



## Bullying Policy

<b>Date</b>	<b>Term 2 2016</b>
<b>Signed</b>	<b>College of Teachers</b>
<b>Review</b>	<b>annually</b>

Ref: Behaviour Management Policy

### **Aims:**

Our aim is to reduce or eradicate bullying across the school and to ensure recognised procedures and strategies are implemented so that they work towards eliminating bullying, violence and unmanaged anger.

### **Rationale:**

All bullying, harassment and intimidation are unacceptable. The Dandenong Ranges Steiner School is committed to ensuring that all staff and students are able to work and learn in a safe environment, free from bullying, harassment and intimidation.

### **What is bullying?**

#### *There are some specific types of bullying behaviour:*

Bullying is repeated aggressive verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour by a person or group directed towards a less powerful person or group that is intended to cause harm, distress or fear.

It may involve any of:

- verbal or written abuse - such as targeted name-calling or jokes
- a hurtful action - either physical or psychological
- a power imbalance
- repetition
- an unjust use of power
- a sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim

- repeated aggression

## What is not bullying?

*There are also some behaviours, which, although they might be unpleasant or distressing, and need to be dealt with are not bullying:*

- Disagreements or mutual conflict - which involves a disagreement, but not an imbalance of power. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation
- Single-episode acts of meanness or physical aggression, or aggression directed towards different people, is generally not bullying
- Social rejection or dislike is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others

## Without limiting the preceding definitions, bullying may take any of the following forms:

1. **Intimidation:** This is any threat, verbal or physical action that frightens another. It includes:
  - physical: hitting, pushing, shoving, hair pulling or any intimidatory physical behaviour
  - psychological:
    - o verbal or written abuse - such as targeted name-calling, jokes, social banter, insults, name calling, teasing, threatening.
    - o non verbal – intimidatory body language, offensive gestures.
  - indirect: rumour-spreading, hurtful gossip, exclusion, social manipulation.
2. **Discrimination:** Treating people differently because of their identity including reasons of: race, ethnicity, gender or sexuality
3. **Sexual harassment or abuse:** This behaviour which is construed by the recipient as unwelcome or offensive and is either repeated or of a significant nature:
  - (a) use of words (either written or spoken) of a sexual nature;
  - (b) physical behaviour of a sexual nature.
4. **Cyberbullying** - targetted threats, intimidation, name-calling, jokes, social banter, insults, name calling, teasing, slander, either online or via mobile phone/tablet.

## Guidelines:

The school acknowledges that bullying can occur.

All forms of bullying are considered unacceptable as this can damage self-esteem and form a barrier to effective teaching and learning.

1. Complaints or observations of bullying will cause the **Process to Investigate Bullying** to come into effect.<sup>1</sup>
2. Students or any other persons alerting the school to acts of bullying will be protected from victimisation.
3. All parties involved in a complaint of bullying will be treated fairly with the complaint resolved as quickly as possible, with the feelings of all involved respected.
4. The parents or caregivers of pupils involved will be contacted and informed of the incident.
5. Monitoring and follow-up will take place to ensure the bullying ceases.
6. Students who are bullied and students who bully will receive support - and referrals will be made to counselling and/or mental health staff, when appropriate.
7. Notes and records will be kept of all meetings and discussions relating to incidents

## Education and Training

The staff, students and parent community will be informed about issues around prevention of harassment and bullying and the Bullying Policy will be published in newsletters and on the school's website.

The most positive outcomes for the students will be obtained when teachers, staff and parents work together to address these issues.

All students will be clearly informed of the school's approach to bullying - using methods and content appropriate to their age.

Classes will have programs to build pupils' confidence, develop self-esteem and enable pupils to assert themselves positively.

Methods used to address bullying will be shared with the whole school community. Implementation may be through:

- Class parent/teacher evenings

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<sup>1</sup> Comments about sexual harassment will be dealt with in accordance with our Sexual Harassment Policy.

- School newsletter
- A Parents' Guide to Preventing Bullying
- The Parents' Handbook
- Consultation with outside agencies

## **Determination of the occurrence of bullying**

The **Process to investigate Bullying** will be instigated if:

- a teacher, or other member of staff believes bullying to have occurred to any student.
- a parent brings a concern or complaint that bullying has occurred to their child.
- a student brings a complaint of bullying to a teacher or member of staff.

## **PROCESS TO INVESTIGATE BULLYING**

- The Educational Administrator will be informed and will ensure all appropriate measures will be put into place
- The complaint or observations will be entered into the school Incidents Register (an electronic database recording details about complaints), including all relevant details, including times, dates and students involved.
- An investigation will be commenced by either the student's Class Teacher or the Educational Administrator according to the circumstances and/or seriousness
- If, as a result of the investigation, bullying is deemed to have occurred then, depending upon the age of the students and/or the seriousness of the incident(s), an appropriate stage of the **Process to Address Bullying** will come into effect
- Depending on the seriousness of the bullying, there is more than one stage of consequences and the appropriate stage will be determined accordingly.
- Notes and records will be kept of all meetings and discussions relating to incidents

## **PROCESS TO ADDRESS BULLYING**

Each incident of bullying will be dealt with individually, according to the age of the students, the circumstances and the seriousness of the incident(s).

All teachers at the relevant campus, especially those on playground duty, will be asked to pay particular attention to the students involved, primarily through observation, to ensure support and minimisation of further incidents.

### **Support of student(s) being bullied:**

- Enabling the student to talk about the experience with their Class Teacher - with a parent(s) present if needed
- Parents of students concerned will be informed of the incident by the Class Teacher
- Ongoing support will be provided in the form of observations and further conversations, as needed

### **Student(s) who carried out bullying:**

#### **Stage 1 Actions**

Steps could include:

- Talking to the student about what happened. Aiming to discover why the incidents arose and discuss what was wrong with such behaviour and its possible consequences for both parties.
- Informing the parents of the student of the incident(s).
- The student would be expected to apologise for their behaviour - in writing if appropriate
- The student could receive an official warning, depending on their age and the overall circumstances
- The student demonstrating bullying behaviour may be excluded from the playground at break and/or play times for a period of time deemed appropriate
- Further work with the student might be arranged in order to change negative attitudes

## Stage 2 Actions

Steps could include:

- The student would receive an official warning
- A letter to the student's parents informing them of the incident and what the process has been up to that point. They will also be informed that the potential consequences are exclusion from the class, playground or school.
- If exclusion takes place, a process will be set in place to determine the conditions under which the child may re-enter the class, playground or school
- The parents, and in some instances the child, will be required to attend a meeting with the class teacher and Educational Administrator to discuss the issue/s and determine the next steps
- The student may be placed on an individual behaviour management plan and be required to 'check in' with an appropriate member of staff regularly

The College of Teachers will offer the families assistance with seeking appropriate support.

## Stage 3 Consequences (Actions)

If the earlier stages have been followed but there are ongoing problems, or if the matter involves the safety of the student being bullied, then expulsion from the school may be necessary.

## Resources/Websites

[Australian Government Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner website](#)

Education resources including classroom resources, online safety resources, guides, policies, and issues for teachers.

[Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission - \(HREOC\)](#)

Useful information for teachers. Information and resources for students designed for Year 5 up, not for early childhood years.

[Together for Humanity Foundation](#)

Conducts programs in schools to challenge religious and cultural misconceptions. Target age for students is 8 to 17 years.

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