

Rag and bully in school, your name will be off rolls

CBSE Issues Fresh Norms For Graded Response To Ragging

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FIGHTING THE MENACE

➤ School prospectus must declare **bullying is strictly prohibited**; any such act will be punished

➤ Each school to have an **anti-bullying committee** with vice-principal, a senior teacher, school doctor, counsellor, PTA representative, school management representative, legal representative & peer educators as its members

➤ A **counsellor** each for

GUIDELINES ISSUED BY CBSE



primary, middle, secondary & senior secondary sections

➤ Students to be sensitized about **respecting privacy and dignity of others**

➤ **Role of parents to be reinforced** in parent-teacher meetings

➤ Curriculum for teacher training courses to include **topics on sensitization & prevention of bullying**

➤ Schools may keep a **complaint/suggestion box & monitor the feedback**

PROMINENT CASES

➤ **Aug 2014:** Son of a Bihar minister found unconscious in his hostel room at a public residential school in Gwalior. 14-year-old's family alleged he was bullied and beaten up by his seniors

➤ **Mar 2014:** A mobile video shows Class VI students of a south Delhi public school hitting a Class VII student

WHAT'S BULLYING

1 Direct: Through physical intimidation or attacks, verbal abuse, unwanted attention and advances, damaging property

2 Indirect: Spreading malicious rumours

3 Cyber-bullying: Sending unpleasant SMSS, photographs or emails, to victim or others

New Delhi: Central Board of Secondary Education has issued a fresh set of guidelines to curb incidents of bullying and ragging in schools. It says "the responsibility of preventing any undesirable aspect of bullying and ragging rests on all stakeholders, which includes the head of the institution teacher, non-teaching staff, students, parents and local community".

For the first time, the board recommends a "graded" response system to address the cases of bullying. It says, "A comprehensive guidelines may be developed for the school management, which includes various actions and penalties which may be taken as per observation and understanding the gravity of the misconduct."

These actions include verbal/written warning, suspension from attending classes/school for a specified period, withholding or cancelling the results, imposition of fine up to a specified amount an finally expulsion/rustication from school in rarest of rare cases. The option of transferring a student from one school to another may also be looked into, the board says.

According to the guidelines issued on Monday, boards with a message of strict prohibition of bullying and ragging should be displayed prominently on the campus. Other measures include con-

stitution of an anti-bullying committee and mandatory inclusion of topics on sensitization and prevention of bullying in schools in the curriculum for teachers' training.

The latest move comes in the wake of the growing menace of ragging across the country. Incidents like the suicide attempt by the son of a Bihar minister after he was allegedly ragged at a prominent residential school in Gwalior or a Kolkata schoolboy being forced to drink urine by classmates have been widely reported by the media.

Taking a serious note of such incidents, CBSE says, "Recent research in school

education indicates that a major issue and cause for concern among students in schools is bullying. Bullying/ragging is a damaging feature in schools. Nature of bullying can be diverse and complex. It

GROWING PERIL

is often not recognized as a major problem and assumed negligible and therefore not much attention is paid to its occurrence."

Issued by Sadhana Parashar, director (academic, research, training and innovation), the CBSE statement says, "It is critical to promote an atmosphere of confidence

and trust among every student and to provide a platform to students where they can raise their concerns. A confident reporting system may be established that allows students to report victimization." The board also urges schools to keep a complaint/suggestion box and monitor the feedback regularly.

It further says that the responsibility and authority of school administration must be defined. "The implications of neglect must also be clearly defined. School's decision, taken after following process of fair investigation, should not be ordinarily challengeable."