



KILMORE PRIMARY SCHOOL



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## **BULLYING (including cyber-bullying) and HARASSMENT POLICY**

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### **Policy Statement**

Kilmore Primary 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 encourages self-esteem, cooperation, personal growth and a positive attitude to learning and teaching. A clear policy on bullying (including cyber bullying) 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 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, 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.

## **Guidelines**

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.

Our school will organise preventative curriculum programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving. 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) and Anti- Harassment Policy, guidelines and procedures (see Appendix A).

## **Program**

Constructive strategies to deal with harassment will include: education in coping strategies; assertiveness training; problem solving and social skills; counselling and behaviour modification. These strategies will be employed in preference to punitive sanctions and negative consequences.

The Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment 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 (including cyber 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 in peer support programs, leadership programs, 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. The school will provide specialist resources such as books, videos,

kits and off site in-service activities to assist staff in responding appropriately to bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment issues.

Disciplinary consequences for bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment will comply with the school's Welfare and Discipline Policy. The principal or their nominee will provide disciplinary consequences including suspension in accordance with Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) guidelines.

## **Anti – Bullying (including cyber-bullying) and Anti- Harassment Procedures**

Our school values are: Kind, Proud and Safe. We have developed shared expectations to ensure that the learning, safety and rights of all are respected. These values form the core of everything we do at school and are displayed in classrooms and around our school environment.

All members of the school community, parents, teachers and students will be aware of the school's position on bullying.

A person is bullied when one or more other people expose them regularly and over time to negative or harmful actions. Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, who have more power at the time, deliberately upset or hurt another person, their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion.

Bullies are people who deliberately set out to intimidate, exclude, threaten and/or hurt others repeatedly. Bullying is a clear form of harassment. It may take many forms including:

### ***Types of Bullying***

- Physical bullying - includes fighting, pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, aggressive play fights or any unwanted touching that is used to harm, hurt or intimidate. It also includes any deliberate property damage.
- Verbal bullying – includes name calling, putting people down (both to their face and behind their back), intimidating noises and teasing people about their race, religion, appearance, family or friends.
- Indirect bullying – this form of bullying is harder to recognize and often carried out behind the bullied student's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes:
  - lying and spreading rumours
  - playing nasty jokes to embarrass or humiliate
  - mimicking
  - encouraging others to socially exclude someone
  - damaging someone's social reputation and social acceptance
  - cyber-bullying, which involves the use of electronic means to humiliate and distress
- Visual bullying – offensive notes or electronic material either hand written or computer generated, damaging other people's possessions, giving people looks and non-verbal signs which are used to intimidate them.

- Exclusion – deliberately leaving people out of activities or treating them as if they don't exist, spreading rumours, deliberately making social invitations in front of them but not to them.
- Extortion- using stand-over tactics to control someone else's behaviour eg Give up possessions, buy food or drink, or do the work for them, picking on others, using threats.
- Sexual bullying – touching or brushing past in a sexual manner, sexually oriented jokes, drawing or writing about someone's body, unwanted advances of a sexual nature, using rude names and asking questions about others personal lives.
- Cyber bullying – Bullying that is carried out through an internet service, such as email, chat room, blog or instant messaging. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as short messaging service (SMS). Examples of cyber bullying include teasing, spreading rumours online, ending unwanted messages, or defamation

### ***What Bullying is Not***

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:

#### ***Mutual Conflict***

In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

#### ***Social Rejection or Dislike***

Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.

#### ***Single-episode acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation***

Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied.

Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying.

#### **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, 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.

### **Why do we have a Policy on these?**

To provide a safe and friendly college environment for students and staff and to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others. All persons have a legal right to protection from harassment under the *Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act* and the *Victorian Equal Opportunity Act*.

### **What are the effects of Bullying and Harassment?**

- poor health - anxiety, depression
- lower self esteem
- reduced study performance
- missed classes, social withdrawal
- reduced career prospects

### **Am I bullying or harassing someone?**

If you are not sure about your behaviour you can:

- check it out by asking if it is offensive or inappropriate
- stop it
- apologise
- take it seriously if someone says they are feeling uncomfortable
- talk it over with an adviser or somebody who has an understanding of the issues

### **What are some of the feelings victims of bullying or harassment may experience?**

- *"I will ignore it and it will go away."*

If anything it will make things worse - you will give the impression that you agree with the situation.

- *"I don't want to cause trouble."*

Most causes of harassment are sorted out quite simply. By speaking up, action can be taken to address the problem.

- *"Am I to blame?"*

Victims of harassment or bullying sometimes feel that it is their fault. Victims are made to feel guilty by the offender and often blame themselves. It is your right to have a safe environment free from harassment or bullying.

- *"Am I imagining things?"*

Often our hunches are correct. Rather than put up with nagging doubts, talk to someone about your feelings.

### **Bullying or harassment can often make people feel:**

- embarrassed or ashamed
- offended or humiliated
- intimidated or frightened
- uncomfortable

### **What should you do if you see another person being bullied or harassed?**

Tell the person that you witnessed the incident and advise them to report it to an appropriate person. However, if your friend is harassing another person, let them know that their behaviour is unacceptable.

Bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully.

### **Bullying can involve**

- grabbing, aggressive staring, hitting, pinching kicking, pushing and shoving
- publicly excluding a person from your group
- knocking a person's books or belongings out of their hands or off their desk
- teasing a person because of their looks

### **Cyber-bullying can involve**

- *Flaming* – online fights using electronic messages with angry or vulgar messages
- *Harassment* – repeatedly sending nasty, mean and insulting messages
- *Denigration* – posting or sending gossip or rumours about a person to damage his/her reputation or friendships
- *Outing* – sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information or images online
- *Exclusion* – intentionally and cruelly excluding someone from an online group
- *Cyber-stalking* – repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear

**Harassment is usually directed at a person because of their gender, race, creed or abilities – it can be subtle or explicit**

**Subtle** (*the most common*) they include:

- offensive staring and leering
- unwanted comments about physical appearance and sexual preference
- racist or smutty comments or jokes
- questions about another's sexual activity

- persistent comments about a person's private life or family
- physical contact e.g. purposely brushing up against another's body
- offensive name calling

**Explicit** (*obvious*) they include:

- grabbing, aggressive hitting, pinching and shoving, etc
- unwelcome patting, touching, embracing
- repeated requests for dates, especially after refusal
- offensive gestures, jokes, comments, letters, phone calls or e-mail
- sexually and/or racially provocative remarks
- displays of sexually graphic material – pornography
- requests for sexual favours
- extreme forms of sexual harassment will lead to criminal prosecution

### **What do you do if you are being bullied or harassed?**

- tell the person you don't like what they are doing and you want them to stop
- discuss the matter with a Coordinator, Student Welfare Coordinator or peer mediator, peer support leader or a teacher that you feel comfortable with
- the school will take your concerns seriously - all complaints will be treated confidentially

### **How will your complaint be dealt with?**

Your concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated confidentially.

School procedures for responding to a student who bullies or harasses others are set out below.

#### **Level 1**

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

- stopping the bullying/re-statement of rules and consequences
- restorative questioning
- think time detention
- private conference
- shared control discussion

If the student does not take control over his/her behaviour, an Incident Report Form should be completed and submitted to the student welfare coordinator or principal/assistant principal.

## **Level 2**

If the bullying or harassment continues, or in instances of severe bullying or harassing, a referral should be made to the Student Welfare Coordinator.

Here, the Student Welfare Coordinator (or another who has responsibility for student welfare) may:

- meet with the student to develop a behaviour contract
- provide discussion/mentoring of different social and emotional learning competencies including structured learning activities
- conduct a restorative conference separately with the perpetrator and “target”

## **Level 3**

For ‘at risk’ students (many risk factors, few protective factors) whose bullying or harassing behaviour is severe and for other non-at risk students whose bullying or harassing and other aggressive behaviour is resistant to change, an individual ‘strength building’ plan should be developed by the student welfare coordinator in consultation with student, parents/carers and teachers. Individual strength-building plans and associated interventions 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 (skills, values).

## **Level 4**

Students whose severe bullying or harassing behaviour resists school efforts and represents a significant threat to the safety and wellbeing should be referred to outside agencies for evaluation. Student Welfare Coordinators will need to be familiar with those community agencies and organisations that can offer more intensive services to the student and student’s family.

**Note:** The school may choose, if bullying or harassment persists or the initial incident is of such magnitude, that parents/carers will be contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the school’s Student Code of Conduct. Furthermore, the principal may commence formal disciplinary action in line with ‘**Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines**’ (DEECD) at any stage in the process depending on contextual information relating to the severity of the bullying (including-cyber bullying) and harassment.

## **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](#)

Appendices which are connected with this policy are:

- Appendix A: Kilmore Primary School Incident Reporting Template

## **EVALUATION**

This policy will be reviewed annually or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

Kilmore Primary 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. (Bounceback, Restorative Practices, SWPBS)
- A bullying survey and yard survey will be administered and acted upon twice annually.
- School values and positive behaviour supports will be established and be embodied in daily practice.
- 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 eg: Bully Stoppers; Take a Stand, Lend a Hand and Bullying- No Way programs.
- Student Representative Council, peer support delegates, staff and students to promote the philosophy of 'No Put Downs'.
- Electives and structured activities available to students at lunch breaks.

### **B. Early Intervention**

- Promote children and staff reporting bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
- Classroom teachers and principal on a regular basis reminding students and staff to report incidents of bullying.
- Parents encouraged to contact school if they become aware of a problem.
- Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems.
- If student bullying, including cyber bullying is evident or presented parents will be contacted.

### **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, including cyber bullying, persists parents will be contacted. If staff bullying persists the Principal will commence formal disciplinary action.

#### **D. Post Violation**

- Consequences implemented will be consistent with the school's Behaviour Management Program.
- Consequences for ongoing behaviour 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, if needed
- 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

## School Improvement Strategies and Actions

Start up Program – two week program start of term one	Clear statements of attendance expectation to parents and students
School Wide Positive Behaviour Supports	Bully No Way initiative. <i>Take a Stand Together</i>
Welfare Program – counselling and student support	Modelling by adults for attendance, work ethic, punctuality and behaviour
Bounceback – focus at the beginning of each term and throughout year	Welfare Officer follows up all chronic absences
House Reward system – weekly and termly award	School attendance targeted with items in newsletter and on website
Early intervention with “at risk” students	Special Celebration days
Community liaison and contact with community groups – includes playgroups and kindergarten	Parents welcome at weekly school Assembly
Monitoring and recording of absences	Student Encouragement awards
Prompt follow-up of student absences – phone calls by Assistant Principal	Principal award
Newsletter articles	Peer Mediation
Student representative council	BullyStoppers initiative. <i>Take A Stand and Lend a Hand</i>
School and House captains	Inter School Sport
Better Buddies	Choir
Computer Club	Boys Gardening and School Improvement Group
Friendship Club	Recognition of 100% attendance
Kilmore’s Got Talent – Talent Program	Homework Club
Restorative Practices – Circle Time	Prep Discovery Days
Rock Band	Art Club

<b>Ratified by School Council:</b> 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2014	<b>Review Date:</b> As per Schedule
<i>Denise Barker</i> (Principal)	Date: 28/3/2014

**Appendix A: Next Page**

# APPENDIX A

## K.P.S INCIDENT REPORT

Child's/Children's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**LOCATION:**

- |   |                                    |                                  |                                  |
|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball court | <input type="checkbox"/> Astroturf | <input type="checkbox"/> Toilets | <input type="checkbox"/> P-2     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3-6 Playground   |                                    |                                  |                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playground       |                                    |                                  |                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hall             | <input type="checkbox"/> Oval      | <input type="checkbox"/> Stadium | <input type="checkbox"/> Walkway |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Halls            | <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom |                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Out of  |

**PROBLEM BEHAVIOUR:**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <i>Aggressive Behaviour</i>                           | <i>Disrespectful Behaviour</i>                 | <i>Unsafe</i>                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To staff                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Leaving       | <input type="checkbox"/> school grounds         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical              | <input type="checkbox"/> inappropriate language |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To students                  | <input type="checkbox"/> ignoring instructions | <input type="checkbox"/> Misuse of equipment    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Damaging/destroying property |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Student               | <input type="checkbox"/>                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical                     |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Climbing                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Property              |   |

**REASON FOR BEHAVIOUR or OBSERVATION:**

- |   |  |                                  |
|---|--|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid adult    | <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain adult attention  | <input type="checkbox"/> Ignore  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid peer     | <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain peer attention   | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disrespectful  |  |                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid activity | <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain items/activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown |

**OTHERS INVOLVED:**

- None  
  ES Staff  
  Teaching Staff  
  Peers  
  CRT  
  Peer Mediator  
 Unknown  
 Other

**CONSEQUENCE/ACTION:**

- MINOR  
  MAJOR  
 Consequence set by teacher  
 Conference with student  
 Mediation  
 Time In  
 Time in Office  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

**DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT:**

Reported by \_\_\_\_\_ student  witnessed by teacher

