



## **Bullying Policy**

**Policy No: 2.15**

### **Definition of Bullying**

“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.” \*\*

<b>Types of Bullying</b> There are four broad categories of bullying			
<b>Direct Physical Bullying</b>	<b>Direct Verbal Bullying</b>	<b>Indirect bullying</b>	<b>Cyber-bullying,</b>
This form includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hitting, tripping, pushing or physically hurting another person in the group.</li> <li>• Damaging the property of others</li> </ul>	This form includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name calling</li> <li>• Insults</li> <li>• Homophobic or racist or sexist remarks</li> <li>• Verbal abuse</li> <li>• Put downs</li> </ul>	This form of bullying is harder to recognise and often carried out behind the bullied person’s back. It is designed to harm someone’s social reputation and /or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lying and spreading rumours</li> <li>• Playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate</li> <li>• Mimicking</li> <li>• Encouraging others to socially exclude someone</li> <li>• Damaging someone’s social reputation and social acceptance</li> </ul>	Cyber-bullying, which involves the use of email, text messages, chat rooms and social internet networks (e.g., facebook), to humiliate and distress someone.

### **What Bullying is Not\*\***

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:

#### **1.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 usually

both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

### **2.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.

### **3.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.

*\*\*Definitions have been taken from "Building Respectful and Safe Schools -A resource for school communities" DEECD 2011*

## **Rationale**

Wales Street Primary School provides a positive culture where bullying by students, parents and staff is not accepted. All students have the right to learn and feel safe and secure in the school environment.

## **Aims**

- To ensure that members of our school community are able to learn, work and socialise in a school environment free from bullying.
- For our school community to have an understanding of all forms of bullying and to develop and implement effective strategies to prevent and counter bullying
- Reinforce within the school that no form of bullying is acceptable.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

## **Guidelines for Implementation**

Wales Street Primary School is committed to providing all students and community members with a safe and healthy school free from bullying and intimidation.

Every child has a responsibility to behave in a responsible manner, to comply with this policy, the school values and our rights and responsibilities as well as treating everyone who works and learns at Wales Street Primary School with dignity and respect.

The school promotes and aims to provide a safe and happy learning environment which meets the needs of our children at all levels of their primary school life.

Our students are taught two main rights that apply to all:

- **Everyone has the right to learn without distraction**
- **Everyone has the right to feel safe and comfortable.**

These rights are supported by shared communal responsibility to maintain these rights by all students, staff and parents/carers. These rights apply to inside and outside the classroom.

Our school policy is also based on:

- The right to be respected and treated with kindness

- The right to express ourselves
- The right to expect our property to be safe.
- The right to receive help and assistance from others
- The right to privacy
- The right to be treated fairly

All students are taught these rights as an integral part of the strategies deployed by staff when dealing with incidents of bullying. Wales Street Primary School will not tolerate bullying behaviour either in the school or during other activities organised by the school.

Strategies to deal with the issue of bullying include:

- A. Prevention
- B. Early Intervention
- C. Intervention
- D. Post-intervention

#### **A. Prevention strategies:**

- Providing professional learning for all staff relating to bullying, harassment and proven counter measures.
- Identifying, defining and communicating the difference between conflict and bullying to students and the community.
- Planned teaching and learning linked to anti-bullying.
- Teaching for and about diversity.
- Teaching students about problem solving, conflict resolution and anger management.
- Using the curriculum/values/social skills programs to teach about respectful relationships.
- Junior School Council, staff and students to promote the philosophy of “No Put downs”
- Structured activities available to students at lunch breaks.
- Consistent approach to behaviour management by all staff established and reviewed each year.
- Promote positive relationships through information included in the newsletter and on the website.

#### **B. Early Intervention**

- The school will provide programs that promote resilience, life skills and protective factors such as:
  - Start of the year program to establish consistent expectations
  - Essential Class Agreements
  - Lunch clubs
  - Values and life skills programs, - Bounce Back!/You Can Do It!
  - Student Leadership programs- JSC , House Captains, PE monitors
  - High expectations through the rights and responsibilities approach
  - Cyber bullying awareness
  - Restorative Practices
  - Prep buddies and effective transition programs.
  - Bystander training/ programs
  - Assertiveness training

- Buddy systems
- Parents encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem.
- Employment of a Welfare Officer and establishment of a welfare team

### **C. Intervention strategies:**

- Students will be encouraged to report bullying incidents they experience and witness
- Once identified each bully, victim and witnesses will be spoken with, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented.
- Both the bullies and victims will be offered counselling and teaching strategies to counter bullying.
- Involving parents when appropriate about bullying issues and encouraging parents to contact the school if they become aware of a problem.
- Implementing consequences for those who bully others as well as providing counselling for them to deal with their issues.
- Teaching students of their responsibilities as contributors or bystanders.
- Implement student surveys each year and use the results as feedback to monitor policy/strategy effectiveness
- Data and records will be kept to monitor student behaviour and identify any issues/ negative pattern behaviour that may need to be addressed.

### **D. Post-intervention strategies:**

- Incidents of bullying will be investigated, documented and followed up by a member of the welfare team or staff
- Monitoring situations between the students who were involved in a bullying incident, to ensure that their safety and wellbeing are maintained.
- Informing parents of strategies to prevent and deal with bullying.
- Reviewing and evaluating behaviour codes and policies regularly.
- Consequences for bullying behaviour will be individually based and may involve:
  - exclusion from the yard
  - exclusion from class
  - school suspension
  - withdrawal of privileges
  - ongoing counselling from appropriate agency for both victim and bully
  - Restorative practices to repair relationships.
- Classroom meetings
- Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies
- Reinforcement of positive behaviours

### **Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed with staff, student and parent input as part of a three year cycle.

## **Resources**

Victorian Essential Learning Standards. Refer to <http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au>

Bullying. No Way! Website, Australian Education Authorities, 2010. Access at <http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au>

Friendly Kids Friendly Classrooms. Available from Pearson Education Australia [www.pearsoned.com.au](http://www.pearsoned.com.au)

\* Bounce Back! wellbeing framework. Access at <http://www.bounceback.com.au>

\* You Can Do It! Education. Access at <http://www.youcandoiteducation.com/>

“Building Respectful and Safe Schools - A resource for school communities”:

DEECD 2011

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