

A principle for civilized language

Purpose

To have a safe, friendly, and tolerant school, free from offensive and abusive language.

Goal

Profanity is generally regarded as inappropriate in professional settings, and then by extension, in the classroom and playground. Schools also teach children how to be a functioning human being, and how to treat people with dignity. Therefore, offensive and abusive language is not acceptable. The goal is for both the school, pupils and their families to moderate their use of offensive and abusive language.

School responsibility

To practice our school values, particularly community and resilience.

To teach and guide pupils to communicate respectfully with each other through appropriate use of language, hand gestures, and body language.

To identify the possible cause of the bad language, for example, is the student testing boundaries or ignorant? Is the student not accustomed to adjusting their language to suit the situation? Is the student seeking attention? In situations such as these, communication and education are the best approach. For example, taking the student aside to speak with them, or contacting the home.

To take a strict approach to offensive and abusive language. For example, where the intent is to offend or hurt through the use of racist, sexist, homophobic or similar language.

To assess if use of bad language is a sign of bullying or poor class dynamics. This should be referred to the principal immediately.

Parent responsibility

To support the school in accepting that school is not a place for foul, abusive and offensive language.

To support the school by also educating their child to recognise the correct time and place for swearing.

To promote cultural awareness by recognising and educating their child that what is acceptable in one language may be offensive in another.

Student responsibility

To moderate their own language at school and online with people from the school.

To not accept others using inappropriate language that can upset or be seen as offensive to others.

To activate the student council through 'Dare not to Swear' campaigns.

Success criteria for this principle

Pupils speaking and listening to each other nicely whether they are at play, in the classrooms, walking the halls, or communicating with each other online.

Related documents:

- Code of conduct (2023)
- Bullying prevention and action plan (2023)
- Achieving Cultural Competence (School Board principle)