Risk factor: Difficulties with fellow students: harassment

*A person is bullied or harassed when he or she repeatedly and over a certain period is subjected to negative actions from one or more person (*The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, Udir.no)

Bullying of young people consists of actions by adults and/or young people that prevent the experience of belonging, being a meaningful participant in the community, and the opportunity for involvement (Lund, Helgeland, Kovac, Nome, Cameron & Godfredsen, 2015, s. 45).

Strategies for working with a good psychosocial environment:

1) **Behavior Regulation.** Caring control: Helping students to behave in ways that promote a good environment: Clear classroom management and socialized supervision.

➢ Classroom Community Building: Arrange regular activities that promote cooperation and unity among students, such as group projects, team-building exercises, and class outings.

➢ Establish Clear Expectations: Set clear rules and expectations for behavior from the beginning. Make sure students understand the importance of respect, cooperation, and kindness.

➢ Create a Welcoming Environment: Decorate the classroom in a way that makes it feel inviting and inclusive. Use students' work to decorate the walls and create a sense of ownership.

➢ Regular Class Meetings: Hold regular class meetings where students can discuss any issues, share their thoughts, and work together to solve problems. This encourages open communication and collaboration.

➢ Collaborative Learning: Use group work and collaborative projects to promote teamwork and cooperation. Assign roles within groups to ensure that everyone participates and feels valued.

➢ Celebrate Diversity: Acknowledge and celebrate the diverse backgrounds and cultures of your students. This can be done through multicultural activities, discussions, and projects.

➢ Positive Reinforcement: Recognize and reward positive behavior and achievements. This can be done through praise, certificates, or a classroom reward system.

➢ Build Relationships: Take the time to get to know your students individually. Show interest in their lives, listen to their concerns, and provide support when needed.

➢ Encourage Student Voice: Give students opportunities to express their opinions and ideas. This can be done through class discussions, suggestion boxes, or student-led activities.

➢ Foster a Growth Mindset: Encourage students to see challenges as opportunities for growth. Praise effort and perseverance and teach them that mistakes are a natural part of learning.

➢ By implementing these strategies, you can create a classroom environment where students feel safe, respected, and valued. This will not only help prevent bullying but also promote a positive and productive learning experience for everyone.

2) **Relationship work; close to the student:** Includes a positive view of students where we reinforce the positive and prioritize relationship work. Being relationship-oriented is a strong ideal among teachers. Good relationships with students characterize good teachers. Some ideas for Relationship-Orientated Classrom Management in Schools:

➢ Social Skills Programs: Implement programs that teach students and teachers important social skills, such as empathy, communication, and conflict resolution.

➢ Build Trust: Create a safe and supportive environment where students feel seen and heard. This can be achieved through regular conversations and showing genuine interest in each student.

➢ Empathy and Understanding: Show empathy and understanding for students' feelings and challenges. This can help build strong relationships and a supportive classroom environment.

➢ Student Involvement: Involve students in decision-making processes and give them the opportunity to influence their own learning and school life. This can increase engagement and ownership of the learning process.

3) **Community activities; belonging and inclusion:** Social activities to strengthen community, cohesion, and inclusion. Measures here can include social activities for students at the start of the school year, activities during recess, projects that encompass culture and sports, social activities with shared interests, activities for students who have social challenges. A sense of "we" can promote a good environment in the class and prevent a negative class and school environment. How can we promote this? There is a need for approaches to bullying that encompass the entire learning environment and do not focus solely on individual factors (Eriksen og Lyng, 2015, s. 150).

➢ Icebreakers and Team-Building Activities: Start the school year with icebreakers and team-building activities to help students get to know each other and build trust.

➢ Student Councils and Participation: Give students the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes that affect the school environment. This can increase their sense of ownership and responsibility.

➢ Community Service Projects: Engange students in community service projects that benefit others. This can foster a sense of empathy and collective effort.

➢ Anti-Bullying Campaigns: Organize campaigns and theme weeks that focus on bullying and how to prevent it. Involve both students and teachers in planning and execution.

➢ Buddy Programs: Create programs where older students mentor younger students, which can help foster a supportive and inclusive environment.

➢ Parental Involvement: Involve parents in the efforts to prevent bullying by organizing informational meetings and workshops on the topic.

➢ Safe Zones: Establish safe zones at school where students can go if they feel unsafe or need someone to talk to.

➢ Anonymous Reporting Systems: Implement systems where students can report bullying anonymously, so the school can address the issue without students feeling exposed.

Fulfillment of the activity duty §12-4 in Norway:

Duty to ensure a safe and good psychosocial school environment (activity duty and documentation duty). Everyone working at the school must monitor how the students are doing and intervene if someone violates a student. Everyone working at the school must report to the principal if they suspect or become aware that a student does not have a safe and good school environment. This also applies when a student says that he or she does not feel safe and good. The school must promptly investigate the matter and rectify the situation with appropriate measures. The principal must report to the municipality or county authority in serious cases.

The school must create a written plan for measures in a case. The plan must include:

a. what problem the measures will solve

b. which measures the school has planned

c. when the measures will be implemented d. who will implement the measures

e. when the measures will be evaluated.

The school must document what is being done to fulfill the activity duty according to the first and second paragraphs, in the form and extent necessary.

Fulfilling the activity duty step by step:

Monitor → Intervene → Report → Investigate → Implement measures → Document

1) Duty to monitor: All adults in the school are highly attentive to what they see, hear, and experience in relation to individual students. This is a prerequisite for suspecting or becoming aware of bullying. Examples: Routines for supervision during recess. Providing everyone with the opportunity to express themselves throughout the day. Structured student conversations. Observation, systematization, and discussion with colleagues. Well-being surveys. Time to follow up.

2) Duty to intervene: Stop an ongoing situation and prevent harm to oneself and others. This may involve physical shielding and intervention, joining a conversation, regulating interactions,

clear expectations for behavior and rules. A situation may, but does not necessarily, lead to a warning.

3) Duty to report: When a student does not feel safe and secure, all staff have a duty to inform the principal. This applies both when there is suspicion of bullying and when there is knowledge of bullying. In serious cases, the principal must also report to the school owner, even when adults are bullying. Suspicion can be based on observations, messages from students, peers, parents, colleagues, and others. And also, activities on social media.

4) Duty to investigate: In case of suspicion or knowledge that a student does not have a safe and good school environment, the school must promptly investigate the matter: Map out incidents and scope. Single incidents or systematic bullying require different measures. It can be difficult for a teacher to interpret whether statements or actions are offensive or humorous. Here, it is important to focus on the student's experience, not the teacher's interpretation. (Refer to the child's right to be heard Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 12)

5) Duty to implement measures: When a student says that the school environment is not safe and good, the school must, as far as appropriate measures are available, ensure that the student has a safe and good school environment. The same applies when an investigation shows that a student does not have a safe and good school environment.

An initial meeting between the student, parents, contact teacher, management, and possibly other participants is held to listen to concerns, establish a trust relationship, and gain acceptance for implementing measures. *A draft action plan* should describe the problem, the measures the school plans to implement, when the measures will be implemented, who is responsible, and when the measures will be evaluated. How the measures will be evaluated should be specified. In a subsequent meeting, the involved parties review the points in the plan, note, and present results based on investigations. If the situation is safe, the process can be concluded. If not, the work continues, and new measures are developed.

6) Duty to document. Steps in the activity obligation are documented in writing: What measures are planned? What is being done to follow up on sub-obligations? What problems are the measures intended to solve? What measures has the school planned? When will the measures be implemented? Who will implement the measures? When will the measures be evaluated?