



BULLYING POLICY DRAFT

RATIONALE:

All members of the school community have the right to attend the school in an environment that is safe, supportive and free from harassment in any form.

- Emotional
- Physical
- Verbal

The act of bullying is a violation of this right. The school environment includes all aspects of schooling including classrooms, playgrounds, travelling to and from school, school camps and excursions, sporting events, Out of School Hours programs, instrumental music programs, canteen and all other related areas.

The Bullying Policy fits under the umbrella of the Student Wellbeing Policy framework.

What Bullying is:

Bullying involves:

- deliberate and repetitive acts which cause distress for the targeted person, not only at the time but from fear of future incidents
- acts that can be physical, verbal or visual (electronic or text, psychological, gesture, exclusion) and can involve victimisation of a sexual, social, economic, religious or racial nature
- the inappropriate use of power by one or more people over another person or group
- the violation of an individual's right to feel safe and happy

Bullying Isn't:

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 want a resolution to the problem.

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

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.

Purpose:

To ensure that instances of bullying are identified and acted upon thus enabling individuals to learn, work and grow in a safe environment by:

- defining and publicising what constitutes bullying
- identifying bullying behaviours and providing support to address the behavioural problems
- identifying the effects bullying has on the **targeted** member of the school community and providing them with the required support and strategies to enable them to interact with peers with assertiveness and confidence

- providing the **observers** of instances of bullying with strategies to assist the target and report the bullying

A **Target** is an individual or group that acts of bullying are perpetrated against.

An **Observer** is someone who witnesses an act of bullying against someone else.

IMPLEMENTATION:

The implementation of this policy –

Requires staff to:

- raise awareness of bullying issues through school activities such as the Learning to Learn program, incursions, assembly items, personal development programs YCDI! Newsletter items and classroom activities
- attend Professional Development sessions on bullying. These to include:
 - Types of bullying
 - Effects of bullying on the target, school community, instigator and observers
- change the ethos from "dobbing" to "helping someone"
- treat disclosures by parents and students with discretion and sensitivity
- provide social skills programs to develop problem solving, assertiveness conflict resolution and resilience
- regularly revisit and reinforce the school/class rules and values and clarify the school's policy on bullying
- actively supervise during yard duty to help reduce opportunities for bullying
- assessing risks and identifying needs
- providing school based counselling and support
- developing and implementing community and staff programs to improve skills
- making referrals to external service providers
- establishing student support groups
- promote a working partnership between the school and the home in dealing with all instances of bullying
- provide ongoing counselling and support as required.

Requires students to:

- refuse to be involved in any bullying situation
- if a student is present when bullying occurs – if appropriate, take some form of action to let the bullying student know that his/her behaviour is unacceptable;
- report the incident to the class or duty teacher.

Requires parents to:

- ask your child to tell a staff member about any incidents where they believe they have been bullied
- ask your child not to retaliate to incidents of bullying
- be prepared to discuss incidents with the school and co-operate with the school to solve the problem. This would apply to the parents of the bullying, student, and the parents of the bullied student.

Protocols will be established to deal with bullying. These will include Prevention, Early Intervention, Intervention and Postvention strategies as outlined in the **Safe School Are Effective Schools** (<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/default.htm>) documentation produced by Student Welfare and Support Branch, DEECD

This will be accomplished by:

Procedure for dealing with bullying

- All staff must be prepared to deal with incidents of bullying, of which they are aware or are brought to their attention
- Students should report an incident of bullying to any teacher
- Teachers should investigate the complaint and all incidents must be fully documented by teachers
- The teacher should meet with the bully and discuss his/her behaviour with them. Teachers should counsel the bullying student/s with the aim of assisting them to recognise that their behaviour is a form of bullying with hurtful consequences. Bullying students will also be made aware that their actions may constitute a breach of the law
- Consequences for the bullying student/s will be implemented consistent with Box Hill North Primary School Student Booklet
- The teacher will discuss with the individual who was bullied that the incident has been dealt with and emphasise to the student the importance of immediately reporting any further incidents should they occur
- In all cases the staff member dealing with the incident will contact the parents of both bullying student and the bullied student. Where necessary home contacts will be made by the Principal/Assistant Principal
- If the student continues to bully others, they will be referred to the Principal/Assistant Principal
- If the bullying continues parents of the student will be requested to attend a meeting with the Principal
- If appropriate, counseling will be offered to both the bullying student and the bullied student
- Police may be involved if the nature of the bullying is so serious as to warrant their involvement.

STRATEGIES:

For teachers:

- Professional Development on bullying including PD provided by experts and school psychologists on types of bullying and confidentiality.

For instigators of bullying:

- Classroom teacher consulted by parent/staff member/student
- School staff member investigates issues with named student
- A controlled and supervised meeting arranged between the instigator and the target to ascertain the problems and the effects the behaviours are having
- For continued behaviour parents will be contacted and a meeting will be organised between parents, classroom teacher and student welfare coordinator
- Continued behaviours will result in children being referred to the school social worker and/or guidance officer (parent consent required).

For Targets:

- Acknowledge their feelings about the situation and that there will be follow up
- Empowerment through the provision of strategies they can apply in situations
- Provide strategies to assist them in making friends.
- Classroom teacher to be consulted by parent/welfare coordinator/Principal/Assistant Principal and students
- Parents consulted and informed.

For Observers:

- To change the ethos from "dobbing" to "helping someone"
- Provide strategies that students can use to effectively report instances of bullying to the right channel
- To see that reporting is effective and achieves results
- Ensure confidentiality of reporting

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This policy was ratified by School Council:

Next policy review: