

# Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy & Management Procedure

St. Georges Rd. Primary School



## Rationale:

Our school is committed to providing a safe and caring environment and culture which enables positive relationships to be formed amongst all students and staff and which reflects our values of RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, PRIDE & EXCELLENCE. We foster a culture that develops self-esteem, cooperation, personal growth and a positive attitude to learning and teaching. A clear policy on bullying (including cyber bullying –refer to ICT & Cyber-bullying policy) and harassment will inform the community that **bullying and harassment in any of its forms will not be tolerated.**

## Aims:

- To reinforce within the school community that no form of bullying is acceptable.
- Everyone within the school community is alerted to signs and evidence of bullying and has a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up and that support is given to both victim and perpetrator.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

## What is bullying, cyber bullying and harassment?

**Bullying:** is *repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group.*

**Cyber-bullying** consists of covert, psychological bullying, conveyed through the electronic mediums such as cell-phones, web-logs and web-sites, on-line chat rooms, 'MUD' rooms (multi-user domains where individuals take on different characters) and Xangas (on-line personal profiles where some adolescents create lists of people they do not like). It is verbal (over the telephone or mobile phone), or written (threats, racial, sexual or homophobic harassment) using the various mediums available.

**Harassment** is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

Our school will actively promote a positive and welcoming personal environment for all members of the school community. When people are bullied or harassed some effects might be anger, embarrassment, fear and humiliation, loss of self-confidence and reduced function and potential. Bullying and harassment will be addressed, individual differences will be respected and students and staff will be enabled and supported in their pursuit of learning and teaching.

## Implementation:

- A school-wide approach will be taken to deal with bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment in a consistent and systematic way.
- All new students and staff will be informed of the anti-harassment policy and practices at the commencement of their time at the school.
- All complaints of harassment will be heard in confidence and taken seriously.

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- Our school will organise preventative curriculum programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving e.g. School Values Curriculum, Bully Busters, 'Friends' program etc.
- Staff programs will occur periodically to keep staff informed of current issues/strategies for dealing with these issues.
- There will be disciplinary consequences, covering a range of strategies, for those in breach of the Anti-Bullying (including cyber bullying) guidelines and procedures.

Constructive strategies to deal with harassment will include:

- education in coping strategies
- assertiveness training
- problem solving and social skills e.g. Restorative practices
- Counselling and behaviour modification.
- These strategies will be employed in preference to punitive sanctions and negative consequences.
- The Anti-Bullying Policy of the school will be widely promoted to students, staff, parents/carers and the local community.
- A summary of the policy will be included in the Student Enrolment Package while new staff will receive extensive documentation as part of the school's induction process.
- The school leadership team and the teachers will work together to ensure the safety of all school members in situations of bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment, by thoroughly investigating all complaints while respecting the need for confidentiality, notifying parents/carers and planning interventions.
- If a teacher feels a student is at serious and imminent risk from bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment then it is their professional duty to pass on the information to an appropriate person in order to ensure appropriate support for the student. It is important that teachers document fully their interaction with the student and to verify the actions taken.
- Student programs will be organized to raise student awareness about bullying and harassment, to provide a forum for discussion of matters and to aid development of attitudes.
- Some matters will be dealt with formally in the curriculum and extra-curricular programs and occasional activities run by outside experts and workers. The curriculum will include anti-bullying messages and strategies in line with current DEECD materials e.g. 'The Friendly Schools' and 'No Blame Approach to Bullying' programs.
- Professional development will be provided for staff relating to bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment and proven strategies to address these issues in classrooms will be shared with all staff.
- Disciplinary consequences for bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment will comply with the school's Welfare and Discipline Policy. The principal, Primary Welfare Officer or Assistant Principal will provide disciplinary consequences including suspension in accordance with Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) guidelines.

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## LINKS (including processes related to this policy)

Links which are connected with this policy are:

- DEECD's [Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines](#)
- DEECD's [Safe Schools are Effective School's](#)
- DEECD's [Student Engagement Policy Guidelines](#)
- The school's Internet Use Policy (re cyber-bullying)
- DEECD's [Respectful Schools](#)

### Reporting incidents of Bullying / Harassment

1. Students will report concerns or issues to their classroom teacher at the time of an incident of harassment or ongoing bullying; or alternatively
2. Parents/ carers will bring concerns to the attention of the classroom teacher, principal or Primary Welfare Officer. The concern will be discussed in private.
3. School staff will investigate the concerns and inform key stakeholders (parents/ carers, teachers and students of victim and perpetrators) in a timely manner.
4. Relevant strategies/ consequence will be put into place to support victim and perpetrator as per the school's Code of Conduct and Student Engagement & Wellbeing policy.

### Implementation of Bully Audit

As a proactive measure, the school will undertake a Bully Audit each term.

1. The primary Welfare Officer will notify the school community through the weekly school newsletter that all children will be participating in a bully audit over specified period of time.
2. All classroom teachers will explain what 'bullying' means as per definition on this policy, and in terms relevant to the age/ grade level of class.
3. In confidence, students will write down the names of any children who have bullied them.
4. The Primary Welfare Officer will collate this information and prepare a report for the leadership team.
5. The Primary Welfare Officer will contact parents directly (phone) or with a follow-up letter, whose children have been identified as Bullies. An interview with the student and parent will take place – with positive strategies discussed and documented for issue to the family.
6. Documentation of ongoing issues will be kept and issued to the leadership team each term.

### Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle. *June, 2020*

This policy was last ratified by School Council in *June 2017*