Quarry Hill Primary School

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No. 1165

Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy

PURPOSE

Quarry Hill 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 forms will not be tolerated.**

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.

This Bullying and Harassment Policy should be read in conjunction with the Quarry Hill Primary School Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy.

AIMS

- To reinforce within the school community that no form of bullying is acceptable.

- To explain what bullying and harassment are, and the fact that they are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- 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.

DEFINITION

Bullying is when a person, or a group of people, repeatedly upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance. Bullying may be direct physical, direct verbal, indirect or cyberbullying. Bullying is not a one-off disagreement between two or more people or a situation of mutual dislike.

Bullying can be:

- **Direct physical bullying:** e.g. hitting, tripping and pushing or damaging property
- **Direct verbal bullying:** e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
- **Indirect bullying:** e.g. spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, and encouraging others to socially exclude a person, damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance, or cyberbullying.

Cyber-bullying is direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology. For example via a mobile, phone, chat rooms, social media, Xanga's (websites that host weblogs, photo blogs and social networking profiles) or MUD (virtual reality) rooms. It could involve setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces. It can be verbal or written.

Harassment is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person. It is reasonably likely to humiliate, offend, intimidate or distress a person. For example, teasing a student because of their speech impediment. (See Appendix A for detailed examples)

By-standers are those who watch bullying happen or hear about it. Bystanders can either be a part of the bullying problem or part of the solution to stop bullying.

What bullying is not.

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management. These include:

Mutual Conflict Situations which arise where there is a disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Mutual conflict situations will be closely monitored as they evolve in to a bullying situation.

One Off Acts of nastiness or meanness, including single incidents of loss of temper, shouting or swearing do not normally constitute bullying.

See Appendix C

Signs of Bullying

Major behaviour changes in a student may be indicative of bullying. Such behaviour changes may include:
- Crying at night and having nightmares;
- Refusing to talk when asked "What's wrong?"
- Having unexplained bruises, cuts or scratches;
- An unwillingness or refusal to go to school;
- Felling ill in the mornings;
- Becoming withdrawn or lacking confidence;
- A decline in the quality of school work;
- Beginning to bully siblings.

Parents/carers are encouraged to recognise signs of bullying and notify the School through the classroom teacher or assistant principal if they suspect their child is a victim of bullying.

Bullying Prevention Strategies:

- Quarry Hill Primary School recognizes that the implementation of whole school prevention strategies is the most effective way of minimising incidents of bullying in our community. The following initiatives form part of our overall bullying prevention strategy.
- A structured curriculum that provides age appropriate information and skills relating to bullying (including cyber-bullying) and bullying prevention. Preventative curriculum programs will promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, tolerance, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- Student programs will be organized to raise student awareness about bullying and harassment, being a bystander and to provide a forum for discussion 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, classroom discussions and occasional activities run by outside experts. The curriculum will include anti-bullying messages and strategies in line with DET materials e.g. Bully Stoppers: Make a Stand, Lend a Hand and 'No Blame Approach to Bullying".
- Promotion of responsible bystander behaviour amongst students, staff and parents/carers.
- Regular risk assessments of bullying within the School are undertaken by surveying students to identify bullying issues that may ordinarily go unnoticed by staff.
- Education, training and professional development of staff in bullying prevention and response strategies and updates on current issues/strategies for dealing with bullying and/or harassment issues.
- All new students and staff will be informed of the Bullying and 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. This policy will be clearly communicated to students, parents and staff on the school's website and through newsletters from time to time.

Responding to Bullying

Bullying behaviours vary enormously in their extent and intent and, as a consequence, each incident needs to be dealt with on its facts. Constructive strategies to deal with bullying and harassment will include: education in coping strategies; assertiveness training; problem solving, mentoring and social skills; counselling, peer support and behaviour modification. These strategies will be employed in preference to punitive sanctions and negative consequences.

In all circumstances the school will:
- Take bullying incidents seriously.
- Take time to properly investigate the facts including discussing the incident with the victim, the bully and any bystanders.
- Take the time to understand any concerns of individuals involved.
- Maintain records of reported bullying incidents and
- Will escalate its response when dealing with persistent bullies and/or severe incidents.

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 and/or staff may elect to use one or more anti-bullying practices:
- restorative questioning
- time in
- private conference
- shared control discussion
- provide counselling and support to the victim

If the student does not take control over his/her behavior then it becomes a level 2 behaviour

Level 2

If the bullying or harassment continues, or in instances of severe bullying or harassing, it should be added to Compass and the Principal/Assistant Principal notified. They may:

- notification of/consultation with parents
- meet with the bully to develop a focus plan
- provide discussion/mentoring of different social and emotional learning competencies including structured learning activities
- provide counselling and support to the victim
- conduct a restorative conference separately with the bully 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, associated interventions will be implemented to 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). Families will be offered support to connect with community agencies and organisations that can offer more intensive services to the student and student's family.

Level 4

Students whose severe bullying or harassing behaviour resists school efforts and represents a significant threat to the safety and wellbeing will be recommended for referral to outside agencies for evaluation.

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 '***Student Engagement Policy Guidelines'*** *(DET)* at any stage in the process depending on contextual information relating to the severity of the bullying (including-cyber bullying) and harassment

The role of stakeholders in support of our bullying prevention policy:

Children should

- Practise strategies taught in the classroom.
- Use positive language and behaviour towards 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.

Staff should

- Teach and model appropriate behaviours and strategies to deal with bullying.
- Teach and clarify for children the terms, meanings and distinct differences between bullying, social isolation, conflict, one of acts.
- Teach and promote resilience and tolerance.
- Keep up to date and maintain their classroom records of incidences.

- Teach and model active listening so that all incidents are treated seriously.
- Recognise and value the partnership between home and school.
- Provide support for the families through the school's wellbeing structure.
- Initiate and arrange meetings as required.
- Document fully any actions taken in response to student bullying and/or harassment (see Appendix B).

Parents/carers should

- Remain calm…to act not react.
- Be aware of the 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 bullying.
- Advise their child to report incidents of bullying immediately to a teacher. If possible encourage your child to report the incident themselves.
- Encourage your child to use their nominated support network when at school.
- Encourage their children to speak openly with them and to look at positive strategies to deal with their feelings.
- Stress to their children that taking part in any bullying still makes them responsible for their actions.
- 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.

Links and Appendices

Links which are connected with this policy are:

- DET's Student Engagement Policy Guidelines
- DET's Respectful Relationships
- DET's Vulnerable Students
- Quarry Hill Primary School's CyberSafety Policy (on school website)

Appendices which are connected with this policy are:

- Appendix A: Explanation of Harassment

- Appendix B Incident Template

- Appendix C Is It Bullying? Flowchart

REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION

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

APPENDIX A: WHAT IS BULLYING

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

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

APPENDIX B – REPORTING ON INCIDENT OF BULLYING/HARRASMENT (COMPASS TEMPLATE)

Staff member recording incident:

Date: /   /

Name of student(s) who appears to have instigated bullying _____

Year: _____

Name of target(s) _____

Name(s) of witnesses

_____

Did you observe the incident?   YES ☐   NO ☐

If 'NO' who reported the incident to you _____

Brief description of incident (what was allegedly said or done to the student who appears to have been bullied?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What form(s) of bullying took place?

Verbal ☐ Physical ☐ Indirect   ☐   Cyber   ☐

Other ☐   Please detail:

Describe how you responded (Did you use a school anti-bullying practice?)

_____

_____

Describe how student responded to your intervention

_____

_____

_____

Where / when / time incident took place:

Location:

_____

When: before school ☐   recess ☐   lunch ☐   in class ☐   after school ☐

Time: ___ _____ :   am/pm

Date incident took place: / ___

Additional comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX C – WHAT IS BULLYING? FLOW CHART

Quarry Hill Primary School's 'What is Bullying?' Flow Chart

Was the action deliberate? → No →

↓ Yes

Is this an ongoing issue? → No → **Not Bullying**

↓ Yes

Not Bullying ← No

Does the incident fit within one of the definitions of bullying?

Physical Bullying

Hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching, pushing or damaging property.

Verbal Bullying

Name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic remarks, racist remarks, or verbal abuse.

Indirect Bullying

Lying and spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude someone, damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance.

Cyber Bullying

Harassment via a mobile phone, iPad or hand held devices, setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces.

↓ Yes

Refer to Quarry Hill Primary School's Bullying Prevention Policy as to what action you need to take.