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The King's School Linbro Park Bullying Policy

1) General viewpoint of The King's School Linbro Park:

As children interact with one another there will inevitably be some who feel the need to bully others. Bullying can be defined as one individual or group deliberately creating physical, mental and/or emotional distress in another individual or group. The causes of bullying are many and varied, and a bullying situation calls for a comprehensive response from the school, the parents and the learners themselves.

We will endeavour to assist learners who experience problems relating to bullying. Our emphasis will be on creating an environment where learners who are being bullied can receive assistance and where learners who are bullying can be helped to replace their unacceptable behaviour with more positive behaviour. We are responsible for the safety of our whole school and we will initiate disciplinary measures where and when required to deal with those who repeatedly engage in bullying. Each case will be dealt with on its own merits, but we do present a basic guideline in this document of the policies with regards intervention strategies. This document can and will be changed and adapted as time progresses if required.

2) Mission:

The vision of The King's School Linbro Park is to provide a Christ-centred environment that enables every child to access his or her full potential. Bullying poses a threat to the environment of the school and to the ability of individual learners reaching their full potential. The motivation for this policy is to create a safe and secure environment with definite direction for all learners, staff and parents to assist with preventative education strategies. The policy includes definitive guidelines for intervention strategies for people who have been identified either as those who are bullying or those who are being bullied. Assistance is available to all, and the responsibility lies with the individual to make use of these resources. The policy will, therefore, assist with the following:

General:

- To aid, support and educate all staff and learners in the maintenance of a safe and nurturing environment which encourages development of the coping skills necessary for successful human interaction.
- To provide a process for discovery, evaluation, monitoring and remediation of problematic and potentially harassing behaviour.
- To provide an easily accessible process by which children can report harassment and receive adult support.

- To provide a process wherein the harassing learner receives support/education in learning alternative behaviours or discipline/consequences should harassment continue.
- To provide a process where learners, parents and staff may check on the status of a harassment problem and receive ongoing assurance that it is being addressed.

Learners:

- It will help create a safe environment for education at the school.
- It will lay down definitive boundaries.
- It will highlight consequences of choices made.
- It will give definitive procedures for all so there can be no misunderstanding as to what the individual and the school should do in situations where bullying is taking place.

Parents:

- It will give parents clear information with regards strategies to be followed by the school should their child be identified as one who is bullying others or as one who is being bullied.
- It will create a platform for a united front to be developed between educators, learners and parents alike to address the issue of bullying.
- It will highlight strategies with regards education and prevention programmes for parents.

Educators:

- It will facilitate consistency in dealing with bullying.
- It will facilitate consistency in prevention and education strategies.
- It will create a policy that is realistic and sustainable and easy to enforce.

3) Implementation and sustainability:

The policy will be enforced through the authority structures already in place in the school, and all staff and leaders within the school must be dedicated to the process and be seen to be enforcing the policy. The structured interventions described in this policy will be implemented and must be adhered to consistently.

The whole school community must be made aware of the policy, and all learners and their parents must sign it upon the learner's acceptance into the school. A compulsory parents' evening will be scheduled and specifically geared to educate the parents on the school's code of conduct of which this policy forms part. Parents of all new learners will also be informed of the school's code of conduct of which this policy forms part. All parents are invited to assist the school with implementing and sustaining the policy.

The prevention campaigns must be proactive and effective. Knowledge of the contents of the policy will be examined as part of the life orientation curriculum.

4) Policy:

The approach of The King's School Linbro Park to the issue of bullying is two-fold. The approach includes (a) prevention and education and (b) structured intervention.

4.1) Prevention and education:

Our first approach will be one of prevention education. The school undertakes to **educate** (through guidance lessons, life skills), to **inform** (using outside speakers,

exhibitions) and to **guide and support** (through counselling, peer-counselling). These actions, however, are intended to supplement (not replace) the responsibility of parents or guardians in educating, informing, guiding and supporting their child(ren) in relation to appropriate social interaction.

Appropriate social interaction forms part of the Life Orientation curriculum so an annual strategy must be adopted to address this subject adequately. This could include the use of outside organisation that specialise in this field. Projects and work assignments on interpersonal communication and relationships. Course tests on the subject. Visual aids around the school like posters and multi-media tools will be utilised.

A peer-helper/counsellor initiative within the student body gives learners the opportunity to seek help from trusted and informed peers. Where necessary support groups among learners will offer assistance in dealing with bullying related issues. And all learners will be expected to display concern for one another – approaching correct channels if concerned about another.

4.2) Structured Intervention:

Each case will be considered on its individual merits taking into account:

- The nature of the incident
- The learner/student's school and family history
- Cultural background
- Mental health and intellectual development
- Any other relevant information including progress reports, performance attendance of extra murals etc.

The school has defined two major strategic intervention models, one to be implemented in Grades 1 – 6, and the other to be implemented in Grades 7 – 12. Copies of all forms and letters used in these processes are attached as appendices to this document.

Intervention for Grades 1 - 6: The following steps will be taken in the case of bullying being reported. Steps 1 and 2 may be interchanged or combined. Steps 1 through 3 require no parental involvement, however, steps 4 through 6 must be undertaken in conjunction with the parents. The process begins with step 1 on the first report of bullying. Each successive report of bullying will result in the next step being taken. The intent of these steps is to help those engaging in bullying activities to realise that this behaviour is unacceptable and to choose to change their behaviour.

Step 1: A **Behaviour Warning** is issued by the educator to the learner(s) engaging in bullying activities and the **Learner Response Choice** is filled in by the learner(s). The educator may help the learner(s) fill in the Learner Response Choice if necessary.

Step 2: A **Hurtful Behaviour Report** is filled in by the learner being bullied.

Step 3: **Mediation** takes place between the learner(s) engaging in bullying activities and the learner(s) being bullied. This mediation will be facilitated by a member of the school staff.

Step 4: A **No-Contact Contract** is signed between the learner(s) engaging in bullying activities and the learner(s) being bullied. The signing of this contract will be facilitated by a member of the school staff.

Step 5: A **Harassment Warning** will be issued by the principal to the learner(s) engaging in bullying activities.

Step 6: A **Determination of Harassment** letter will be sent to the parents of the learner(s) engaging in bullying activities. The parents will be required to meet with the principal and class teacher. A **Final Warning** will be issued by the principal to the learner(s) engaging in bullying activities.

Step 7: If the learner(s) continue to engage in bullying activities, they will be asked to **leave the school**.

Intervention for Grades 7 – 12: The following steps will be taken in the case of bullying being reported. Steps 1 requires no parental involvement, however, steps 2 through 4 must be undertaken in conjunction with the parents. The process begins with step 1 on the first report of bullying. Each successive report of bullying will result in the next step being taken. The intent of these steps is to help those engaging in bullying activities to realise that this behaviour is unacceptable and to choose to change their behaviour.

Step 1: A **Behaviour Warning** is issued by the educator to the learner(s) engaging in bullying activities and a **Learner Response Choice** is filled in by the learner(s). The educator may help the learner(s) fill in the Learner Response Choice if necessary.

Step 2: **Mediation** takes place between the learner(s) engaging in bullying activities and the learner(s) being bullied. This mediation will be facilitated by a member of the school staff.

Step 3: A **Harassment Warning** will be issued by the principal to the learner(s) engaging in bullying activities.

Step 4: A **Determination of Harassment** letter will be sent to the parents of the learner(s) engaging in bullying activities. The parents will be required to meet with the principal and class teacher. A **Final Warning** will be issued by the principal to the learner(s) engaging in bullying activities.

Step 5: If the learner(s) continue to engage in bullying activities, they will be asked to **leave the school**.

5) Conclusion

The King's School Linbro Park Bullying Policy is for the benefit of all parties concerned. The aim of the policy is to assist, educate and guide learners on the issue of bullying. The school will assist in the counselling of learners if and where necessary.

No member of the student body of the school is exempt from the consequences spelt out in this policy. It is the responsibility of the learner and parents to familiarise themselves with the contents of this policy.