

# Bullying, Cyber-Bullying and Harassment Policy

## Definition:

A person is bullied when they are intentionally exposed regularly and over time to negative or harmful actions by one or more other people. 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 to respect from others, the right to learn or to teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in their school environment.

## **What are 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 (flaming, threats, 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.

## 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.
- To recognise Cyber bullying is a form of bullying.
- There will be disciplinary consequences, covering a range of strategies, for those in breach of the Anti-Bullying (including cyber bullying) and Anti-Harassment Policy, guidelines and procedures.

## 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 as outlined below.

## Primary Prevention:

- Professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment and the strategies that counter-act them.
- 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, e.g. 'Learning to Learn and the Berry Street Education Model.'
- A bullying survey and yard survey can be used to identify problems.
- Each classroom teacher to clarify at the start of each year the school policy on bullying.
- Staff and students to promote the philosophy of 'No Put Downs'.

- Activities are available to students at recess and lunch breaks when required.

#### Early Intervention:

- Promote children reporting bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
- Classroom teachers on a regular basis reminding students to report incidents, and that reporting is not dobbing.
- Parents encouraged to contact school if they become aware of a problem.
- Specific Area – a designated safe and quiet place for children to access at recess and lunch times.
- Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems.

#### Intervention:

- Those identified through the Bullying Survey will be counselled.
- Once identified; bully, victim and witnesses spoken with, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented.
- Both bully and victim offered counselling and support.
- If bullying is ongoing, parents will be contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the school's Student Engagement Policy.

#### Post Violation:

- Consequences may involve:-
  - exclusion from class.
  - exclusion from yard.
  - school suspension.
  - withdrawal of privileges.
  - ongoing counselling from appropriate agency for both victim and bully.
- Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies.
- Rewards for positive behaviour.

#### Procedure for handling Complaints and Grievances:

- Students are encouraged to speak to their classroom or other teacher immediately they perceive that they have been bullied. Ideally, this should be immediately after the incident to ensure prompt follow-up or intervention.
- The teacher will investigate the incident, collect witness statements and when appropriate, follow-up with a restorative conversation.
- Major incidents will be reported to parents of both parties and explanations provided.
- Parents of affected students will be offered a meeting with the class teacher and/or principal where concerns will be listened to and resolutions and outcomes provided.
- If the parent wishes to take their concern further they will be given opportunity for further follow-up through the school's **Community Grievance Policy**.

#### LINKS AND APPENDICES (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
- Kingsbury Primary School Community Grievance Policy

#### Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed with student, parent and community input as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on **March 23<sup>rd</sup> 2017**

**SC President**