

RATIONALE

It is important for the school to provide a safe and friendly 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. There is a zero tolerance approach to bullying at Barton Primary School.

AIM

This Approach to Bullying Policy is intended:

- To reinforce within the school community what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable.
- To alert everyone within the school community of the signs and evidence of bullying and to ensure bullying is reported to staff whether a person is an observer or a victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.
- Implement whole school strategies to minimise the development of bullying behaviours

The effects of harassment or bullying include

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

DEFINITION

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, deliberately upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying with the bully or bullies having more power at the time due to age, size, status or other reasons.

Bullying may occur because of perceived differences such as culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability or disability, religion, body size, and physical appearance, age or economic status. Bullying may be motivated by jealousy, distrust, fear, misunderstanding or lack of knowledge. It can continue over time, is often hidden from adults and will probably continue if no action is taken.

Types of Bullying

There are four broad types of bullying:

Direct physical bullying: includes hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property.

Direct verbal bullying: includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.

Indirect bullying: is often harder to recognise and can be carried out behind the bullied person'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 and humiliate
- mimicking
- encouraging others to socially exclude someone
- damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance

Cyberbullying: is direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technologies. This may include harassment, via a mobile phone, iPad or other hand held devices, setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces.

IMPLEMENTATION

- A school-wide approach will be taken to deal with bullying (including cyber bullying) in a consistent and systematic way.
- Barton Primary 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 Bullying Prevention Policy.
- The Bullying Prevention Policy of the school will be widely promoted to students, staff, parents/carers and the local community.
- The school leadership team and teachers will ensure the safety and wellbeing of all school members in situations of bullying (including cyber bullying), by thoroughly investigating all complaints, respecting the need for confidentiality, notifying parents/carers and planning interventions.
- If a teacher feels a student is at imminent risk from bullying (including cyber bullying) then it is their professional duty to pass on the information to an appropriate person such as a Principal Class member, in order to ensure appropriate support for the student. It is important that teachers fully document their interaction with the student and to verify the actions taken by recording information on Sentral.
- Student programs will be organized to raise student awareness about bullying (including cyber bullying) 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 bullying prevention messages and strategies in line with current DET materials e.g. "The Friendly Schools" and "No Blame Approach to Bullying" programs.

BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

26/04/2018

- Professional development will be provided for staff relating to bullying (including cyber bullying) and proven strategies to address these issues in classrooms will be shared with all staff.

EVALUATION

Evaluation of the effectiveness of these guidelines and the established school procedures will be conducted through:

- Informal feedback from staff, parents, students (where appropriate), and School Council.
- Surveys developed by the Wellbeing Committee for students, teachers and parents.
- Official DE&T Parent and Staff surveys.

WELLBEING & LEARNING SUPPORT TEAMS

These teams will be responsible for the implementation and review of the Bullying Prevention Policy. The teams will:

- Regularly review student behaviour data to assess the effectiveness of this policy.
- Review the program that addresses bullying each year in consultation with staff.
- Consult with the school community if amendments to this policy are to be made.

In addition this policy will be reviewed every two years as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was ratified by School Council on 21st September 2017



Definitions:

<http://www.stopbullying.gov/what-is-bullying/roles-kids-play/index.html>

<https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/respectfulsafe.pdf>

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/bullying.aspx>

Barton
PRIMARY SCHOOL

APPENDIX A SUPPORTING THE BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

CHILDREN SHOULD:

- Practise strategies taught in the classroom during wellbeing sessions.
- Model acceptable behaviour to others.
- Be a responsible bystander and take appropriate action. (i.e. If it's not safe, it's safe to tell)
- 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.
- Use positive language and behaviour towards all others.

TEACHERS SHOULD:

- Teach and model appropriate behaviours and strategies to deal with bullying.
- Teach and clarify for the children the terms, meanings and distinct differences between, bullying, social isolation, conflict, random acts of aggression/intimidation and meanness.
- Teach and promote resilience.
- Keep up to date and maintain their classroom records of incidents.
- Teach and model active listening so that all incidents are treated seriously.
- Recognise and value the partnership between home and school.

ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT STAFF SHOULD:

- Promote our School Bullying Prevention Policy and Procedures.
- Teach and model appropriate behaviours.
- Teach and clarify for students the terms, meanings and distinct differences between, bullying, social isolation, conflict, random acts of aggression/intimidation and meanness.
- Teach and promote resilience to students.
- Teach and model active listening so that all incidents are treated seriously.
- Provide counselling and other support services as required.
- Provide support for parent/guardians through the school's pastoral care structure, information seminars and support networks.
- Initiate and arrange meetings with stakeholders at the reporting stage of the procedure.
- Recognise and value the partnership between home and school.

PARENTS SHOULD:

- Remain calm....to act not to 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 children to report incidents of bullying immediately to a teacher. If possible encourage children to report the incident themselves. They will gain more self-respect by taking the initiative themselves rather than relying on a parent to take action.
- Encourage children to have and 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 any part in bullying still makes them responsible for their actions.
- Recognise and value the partnership between home and school.
- It is the parent's responsibility to care for and support his or her own children.
- Support their child in the knowledge that the resolution of the situation may take some time.
- Stress to them that school should be a safe place for everyone, regardless of the differences between people. No-one deserves being bullied because they speak, look or act differently or in a way 'you don't like'.
- Show support for the school's consequences for bullying

IF BULLYING HAS OCCURRED THE FOLLOWING WILL HAPPEN

If a parent feels their child has been involved in a bullying incident as defined by our school Bullying Prevention Policy the following steps should be taken:

THE SCHOOL WILL:

For the child who is the victim of bullying:

1. Clarify the facts of the incident.
2. Discuss the incident with the student(s) concerned.
3. Make sure that the victim of the bullying has been given strategies to deal with a similar problem in the future.
4. Make sure the Class Teacher has been informed.
5. Make sure the Assistant Principal and Principal has been informed.
6. Keep open lines of communication with parents

For the child who is displaying the bully behaviours:

1. Clarify the facts of the incident.
2. Discuss the incident with the student(s) concerned.
3. Link actions to consequences including time out, discipline note, detention or suspension as required.
4. Restate the school rules on discipline and acceptable behaviour.
5. Coordinate a restorative discussion including an apology
6. Aim to bring about a change of attitude.
7. Discuss with perpetrator other options in reacting to incidents.
8. Make sure the Class Teacher has been informed.
9. Make sure the Assistant Principal and Principal has been informed.
10. Keep open lines of communication with parents

SUPPORT AFTER INCIDENT

It is important that appropriate strategies are put in place after the incident has been resolved for all students involved.

Appropriate strategies may include:-

- conciliation meetings between all parties
- ongoing monitoring of students involved.
- identification of an agreed key contact staff member for each student involved.
- follow-up meetings regarding each child's management strategy.
- ongoing communication with parents.
- counselling from appropriate agencies of support officers etc for both parties.
- reinforcement of positive behaviours and appropriate behaviour strategies.