



Bullying Prevention

POLICY

Rationale

Cardinia Primary School is committed to providing a safe and caring environment where everyone will have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or to teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in their school environment. Bullying will not be accepted or tolerated and consequences exist for students who choose to bully others.

Definition

A person is bullied when someone, or a group of people, expose them regularly and over time to negative or harmful actions. Bullies are people who deliberately set out to intimidate, exclude, threaten and/or hurt others repeatedly. Bullying is a clear form of harassment. Bullying can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).

There are four broad types of bullying:

Direct physical bullying: includes hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property.

Direct verbal bullying: including name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.

Indirect bullying: action designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes lying and spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude someone or damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance.

Cyberbullying: includes direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using any form of digital technology. This includes harassment via any electronic medium (i.e. repeatedly sending nasty, mean and insulting messages), outing someone by sharing embarrassing information or images online, creating fake profiles, deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces and denigration (i.e. posting or sending gossip or rumours about a person to damage their reputation or friendships).

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management. There are three socially unpleasant situations that are often confused with bullying. They are:

Mutual conflict: involves an argument or disagreement between people, but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

Single-episode acts: of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. This does not mean, however, that single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression should be ignored or condoned as they are unacceptable behaviours.

Social rejection or dislike: is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Aims

- To reinforce within the school community what bullying is, and the fact that no form of bullying is acceptable.
- To encourage all within the school community to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are investigated and followed up appropriately.
- To ensure that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.
- To implement effective whole school strategies to minimise the development of bullying behaviours.

Implementation

- This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Student Engagement and Well-Being Policy.
- Students, teachers, parents and the community will be regularly informed of the school's position on bullying.
- Teachers will be regularly reminded of their duty of care regarding protection of students from all forms of bullying.
- The school will adopt the following four-phase approach to bullying:

1. Primary Prevention – Community Education

- Professional development will be provided for all staff relating to bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment and proven strategies to address these issues in classrooms will be shared with all staff.
- The school community will be educated about the seriousness of bullying, its characteristics, its effects on victims and the school's programs and response.
- Each classroom teacher is to discuss with students regularly throughout the year, the school policy on bullying.
- The curriculum is to include preventative programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving, as well as anti-bullying messages and strategies.
- Sporting equipment will be available to students at recess and lunch breaks.
- The use of mobile phones by students during school hours will be prohibited. All mobile phones are to be handed into the Office when students arrive at school.

2. Early Intervention

- Encourage students and staff to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
- Classroom teachers are to remind students on a regular basis to report incidents of bullying.
- Classroom teachers and the Principal are to regularly check the yard duty folders to monitor student behaviour outside to identify potential problems.

- The school will regularly monitor student traffic on the school's computer networks to identify potential problems.
- If a teacher feels a student is at imminent risk from bullying then it is their professional duty to pass on the information to the Principal in order to ensure appropriate support for the student.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school immediately if they become aware of a problem.
- Public recognition and reward should be given for positive student behaviour and appropriate resolution of problems.
- If the school becomes aware of any bullying incidents, they will contact the parents/guardians of the students involved.

3. Intervention

- All incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented by a staff member and forwarded onto the school leadership team (see Appendix 2).
- Students identified by others as bullies will be informed of the allegations.
- The parents of any students involved in a bullying incident (whether the victim or the perpetrator) will be contacted.
- Both bullies and victims may be offered counselling and support.
- Cyberbullies may have their access to the school's network and computers removed for a period of time as deemed appropriate by staff members.
- If student bullying persists, consequences consistent with the school's Student Behaviour Management Policy will be implemented.

4. Post Violation

- Consequences for students will be individually based and may involve:
 - * exclusion from class;
 - * exclusion from the playground;
 - * school suspension;
 - * withdrawal of privileges; and/or
 - * ongoing counselling from an appropriate professional as decided by the Principal for both the victim and bully.
- Reinforcement of positive behaviours, including rewards being given for students displaying positive behaviours.
- Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies.

References

- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/bullying.aspx>
- <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>
- <https://www.education.gov.au/national-safe-schools-framework-0>
- <https://www.esafety.gov.au/>

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every three (3) years or as deemed necessary.



Role of Stakeholders

APPENDIX 1

STUDENTS should:

- Practice strategies taught in the classroom.
- Model acceptable behaviour to others.
- Be a responsible bystander and take appropriate action.
- Identify a network of trusted adults they can talk to for support.
- Let an adult know what is happening.
- Keep on telling until the bullying stops.
- Say no to bullying behaviours.
- Use positive language and behaviour towards all others.

TEACHERS should:

- Teach and model appropriate behaviours and strategies to deal with bullying.
- Teach and clarify for the students the terms, meanings and distinct differences between bullying, social isolation, conflict, random acts of aggression/intimidation and meanness.
- Teach students that school should be a safe place for everyone, regardless of the differences between people. No one deserves being bullied because they speak, look or act differently or in a way 'you don't like'.
- Teach and promote resilience.
- Keep up to date and maintain their classroom record of incidents.
- Teach and model active listening so that all incidents are treated seriously.
- Recognise and value the partnership between home and school.

ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT STAFF should:

- Promote the school's Bullying Prevention Policy.
- Teach and model appropriate behaviours.
- Teach and model active listening so that all incidents are treated seriously.
- Provide counselling and other support services as required.
- Provide support for parents/guardians through the school's support networks.
- Initiate and arrange meetings with stakeholders at the reporting stage of the procedure.
- Recognise and value the partnership between home and school.

PARENTS should:

- Remain calm ... act, not react.
- Be aware of the school's Bullying Prevention Policy and the strategies being implemented in the school and actively discuss the policy with their children.
- Teach and model appropriate behaviours at home.
- Let your child know that bullying is totally unacceptable because it affects the emotional wellbeing and rights of others.
- Ensure the school is informed of all incidents of bullying.
- Advise their child to report incidents of bullying immediately to a teacher. If possible, encourage children to report the incident themselves. They will gain more self-respect by taking the initiative themselves rather than relying on a parent to take action.
- Encourage their child to have and to use their nominated support network when at school.
- Encourage their child to speak openly with them and to look at positive strategies to deal with their feelings.
- Recognise and value the partnership between home and school.
- Support their child in the knowledge that the resolution of the situation may take some time.
- Stress to your child that school should be a safe place for everyone, regardless of the differences between people. No one deserves being bullied because they speak, look or act differently or in a way 'you don't like'.
- Show support for the school's consequences for bullying.



Bullying

APPENDIX 2

All concerns relating to bullying should be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly while respecting the need for confidentiality, the need to notify parents/guardians and planning interventions.

If a student has been involved in a bullying incident as defined in the school's Bullying Prevention Policy the following steps should be taken:

Level 1

If the bullying is minor or a first time occurrence, teachers may elect to use one or more anti-bullying practices, such as:

- Stopping the bullying;
- Revisiting the school's Bullying Prevention Policy with the student;
- Revisiting the school's values and rules;
- Time out of the classroom and/or playground; and
- A shared conversation with the Principal.

Parents of the bully and the victim should be notified.

Level 2

If the bullying continues, or in instances of severe bullying, a referral should be made to the Wellbeing Coordinator. They may:

- Issue a Behaviour Management Report;
- Provide discussion/mentoring of different social and emotional learning competencies including structured learning activities; and
- Conduct a restorative conference separately with the bully and the victim.

Parents of the bully and the victim should be notified.

Level 3

For students whose bullying behaviour is severe or resistant to change, a Behaviour Management Plan must be prepared by the classroom teacher in consultation with the parents/guardians and the Wellbeing Coordinator. This plan should help connect the student to positive people, programs and actions in the community, school and home as well as develop the student's inner social and emotional strengths.

Level 4

Students whose severe bullying behaviour resists school efforts and represents a significant threat to the safety and wellbeing of others should be referred to outside agencies for evaluation.

Note

The school may choose, if bullying persists or the initial incident is of such magnitude, to commence

formal disciplinary action. The procedures set out by the Department of Education will be followed.

Documentation

It is important that staff document fully their interactions with students when dealing with complaints of bullying.

For the child who is the victim of bullying

- Clarify the facts of the incident.
- Discuss the incident with the student/s concerned.
- Make sure that the victim of the bullying is given strategies to deal with a similar problem in the future.
- Make sure the classroom teacher and Principal have been informed.
- Notify the parent/guardian of the process that has been undertaken.

For the child who is displaying the bully behaviours

- Clarify the facts of the incident.
- Discuss the incident with the student/s concerned.
- Link actions to consequences including time out, Behaviour Management Report, detention or suspension as required.
- Restate the school rules on acceptable behaviour.
- Coordinate a reconciliation including an apology.
- Discuss with the perpetrator other options in reacting to incidents.
- Make sure the classroom teacher and Principal have been informed.
- Notify the parent/guardian of the process that has been undertaken.