

ANTI-CORPORAL PUNISHMENT POLICY

The Right of children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE, 2009), clearly states that no child shall be subjected to “physical punishment or mental harassment” in schools. Those officials that contravene this provision shall be liable for disciplinary action under service rules applicable to them.

It is not easy to define corporal punishment as it involves humiliation and insult which a child feels as a subject. Considering the millions of ways in which punishment is perpetrated on children in contemporary times, it is impossible to exhaust all the forms of insinuations and violence. However, following behaviour has been categorically put under Anti corporal policy of the school.

PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT is understood as any action that causes pain, hurt/injury and discomfort to a child, however light. Examples of physical punishment include but are not restricted to the following:

- Causing physical harm to children by hitting, kicking, scratching, pinching, biting, pulling the hair, boxing ears, smacking, slapping, and spanking or with any implement (cane, stick, shoe, chalk, dusters, belt, whip, giving electric shock etc.)
- Making children assume an uncomfortable position (standing on the bench, standing against the wall in a chair-like position, standing with a schoolbag on the head, holding ears through legs, kneeling etc.)
- Forced ingestion of anything (for example: washing soap, mud, chalk, hot spices etc.)
- Detention in the classroom, library, toilet or any closed space in the school.

MENTAL HARASSMENT is understood as any non-physical treatment that is detrimental to the academic and psychological well-being of a child. It includes but is not restricted to the following:

- Sarcasm that hurts or lowers the child’s dignity; Calling names and scolding using humiliating adjectives, intimidation;
- Using derogatory remarks for the child, including pinning of slogans;
- Ridiculing the child with regard to his/her background or status or parental occupation or caste;
- Ridiculing the child with regard to his/her health status or that of the family – especially HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis;
- Belittling a child in the classroom due to his/her inability to meet the teacher’s expectations of academic achievement;
- Punishing or disciplining a child, not recognizing that most children who perform poorly in academics are actually children with special needs. Such children could have conditions like learning disability, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, mild developmental delay etc.
- Using punitive measures to correct a child and even labeling him/her as difficult; such as a child with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder who may not only fare poorly in academics, but also pose a problem in management of classroom behaviors;
- ‘Shaming’ the child to motivate the child to improve his performance and
- Ridiculing a child with developmental problems such as learning difficulty or a speech disorder, such as, stammering or speech articulation disorder.

DISCRIMINATION is understood as prejudiced views and behaviour towards any child because of her/his caste/gender, occupation or region and non-payment of fees or for being a student admitted under the 25% reservation to disadvantaged groups or weaker sections of society under the RTE, 2009. It can be latent; manifest; open or subtle. It includes but is not restricted to the following:

- Bringing social attitudes and prejudices of the community into the school by using belittling remarks against a specific social group or gender or ability/disability;
- Assigning different duties and separate seating in schools based on caste, community or gender prejudices for example, cleaning of toilets assigned by caste; task of making tea;
- Commenting on academic ability based on caste or community prejudices and
- Denying a facility like library books or uniforms or sports facilities to a child or group of children based on caste, community, religion or gender.

SCHOOL POLICY OF BBPS, NEELBAD, BHOPAL

The concept of punishment has always nursed a sense of fear and learning does not occur in a fear prone environment. It is therefore imperative that schools should adopt such methods by which the learner develops a sense of self-confidence and self-dependence. On certain occasions, when the behaviour and attitude of the students is acceptable, it is important to find out the reasons for such errant behaviour and counsel them appropriately rather than to punish them straight away.

Corporal punishment signals to the child that a way to settle interpersonal conflicts is to use physical force and inflict pain. Such children may in turn resort to such behavior themselves. They may also fail to develop trusting, secure relationships with adults and fail to evolve the necessary skills to settle disputes or wield authority in less violent ways. Supervising adults who will-fully humiliate children and punish by force and pain are often causing more harm than they prevent.

Research on corporal punishment has shown that it is indeed harmful. Many other methods of discipline are effective in promoting self-control, eliminating undesirable behaviors and promoting desired behaviors in children. The school recommends non-violent methods of addressing inappropriate behavior, such as behavior management and school-wide positive behavior supports.

The School believes that there is no scope for such punishments in the learning environment and the teachers should adopt strategies by which the learner realizes one's mistake, if any, rather than face a corporal punishment by the institution. Love reinforces confidence and once the learner believes that the school atmosphere is permeating with love from the teachers, they will desist from indulging any acts that would negate the environment that has been built.

THE SCHOOL HAS A ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY ON CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.