

# Whole-School Bullying Policy

## 1. RATIONALE

We at Strathpine West have a vision which challenges us to create a learning community based on values. Each person is recognised as a unique individual bringing special qualities and gifts to share and so we all have a right to be respected and a responsibility to respect each other.

Therefore, we do not tolerate bullying (including cyberbullying) or harassment in any form. All members of our community are committed to ensuring a safe and supportive learning environment which promotes personal growth and fosters positive self-esteem for all. We aim to maintain a setting in which everyone feels valued and respected and where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted.

## Definitions

### Bullying is:

- a repeated and unjustifiable behaviour;
- intended to cause fear, distress and/or harm to another;
- may be physical, verbal or indirect/relational;
- conducted by a more powerful individual or group and
- against a less powerful individual who is unable to effectively resist.

### Types of bullying:

	Direct	Indirect
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hitting, slapping, punching</li> <li>• Kicking</li> <li>• tripping</li> <li>• Pushing, strangling</li> <li>• Spitting, biting</li> <li>• Pinching, scratching</li> <li>• Throwing things eg. Stones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting another person to harm someone</li> </ul>
Non-Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mean and hurtful name-calling</li> <li>• Hurtful teasing</li> <li>• Demanding money or possessions</li> <li>• Forcing another to do homework or commit offences such as stealing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spreading nasty rumours</li> <li>• Trying to get other students to not like someone</li> </ul>
Non-Verbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threatening and/or obscene gestures</li> <li>• Sending inappropriate, degrading and/or offensive images or text by phone or internet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliberate exclusion from a group or activity</li> <li>• Removing and hiding and/or damaging other's belongings</li> </ul>

## Harassment

Harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome, or uninvited behaviour which makes a person feel humiliated or offended. Harassment can be seen as one form of bullying. The terms are often used interchangeably.

## **Objectives**

**The objectives of our whole-school bullying policy are:**

- to raise awareness among staff, students and parents about bullying;
- to actively counter bullying at the school;
- to provide strategies to resolve conflict and respect differences;
- to create a school environment where all students, staff and parents feel safe and welcome;
- to create a climate where it is okay to talk about bullying and ask for help and
- to promote positive mental health.

## **2. RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Rights**

- Every person has the right to feel safe. Any person who bullies another is denying them that right. This means we have to think about how we speak and act towards others (not just ourselves) both in the classroom and in the playground.
- Every person has the right to be treated with respect and fairness. This means we show respect to other people and their property, in the class and in the playground. The right to receive respect and fair treatment requires from us the responsibility to show manners and courtesy towards each other.
- Every person has the right to learn. This means we do not adversely affect the learning of another student.

At Strathpine West we will not tolerate any action that undermines a person's right to feel safe, respected and to learn.

### **Responsibilities**

**Staff, students and parents have the following responsibilities:**

**Leadership Team through the supportive school environment committee will:**

- Support, promote, enact, maintain and review the bullying policy and procedures;
- Provide relevant professional development for staff and
- Provide resources to support the program.

**All Staff will:**

- Support and follow the school's bullying policy and procedures;
- Be models of caring and tolerant behaviour;
- Listen to reports of bullying;
- Act upon these;
- Inform the Principal;
- Protect the person being bullied from further harm;
- Act to stop the behaviour recurring and
- Record identified bullying incidents (on the bullying report form).

**Students who are bullied need to:**

- Discuss with a teacher/staff member/parents/trusted adults and give them full details

**Student witnesses should:**

- Seek assistance from a staff member
- Provide information if requested

### **Parents should:**

- Listen sympathetically to reports of bullying
- Speak to relevant school personnel (not the alleged student/s concerned)
- Work with the school in seeking a permanent solution

### **Parent witnesses should:**

- Be limited to verbal intervention
- Seek assistance from a staff member
- Provide information if requested by school staff

## **3. MANAGEMENT OF BULLYING INCIDENTS**

All parties are expected to treat each other with respect and dignity, and ensure the confidentiality of any issues that may arise.

### **Staff Responsibilities**

- Staff to be familiar with the school's bullying policy and procedures.
- Staff to be models of caring and tolerant behaviour.
- The non-acceptance of bullying is to be discussed in class.
- Staff to make students aware of their responsibilities with regard to the bullying policy.
- Implement lessons to develop resilience to bullying.
- Teach relevant strategies.
- Attend to reported instances of bullying behaviour.
- Treat information regarding bullying confidentially.

### **Action**

1. Protect the bullied child from further harm.
2. Complete the **Bullying Report Form** (green). Ask the bullied child what happened.
3. Suggest strategies that the bullied student might use to avoid being bullied in the future and tell them the report will be given to his or her teacher to follow up. Send **Bullying Report Form** to the bullied child's class teacher.
4. Class teacher to individually interview students involved, as soon as possible, using the Shared Concern Approach (see below). Discuss strategies these students might use to avoid bullying in the future.
5. Record information and agreed plan to prevent reoccurrence on the **Bullying Investigation Record** in Bullying Investigation Record Book.
6. Class teacher keeps the original form in The Bullying Investigation Record Book until the end of the year. The form then needs to be placed in the bullied student's portfolio. A copy of the form is to be sent to class teacher of child who was bullying. Discuss with admin if necessary.
7. Monitor the situation over the following few days and **follow up** at regular intervals.
8. Where bullying has been substantiated send Bullying Report Form to class teacher of Student who was bullying. Class teacher is to enter information onto OneSchool.
9. Where necessary, speak to the class without using any names.
10. Where appropriate and using discretion, work with parents of the bullied child to assist their child to avoid being bullied in the future. Keep them informed about progress and measures taken.
11. If necessary, where appropriate and using discretion, inform parents of the child bullying and work with them to establish joint strategies for behaviour modification.

## **Responses to Bullying Incidents**

### **The Pikas Method of Shared Concern**

The method of Shared Concern aims to change the behaviour of students involved in bullying incidents and improve the situation of the student being bullied. The method employs a non-punitive, non-blaming and non-aggressive approach.

- A. Assure the student bullied that the incident will be dealt with.
- B. Speak individually with each of the students involved in the bullying situation (including bystanders)
- C. Each student is asked about the problem and to suggest ways in which he or she personally could help to improve the situation.
- D. Follow-up meetings, discussions and planning give students the opportunity to change and improve their attitudes and behaviour and to put these into practice in a supportive environment.

## **Challenging Incidents**

### **Physical Violence or Intimidation**

- Immediate request for assistance from admin or colleague – red card.
- Move student onlookers away.
- Separate students using minimal physical contact.
- Apply Classroom/Playground Process for managing Inappropriate Behaviour procedures.
- Apply shared concern – students involved in the incident are questioned separately.
- Report of incident to be written up.

## **Challenging Students**

- Collaborative case management of students with persistent aggression or continued victimisation. Develop a collaborative action plan with specified outcomes. (teacher/admin/GO/parent)

## **4. SCHOOL STRATEGIES TO REDUCE AND PREVENT BULLYING**

Our strategy has two aspects: prevention and management. Prevention strategies assist students to become resilient. The management strategy we apply is the Student Support and ‘Shared Concern’ approach. Although this approach is not based on punishment, the school has a range of measures available, up to and including suspension or exclusion which are in accord with the school’s Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students, and which may be used in response to bullying.

## **Prevention Programs**

### **Whole-School approach:**

- School policy for ‘bullying.
- All staff made aware of bullying issues, student attitudes, the need to take action and of their role in implementing the policy.
- The bullying policy clearly articulated to staff, students and parents.
- All staff to provide careful supervision.

- Discuss the issue of bullying regularly at staff meetings and provide training to all staff.
- Anti-bullying resources included in Health learning area.
- Teachers to run a program in the classroom as a prevention model. Students will be given opportunities to practice conflict resolution and protective behaviours.
- Class meetings to discuss problem-solving measures. Focus on behaviour changes not punishment. *Preventative social skills training* – playing games well, giving and receiving compliments, taking risks and joining in, cooperating and respecting other people's decisions.
- Self-protective behaviours – ignoring verbal put downs, enlisting adult or peer support, learn assertive responses, saying “no” and walking away, helping others being bullied. Change the “don't do it” culture. Model and teach students to value and respect others.
- Preventative support systems – peer support (student councillors, buddy class) to assist in making the school safer by reporting incidents and assisting students who may be targets of bullying. Teach bystander students to safely challenge bullying. Provide safe places, mentors and group problem-solving.
- Whole class / parent / group workshops for ongoing problems.
- Intensive small group work for students who bully (conflict resolution, anger management) and students who are bullied (assertiveness training and self protective behaviours).
- Teachers to be assisted in difficult cases by admin and Guidance Officer.
- **Rewarding positive action and appropriate behaviour:**
  - Acknowledge and encourage appropriate behaviour
  - Inform the students about opportunities for incidents to be reported confidentially in a verbal or written form to staff, parents and student leaders.
  - New students during the year to be advised of the policy.
- **Playground strategies:**
  - segregate the playground into group areas ( Prep, 1/2, 3/4, 5/6)
  - More play direction – ideas given for games.
  - Teachers reinforce positive behaviour. Listen to grievances and take appropriate action.
  - Teachers to return to class 2-3 minutes before the bell goes to counter bullying in class lines.
  - Lunchtime activities –games in the library, activities in Star Rooms, sporting activities.
  - Follow the school's Behaviour Management policy.
  - Student leaders to help with play in the lower school during breaks.

## **Induction of New Students and New Staff**

- Class teachers to introduce new students to the desired outcomes and the prevention programs.
- Admin to discuss program with new staff.