



Protocol to prevent bullying at DENISE (Primary and Secondary)

Goal

The goals of our anti bully protocol are that all students feel secure at school and will be able to develop in the best possible way with resilience, sense of ethic, communicative skills, thoughtfulness, cooperation and respect for each other and the environment.

We achieve these goals with our ICC/IPC/IMYC-lessons, supported by the Kwink-program, through which we teach our students to:

- communicate and cooperate with each other
- be respectful and open
- solve problems together
- look at problems from different perspectives

Behavior code

At DENISE we do have a behavior code which we use to evaluate the way we act:

At DENISE we treat everybody with respect: parents, students, teachers and anybody who is our guest. We treat each other as we want to be treated ourselves. We don't judge each other, but rather go in dialogue. We ask questions and listen. We confront each other and offer help. Together we take responsibility for a safe learning and working atmosphere.

How do we define bullying?

Because bullying is present at almost any school in one way or another we will make an agreement at DENISE about how we define and treat bullying.

Bullying is the systematic psychic or physical violation of a student or group of students towards one or more classmates who are incapable of defending him/her/themselves.

The key points of this definition that distinguish bullying from play are the following:

- Bullying is systematic, repeatedly and deliberate.
- There is a difference in power between the bully and the bullied.
- Bullying has serious consequences for the bullied.
- The bullied cannot stand up for him/herself.

In what ways do we see bullying at school?

- Calling names
- Unpleasant remarks about background, belief or personal circumstances
- Hateful remarks about looks and clothes
- Pushing and pulling, kicking and hitting or other physical assault
- Exclusion, isolation
- Stealing of personal properties
- Telling lies or gossip about students

Examples of digital bullying are:

- Calling names or making fun via Facebook, e-mail or SMS
- Posting photos on the internet without permission
- Sending threatening emails.



Who is involved in bullying cases?

1. The bully
2. The bullied
3. The other students in class
4. The teacher
5. The parents
6. School management

The other students in class are to be divided in sub-groups:

1. The active frightened: those who join the bullying out of fear (afraid of being bullied themselves if they don't join)
2. The active-calculate parties: those who join the bullying to be better off themselves
3. The passive: those who do not join the bullying but also do not take action to avoid it
4. The unknown: those who do not see what is happening (most have their own group of friends apart from the rest of the class).
5. The protectors: Those who (try to) protect the bullied.

To treat bullying it is important to know which students belong to which sub-group..

The causes of bullying

When bullying takes place the blame can't be put only on the bully. Personal problems of students and the cause of social-emotional development are also important to be addressed, both for the bully as well as the bullied. Research has shown that bad relations between students and a non-democratic environment at school makes bullying possible. At a group level the lack of balance in power also makes bullying possible as well as insufficient exemplary behavior of teachers.

The effects of bullying

The effects of bullying can be major. Victims can be very unhappy, scared and suffer from reduced self-confidence. Victims also suffer from low self-esteem, retreat en feeling lonely. Victims are afraid to stand up for themselves and feel responsible for being bullied. Their attitude changes over time, they become skittish, stressed and physically stiff and clumsy. Some kids start hyperventilating, have headaches or other pains and start bed wetting. Social and emotional development becomes disrupted. Depending on treatment victims can be damaged for life.

Signals of bullying

Early recognition of bullying is essential. Students tend not to speak about bullying in class. While some may know bullying is taking place, nobody dares to tell the teacher out of fear to be the 'snitch'. Parents often do not know how to bring the subject to the teachers attention. For that reason it is important to agree with students and parents that telling someone about bullying is never wrong. It is always important that the teacher knows. Students have to be aware that they can talk to the teacher safely and that they will be heard. Parents need to realize that bullying will not be tolerated by the teacher and that cooperation between parents and teacher is important.

The teacher always has to be alert to signs of bullying in the group. Anytime there is a sign of bullying the teacher will investigate what is going on immediately.



How do we recognize bullying?

Besides what's addressed in the last paragraph we recognize bullying by the following warning signs:

- a child standing alone during the break
- a child seeking regularly contact with the teacher
- a child doesn't want to go outside
- a child only plays with younger children
- a child has fewer friends over time and starts to be alone
- unpleasant sounds of children in the group a the child shares something during circle time
- when everything a child does make others react unpleasantly
- a game 'already started' when a child wants to join, while other kids are welcomed at a later time
- gossip about a child circulates in the group

Signs for parents:

- a child does not want to go to school
- a child complains about all kinds of pain which disappears during holidays
- a child does not want to wear certain clothes to school
- a child has a bad temper/anger
- a child has nightmares
- a child starts wetting the bed
- a child is never invited to birthday parties
-

Bullying prevention.

There will be less bullying in a climate with clear expectations of how we treat one another, where differences are accepted and problems do not end up in fights but rather dialogue. Positive modeling from the teacher is highly important.

At DENISE we believe it is important to prevent bullying. Therefore we work on the social-emotional development of students in a safe group environment even if there are no signs of bullying. Furthermore we:

- Talk about class rules and how we communicate
- Will join the Kwink-program
- We address social-emotional subjects via ICC/IPC/IMYC and drama lessons
- Teach about taking part in the global multi-cultural society we live in
- Offer special training programs for children who need help

The 'stop-method'

In all classes we use the 'stop-method': when ever a child says 'stop' to an other child doing 'something' the child does not want, the other child has to stop. Any child or teacher can make the line very clear by using the 'stop-method.' Anytime a child crosses that line the teacher will act in an appropriate way.



Bullying is a subject to be discussed

The teacher talks about bullying throughout the year, including when bullying is not taking place. The teacher points out that:

- students know they are all responsible for the atmosphere in class
- children know how and when to go to the teacher
- children know that it is alright to talk about bullying and that they should always speak with the teacher should it occur

How to respond to bullying

Whenever bullying takes place the school will take the following actions:

1. Help students to resolve their problems together.
2. When students are not capable of resolving the problems themselves they go to the teacher.
3. The teacher will organize a dialogue and help to stop the bullying. New agreements will be made.
4. The teacher will evaluate the results. If they are not satisfied, a plan will be made with parents, student support coordinator and teacher to resolve the issues.