



To pupils at Bamble primary schools and their guardians

New Chapter 9a in the Education Act

In the spring of 2017, the Norwegian Parliament approved changes to Chapter 9a of the Education Act concerning the pupils' school environment. The twin aims of the new regulations in Chapter 9a are to strengthen the rights of pupils who are subjected to bullying, and to provide an effective instrument with which to combat bullying and negative school environments.

Bamble municipality's strategic plan for schools and pre-schools places a strong emphasis on the work to promote a positive school environment, and there is a very clear zero tolerance policy regarding offensive behaviour, bullying, harassment and discrimination in all schools in Bamble. Each and every pupil has an individual right to a secure psychosocial environment, and every school must work actively to safeguard this right.

What to do if you feel your school environment is not positive and secure:

- Tell an adult at the school immediately. Regardless of who you tell, they must then inform the head of the school. You can also tell the head yourself. You can tell them verbally, in writing or by e-mail. The school will then be obliged to investigate the matter. The aim of the investigation will be to find out all the facts of the situation and identify the factors that have influenced the pupil's perception of the school environment.
- Once the school has investigated the matter, it must implement measures to ensure a positive and secure school environment for everyone. The school must prepare an action plan which states what the problem is, the measures that the school has planned, when they will be implemented, who is responsible for implementing them and when the results of the measures will be evaluated. The views of the pupils involved must be taken into account when this action plan is prepared, and the pupils concerned must also be informed of the contents of the plan. The school must document what has been done, and those involved are entitled to see the documentation that is prepared.
- If the school fails to take the matter seriously or takes too long to do anything about it or if the measures that the school implements do not have the desired effect, you can report the matter to the County Governor. The County Governor can then order the school to identify suitable measures to resolve the matter. If necessary, the County Governor can also decide what the school should do him- or herself. It is a condition that the head has been notified of the matter and that at least one week has passed since the incident occurred.
- If the County Governor's decision does not have the desired effect or you disagree with it, you can appeal to the Directorate for Education and Training. The school office in Bamble will be able to help you with this.

See the Directorate for Education and Training's website at www.udir.no/laring-og-trivsel/skolemiljo/meld-mobbing/ for more guidance on what to do if you do not have a secure and positive school environment.

In order to create an inclusive school where every pupil feels secure and in control, every single employee, pupil and parent at the school must do their bit to ensure that the school remains free from bullying. Show that you care about your school and do your bit to ensure that every pupil has a positive school environment.

Yours sincerely,

Trond Gausnes
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Unit for Schools and Nurseries