

1. Rationale:

Every student has the right to be happy and safe, and to participate in all school activities in an environment which is free from harassment or bullying, and which promotes personal growth and positive self-esteem.

The definition for the purpose of this policy is... *Bullying is when a person is intentionally exposed regularly and over time to negative or harmful actions by one or more other people. Bullies are people who intimidate, exclude, threaten and/or hurt others repeatedly. Bullying is a clear form of harassment and may be verbal (name calling, threatening, taunting, malicious teasing, slandering), physical (hitting, kicking, pushing), or emotional (intentional exclusion, making faces, obscene gestures, manipulating friendship relationships). Bullying may occur in person or through mediums such as mobile phones and the Internet.*

2. Aims:

- To reinforce within the school community what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable.
- To ensure that everyone within the school community is alert to signs and evidence of bullying and has a responsibility to report it, whether as observer or victim, to a staff member.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up and that support is given to both the victim and perpetrator.
- To ensure that parents/carers, teachers and the community are aware of the school's position on bullying.

3. Implementation:

The school will adopt a four-phase approach to bullying.

1. Primary Prevention:

- Provide appropriate professional learning for staff to enable them to reinforce school expectations in regard to ensuring a safe learning environment.
- Have in place consistent structures relating to student behaviour and introduce others as seen to be appropriate.
- Directly and indirectly draw on the School Values as a guide for acceptable behaviours– Respect, Responsibility, Honesty, Resilience and Learning.
- Ensure student wellbeing is a priority that underpins effective student learning and behaviour
- Ensure parents, teachers, students and the community are aware of the school's position on bullying.
- Seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.
- Ensure that all staff continually reinforce and model the concept of caring for others and reinforce the rights of each person to feel safe.
- Provide programs that promote inclusiveness, resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving will form an integral part of our curriculum. In particular, assertiveness training and bystander training that builds skills in children to challenge and/or report unacceptable behaviour will be central to our curriculum.
- Promote community awareness through school website and newsletter relating to bullying, its characteristics and the school's programs and response.
- Clarification with students at the start of each year as part of the school start up program the types of bullying, as well as the consequences and impact of bullying.
- Specific play areas and supervising staff outside during recess and lunch break times.
- Use of Year 5/6 Student Attitudinal survey results in regard to Safety to inform school actions.
- Buddy system for Foundation students.

2. Early Intervention

- On a regular basis, classroom teachers are to remind students to report incidents involving themselves or others, and that reporting is not dobbing.
- Staff to record incidents of bullying, including names of bullies and victims so that individuals can be tracked.
- Parents encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem.
- Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems.
- All instances of suspected bullying or inappropriate behaviour must be responded to by staff.

- Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they suspect a bullying or behaviour problem.
- The school will reinforce with children the importance of appropriately reporting incidents of inappropriate behaviour involving themselves or others, and the imperative that staff respond appropriately and proportionally to each allegation consistent with the school's Student Code of Conduct, including the proper reporting and recording of the incident.
- Parents are to be contacted if their child is alleged to have been bullied or experienced inappropriate behaviour, or if their child appears to have behaved inappropriately or bullied someone else.
- Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems will occur as appropriate.

3. Intervention:

- Incidents of bullying or unacceptable behaviour must be reported, investigated by staff and documented appropriately.
- Serious incidents are those that include physical assault, sexual assault, criminal activity involving theft or serious damage of property, serious threats, racist bullying or homophobic bullying etc.
- Depending upon the nature of each incident, they may be also be reported to and investigated by police, reported to the Student Critical Incident Advisory Unit, and/or reported to the Department's Emergency and Security Management Unit.
- The school may contact support professionals such as Welfare officers, Welfare coordinators or Counsellors and/or Student Support Officers for assistance and support.
- Parents of students identified by others as bullies will be informed of allegations.
- Both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support.
- All repetitive or serious incidents must be brought to the attention of the principal class members of the school.
- The most appropriate staff member will contact parents of the targeted child. Principal class members will contact alleged perpetrators unless advised by police etc not to do so.
- Consequences of repetitive or serious incidents may include suspension, expulsion, loss of privileges, counselling, written apology, a Behaviour Contract, conciliation or any other consequences consistent with the school's Student Code of Conduct.
- A management strategy for all parties will be developed in consultation with the students and parents involved.

4. Post Violation:

It is important that appropriate strategies are put in place after the incident has been resolved for all students involved. Appropriate strategies may include:-

- conciliation meetings between all parties.
- ongoing monitoring of students involved.
- identification of an agreed key contact staff member for each student involved.
- follow-up meetings regarding each child's management strategy.
- ongoing communication with parents.
- counselling from appropriate agencies of support officers etc for both parties.
- reinforcement of positive behaviours and appropriate behaviour strategies.

4. Evaluation:

- *This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the school's three-year review cycle.*
- *The Student Attitudes to School Survey (Yrs 5-6) will be used to measure the three Student Relationships measures; Connectedness to Peers, Class Behaviour and Student Safety.*
- *Surveys relating to feeling safe at school may be administered at any grade level to gain further information relating to bullying.*

References and Related Documents:

1. <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/adviseddealingwithbullying.aspx>

This policy was ratified by School Council in May 2016