

# Bullying and Harassment Policy

## 1. Definitions

- 1.1 **ACER** - Australian Council for Educational Research.
- 1.2 **Bullying** - when someone, or a group of people, unreasonably and repeatedly upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance. 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.
  - 1.2.1 Direct physical bullying includes but is not limited to hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property.
  - 1.2.2 Direct verbal bullying includes but is not limited to name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.
  - 1.2.3 Indirect bullying includes but is not limited to lying and spreading rumours, planning nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude someone and damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance. Cyber Bullying - consists of covert, psychological bullying, conveyed through the electronic mediums such as mobile phones, websites, social media platforms and on-line chat rooms. It may be verbal (over the telephone or mobile phone) or written (threats, racial, sexual or homophobic harassment) using the various mediums available. Examples of Cyber Bullying include but are not limited to teasing, spreading rumours or posting inappropriate photos online, sending unwanted messages, posting defamatory materials or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces.
- 1.3 **Harassment** – includes but is not limited to any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.
- 1.4 **Positive Behaviour Model** – school wide process to manage student behaviour
- 1.5 **Principal Class** – School Principal and Assistant Principal
- 1.6 **Sentral** - School and Student Management System.

## 2. Purpose

- 2.1 Coatesville Primary School is committed to providing a safe and caring environment which enables positive relationships to be formed between students, staff and the wider school community.
- 2.2 A clear policy on Bullying and Harassment informs the community that Bullying and Harassment in any of its forms will not be tolerated. Everyone has a legal right to protection from Harassment under the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act and the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act.
- 2.3 People who are bullied or harassed might experience 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. Our aims are:

- 2.3.1 to reinforce within the school community that no form of Bullying or Harassment is acceptable;
- 2.3.2 to alert everyone within the school community to signs and evidence of Bullying or Harassment and that everyone has a responsibility to report it to staff whether they are an observer or target;
- 2.3.3 to ensure that if a member of the school community sees another person being harassed or bullied they report it to staff;
- 2.3.4 to ensure that all reported incidents of Bullying are followed up and that support is given to both the target and perpetrator; and
- 2.3.5 to seek parental and peer group support and co-operation at all times.

### **3. Guidelines**

- 3.1 A school wide approach will be taken to deal with Bullying and Harassment which will follow the school's Positive Behaviour Model in a consistent and systematic way.
- 3.2 The Bullying and Harassment Policy of the school will be widely promoted to students, staff, parents/carers and the local community.
- 3.3 All new students and staff will be informed of the Policy when they start at the school. A summary of the Policy will be included in the Student Enrolment Package, while new staff will receive extensive documentation on the topic as part of the school's induction process.
- 3.4 All complaints of Bullying and Harassment will be heard in confidence and taken seriously.
- 3.5 The school organises preventative curriculum programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- 3.6 Staff programs will occur periodically to keep staff informed of current issues and strategies for dealing with Bullying and Harassment.
- 3.7 There are disciplinary consequences, covering a range of strategies, for those in breach of the Policy. (see Student Engagement, Wellbeing & Inclusion Policy). [hyperlink](#)

### **4. Implementation**

- 4.1 Our school promotes curriculum programs to strengthen bullying prevention and reduce Bullying incidents through the consistent implementation of the Positive Behaviour Model and restorative practice.
- 4.2 Student programs are organised to raise student awareness about Bullying and Harassment, to provide a forum for discussion of matters and to aid development of positive 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 professionals. The curriculum will include anti-bullying messages and strategies in line with our school values, PYP – IB learner profiles and attitudes and current DET materials e.g. Building Respectful Relationships.
- 4.3 The school leadership team and the teachers will work together to ensure the safety of all school members in situations of Bullying and/or Harassment, by thoroughly investigating all complaints while respecting the need for confidentiality, notifying parents/carers and planning interventions.

- 4.4 Constructive strategies to deal with Bullying and Harassment include: education in coping strategies; assertiveness training; problem solving and social skills; counselling and behaviour support plans. These strategies are employed in preference to punitive sanctions and negative consequences.
- 4.5 Buddy systems and support programs are set up at the start of the year between different grade levels to link groups and individual students. This provides a positive support network for students in the school community, including the playground at recess and lunch.
- 4.6 If a teacher believes a student is at serious and imminent risk from Bullying and Harassment, then it is their professional duty to pass on the information to Principal class to ensure appropriate support for the student. It is important that teachers document their interaction with the student/s and verify the actions taken on Sentral.
- 4.7 There are disciplinary consequences, covering a range of strategies, for those in breach of the Policy. Such consequences will comply with the Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy and will be in accordance with DET guidelines.
- 4.8 Professional development is provided for staff relating to Bullying and Harassment and proven strategies to address these issues in classrooms will be shared with all staff.
- 4.9 The school provides specialist resources such as books, videos, kits and off site in service activities to assist staff in responding appropriately to Bullying and Harassment.
- 4.10 Sentral is used to monitor the rates of Bullying, Cyber Bullying and other forms of Harassment and abuse at school. This information is monitored and analysed by the Assistant Principal-Student Wellbeing Coordinator, in consultation with the Principal.
- 4.11 The Student Attitude to School Survey, Social & Emotion Wellbeing survey (ACER) and the Parent Opinion Survey data are used to monitor the success of all student based strategies and approaches.
- 4.12 eSmart Guidelines on cyber safety are followed.

## **5. Resources**

5.1 DET links connected with this policy are:

5.1.1 DET's Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines

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

DET's Safe Schools are Effective Schools

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

5.1.2 DET's Student Engagement Policy Guidelines

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/engagepol.aspx>

5.1.3 DET's Respectful Schools

<http://tas-education.org/doe/respectful-schools/Respectful-Schools-Respectful-Behaviour.pdf>

## **6. Related School Policies**

6.1 eSmart Policy.

6.2 Student Code of Conduct.

6.3 Students Engagement, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy.

**7. Evaluation**

7.1 This policy will be reviewed every two years (or as required) as part of the school's policy review cycle.

**This policy ratified by School Council on**

**2017**