

# **BULLYING POLICY**

**2011**

## **DEFINITION**

A person is bullied when one or more other 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.

## **RATIONALE**

- The school will provide a positive culture where bullying is not accepted, and in so doing, all 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.

## **AIMS**

- To reinforce within the school community what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable.
- Everyone within the school community to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and to have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

## **TYPES OF BULLYING**

Physical	*Hitting, slapping, punching *Kicking *Pushing, strangling *Spitting, biting *Pinching, scratching *Throwing objects	*Getting another person to harm someone
Non-Physical	*Mean or hurtful name calling *Hurtful teasing *Demanding money or possessions *Forcing another to do homework or commit offences such as stealing	*Spreading nasty rumours *Trying to get other students to not like someone
Non-Verbal	*Threatening and / or obscene gestures *frequent use of negative body language	*Deliberate exclusion from a group or activity *Removing and hiding and / or damaging others' belongings
Cyberbullying	*Mean or hurtful emails,	*Having someone

	text messages, multi-media messages, chat room conversations or hurtful content being posted to social media sites, such as Facebook *Prank telephone calls	else do it for you
Racial / Religious / Sexual / Disability	*Inappropriate touching and / or actions *Inappropriate suggestions, conversations and / or comments	

### Adult Bullying

Our site does not tolerate abuse / bullying / harassment of or between students, staff and parents

### Bystander Bullying

**What is a Bystander?** A bystander is someone who sees the bullying or knows that it is happening to someone else. Bystanders can be identified in the following categories:  
 Supporters—Support the person bullying, either by helping the child to bully the other person or by encouraging the person bullying  
 Spectators—Gather or deliberately stay to watch the incident (sometimes from concern and sometimes for enjoyment)  
 Witnesses—Are aware that the incident is occurring (know about the bullying or see it from a distance)  
 Within each group there may be potential victims who are afraid they could be bullied next and this may influence their decision-making when deciding what to do.

### What Can I Do?

If Bullying is happening to you or someone else:

- Tell the student who is bullying to stop. State quite clearly that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive
- Ignore them and walk away
- Be a friend to the person being bullied
- Encourage the person being bullied to inform someone
- Seek help. Talk about it to someone you trust
- Report it to a member of staff, a trustworthy friend or buddy. Feel confident that an incident can be solved
- Talk it over openly with your parents—they can help you make a decision
- DO NOT retaliate with physical or verbal abuse
- If you are experiencing bullying on the way to or from school, tell your parents and walk home with a friend
- Write a description of the event and place it in the class meeting agenda or give it to the teacher

### Do You Bully?

- Do you tease, abuse or hit others?
- Do you call people names?

- Do you belong to a group which hurts or insults others?
- Do you stand silently watching others being hurt?
- If you answered yes then... this will happen:

### **If You Are Bullying:**

*Step 1*—You will be counselled by your classroom / yard duty teacher. You will be given the opportunity to resolve the situation and discuss the issue with the person you bullied. The name of the perpetrator and victim will be recorded.

*Step 2*—If you persist you will be referred to a member of the administration team. You may be required to attend a counselling program and your parents will be notified.

*Step 3*—If you are found to be bullying again a consequence will be applied. This may include:

- in school isolation (recess and lunch)
- letter home to parents and a parent interview
- counselling program
- loss of privileges
- suspension

*Step 4*—If bullying continues your parents will be phoned and required to come to school. Severe cases involving bullying are accelerated through these stages.

### **How Can You Help?**

As Parents You Can:

- Be aware of signs of distress in your child.
- Assist you child to discuss the problem with a teacher.
- Discourage any planned retaliation, either physical or verbal, if your child is bullied by discussing positive strategies they can use.
- Be positive about your child's qualities and encourage your child to be tolerant and caring.

As Staff You Can:

- Adopt positive classroom management strategies and incorporate anti-bullying messages in the curriculum.
- Provide positive role models for students.
- Actively counteract bullying behaviour.
- Respond appropriately to any reported incident of bullying.
- Be obviously present during recess and lunchtimes when you are on duty, as a deterrent to possible incidents of bullying.

### **Responses to Bullying**

- We use the 'Restorative Practise' approach to deal with incidents of bullying. Restorative Practise creates opportunities for those involved in a conflict to work together to understand, clarify and resolve the situation and work together towards repairing the harm caused.
- A copy of the process used and questions asked is available at the front office.
- This process occurs on the first occasion. Continued incidents will result in referral to an administrator for the possible application of behaviour management consequences.

### **Promoting Positive Behaviours**

- At Mt Dandenong Primary School we aim to promote positive behaviours around the issues of bullying and harassment in a number of ways including:

- The implementation of the 'Runde' program throughout the year.
- Peer Mediation.
- Staff training and development.
- Our Healthy Living program.
- Use of the Bounce Back Program
- Promoting the School Values

### **Grievance Procedure**

- If you are unhappy with the outcome of an incident please refer to and work through the Mt Dandenong Primary School Grievance Procedure.
- Copies of these are available from the front office.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

- Parents, teachers, students and the community will be aware of the school's position on bullying.
- The school will adopt a four-phase approach to bullying.

#### **A. Primary Prevention:**

- Professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment and proven counter measures.
- Community awareness and input relating to bullying, its characteristics and the school's programs and response.
- To provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- A bullying survey and yard survey will be administered and acted upon twice annually.
- 'Bounce Back' program implemented across the school.
- Each classroom teacher to clarify at the start of each year the school policy on bullying.
- The curriculum to include anti-bullying messages and strategies.
- Student Representative Council, peer support delegates, staff and students to promote the philosophy of 'Respect'.
- Electives and structured activities available to students at recess and lunch breaks.

#### **B. Early Intervention:**

- Classroom teachers and principal on a regular basis reminding students and staff to report incidents of bullying.
- Parents are encouraged to contact school if they become aware of a problem.
- Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems.
- Junior School Council to promote school values.

#### **C. Intervention:**

- Once identified each bully, victim and witnesses will be spoken with, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented.
- Students and staff identified by others as bullies will be informed of allegations.
- Both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support.
- If student bullying persists parents will be contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the school's Student Code of Conduct.
- If staff bullying persists the principal will commence formal disciplinary action.

**D. Post Violation:**

- Consequences for students will be individually based and may involve:-
  - exclusion from class.
  - exclusion from yard.
  - school suspension.
  - withdrawal of privileges.
  - ongoing counselling from appropriate agency for both victim and bully.
- Reinforcement of positive behaviours.
- Classroom Meetings.
- Support Structures.
- Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies.
- Rewards for positive behaviour.
- Consequences for staff will be individually based and may involve:-
  - counselling
  - a period of monitoring
  - a formal support group
  - disciplinary actions

References: Safe Schools are Effective Schools booklet

[www.curriculum.edu.au/mindmatters](http://www.curriculum.edu.au/mindmatters)

Circular 41/2002 VicHealth Publicity for Partnership Campaign Together We Do Better: Department  
Participation

[www.bullyingnoway.com.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au)

[www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/bullying/index.htm](http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/bullying/index.htm)

