** is often related to **normal age related development and/or sensory integration difficulties** and it cannot automatically be assumed that this is bullying – each case must be judged on its own merit and be dealt with accordingly under the guidance of our team of trained and experienced therapists.

Is there a difference between playing and bullying?

Play builds the imagination, develops physical coordination and teaches children about rules, roles and possibilities. Occasional roughness between young children is a perfectly normal part of play.

Aggressive behaviour, especially if uncommon or for a short period of time, is often the result of physical or emotional stress caused by things like hunger, anger, fatigue, illness, divorce, death or a new sibling.

Bullying is very different from occasional rowdiness or behaviour problems under unusual circumstances. **Bullying** is repeated roughness or repeated planned victimization. The intention of bullying is to cause deliberate hurt, or to gain more power and control. Bullying occurs consistently between the same children, with each consistently playing the same role – aggressor or victim.

Procedures to deal with bullying

We believe that our children must stand up for themselves; however, they are not encouraged to harm another child, either verbally or physically. As a result we have endorsed the phrase: **'Stop It- I Don't Like It'**.

Children are coached to use this phrase when a peer says or does something which makes them feel hurt or uncomfortable, following which the child must report the bullying child to an adult.

When an incident of bullying or suspected bullying is reported, the school will respond in a manner that is appropriate to the incident. **The following steps will usually be taken, depending on the nature of the incident:**

Step 1

Any child who is bullied will be encouraged to report the incident to their class Teacher. The level of intervention will be guided by the seriousness of the situation. At this point a discussion, without punishment will take place. The Class Teacher will manage and document this step and report it to the Principle. The incident will be recording in the school's incident book.

Step 2

If the same child/children continue to display unacceptable behaviour, a first warning will be issued and the child will be sent to 'Time Out' for a duration which is appropriate for their age.

Step 3

If the same child/children continue to display unacceptable behaviour he/she will be sent to the Principal's office for 'Time Out' for a discussion and will spend a period (which will be at the discretion of the Principal) in the office excluded from play time. The parent's will be informed of the offence by the class teacher and we strongly suggest that the appropriate corrective action starts at home at this point in time.

Step 4

Continued unacceptable behaviour (bullying, rough play, verbal abuse etc...) will result in a Second Warning. The parent/s will be notified and the child will be suspended from free play for duration of no less than 2 consecutive days.

At this time the school might, at its discretion wish to refer the child to a Play therapist or Occupational therapist for more intense intervention. The parents will be contacted and the specific situation will be discussed in detail and an action plan devised.

Step 5

Following the above mentioned steps and the failure of:

1. the child's continued inability to adhere to school rules
2. the parents refusal to consider outside intervention or to give their co-operation,
will result in the parents being requested to remove their child from Little Flowers Babyhouse & Pre-school.

Other instances in which a parent might be asked to remove their child from Little Flowers Babyhouse & Pre-school:

1. Verbal- and/or any other form of abuse towards a staff member by a parent/s or pupil
2. Hitting, spitting and/or any other form of aggression /disrespect shown to a staff member by a pupil on an ongoing/regular basis

Recommended procedure for Parents in the case of their child being bullied OR in the case of their child being the bully.

- ✓ Remember there are always two sides to every situation - be prepared to hear the other versions of what happened. This can be a very emotional time for you as a parent. It is, therefore, essential that you remain as objective as possible.
- ✓ Children have relatively short memories as well as their perception of time not yet being fully developed. As a result, should an incident occur, it is best to promptly report the incident to the school within 2-3 days of it occurring to ensure that the most accurate follow-up and intervention takes place.
- ✓ Do not bring outside incidences to the school.
- ✓ Co- operate with the school. Once a course of action has been agreed upon allow the school time to implement it and keep your side of the bargain at home. Consequent behaviour and team work between the school and the parents are essential tools for success.
- ✓ Should you notice your child displaying different behavioural patterns, we ask that you assess whether or not there has been a change in the home environment before assuming there has been an issue at school. E.g. one parent has been away for a 2 week business trip, a relative has been staying with you and the attention has not only been on the child etc

