

BULLYING & HARASSMENT



Latest DET Update: 23/02/2016

First Developed: November 2014

Reviewed: February, May, September & November 2015

Updated: March 2016

Rationale

- Everyone - students, staff and parents – have the right to a safe school environment which is free from bullying of any kind. Bullying affects everyone and it is the responsibility of all members of our community to address and prevent its occurrence.

Purpose

- To create a safe and respectful school environment and prevent bullying, cyber bullying and other unacceptable behaviours.
- To ensure Seaholme Primary School complies with DET policy and guidelines.

Definitions

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, deliberately upsets or hurts another person or damages 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.

Cyberbullying is direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technologies. This includes harassment via a mobile phone, setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces.

Homophobic Bullying on the basis of sexuality is a common experience for young people who are same sex attracted or for those who may not behave according to gender stereotypes.

Categories of bullying include direct physical bullying (hitting, kicking, pinching, pushing or damaging property), direct verbal bullying (name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, racist remarks or verbal abuse), indirect verbal bullying (lying or spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes, mimicking or encouraging others to socially exclude someone) and cyberbullying (direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technologies including harassment using a mobile phone, setting up a defamatory website or deliberately excluding someone from social spaces).

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

Mutual conflict involves an argument or disagreement between people but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

Social rejection or dislike is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Single-episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. However, this does not mean that single episodes should be ignored or condoned as these are unacceptable behaviours.

Implementation

- Seaholme Primary School will:
 - promote and support safe and respectful learning environments where bullying is not tolerated
 - provide clear definitions of what is and what is not bullying, including descriptions of the different subtypes of bullying
 - put in place whole-school strategies and initiatives as outlined in DET's anti-bullying policy
 - develop a Student Engagement Policy that includes processes and strategies to prevent and respond to incidents of bullying and other forms of unacceptable behaviour.
 - involve students, staff and parents in updating the Student Engagement Policy.

- take a whole-school approach focusing on safety and wellbeing
- consistently respond to all incidents of bullying that have been reported to the school and ensure that planned interventions are used to respond to these incidents
- ensure that support is provided to any student who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour
- provide regular updates, within the bounds of privacy legislation, to parents or caregivers about the management of incidents
- address cyber bullying as part of its *Internet / Social Media Policy*
- The school will ensure the policy is easily accessible within the school community and published on the school's website.
- If circumstances warrant, the school may consider using [Bullying No Way!](#) and the [National Safe Schools Framework](#).
- For further information, the school will refer to the DET resources at the website below.
- Please refer to the school specific procedures below.
- Please refer also to the school's *Child Safe Policy*, the *Duty of Care Policy* and the *Student Engagement Policy*.

Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed annually as part of preparing the Annual Report or if guidelines change (latest DET update late February 2016).

This update was ratified by School Council on 1st August

Reference:
www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/bullying.aspx