Bullying Prevention Policy
Policy No: 2.15

Rationale

Wales Street Primary School is committed to providing a safe and respectful teaching and learning environment where bullying and harassment is not tolerated. All students have the right to learn and feel safe and secure in the school environment.

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological aggressive behaviour by a person or group directed towards a less powerful person or group that is intended to cause harm, distress or fear. ***

Aims

- To ensure that members of our school community are able to learn, work and socialise in a school environment free from bullying.

- To explain what bullying and harassment are, and the fact that they are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

- To ask that everyone in the school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.

- 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.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is when a person, or a group of people, repeatedly upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance. Bullying may be direct physical, direct verbal, indirect or cyberbullying. Bullying is not a one-off disagreement between two or more people or a situation of mutual dislike.

Bullying can be:

1. **Direct physical bullying** – e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.

2. **Direct verbal bullying** – e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.

3. **Indirect bullying** – e.g. spreading rumors, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude a person, damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance, or cyberbullying.

   - **Cyber-bullying** is direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology. For example via a mobile phone, chat rooms, social media. It could involve setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces. It can be verbal or written.

   - **Harassment** is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome and which is reasonably likely to

humiliate, offend, intimidate or distress a person. For example, teasing a student because of their speech impediment.

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.

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.
- Professional development in the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships program and delivery of the curriculum

- 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.
- Parent Information sessions to support understanding of the impact of cyber bullying and technology management.

B. Early Intervention

The school will provide programs that promote resilience, life skills and protective factors such as:
- IB Learner Profile and Attitudes (e.g. being courageous - bystander behaviour)
- Learn to Learn program to establish consistent expectations including bystander behaviour
- Essential Class Agreements
- Lunch clubs
- Resilience Programs such as The Resilience Project and Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships
- Student Leadership programs- JSC , House Captains,
- High expectations through the rights and responsibilities approach
- Cyber bullying awareness
- Restorative Practices
- Prep buddies and effective transition programs.
- Bystander training through incursions and embedded in relevant units of inquiry
- Buddy systems such as partner classes
- Parents encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem.
- Employment of a Welfare Officer and establishment of a welfare team
- School Nurse program
- Cyber bullying PD for students and teachers in senior classes and when relevant
- Esmart school initiative to support prevention of cyber bullying and technology management.

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 as part of a three year cycle.

Resources

*** http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/what.aspx

http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/personal-and-social-capability/introduction/scope-and-sequence

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

Bully stoppers http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/classresources.aspx

For parents:
http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/parents.aspx

You Can Do It! Education. Access at http://www.youcandoiteducation.com/

The Resilience Project http://theresilienceproject.com.au/

"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

Version	Edited by/Comments	Next review
1	Ratified by School Council	2013
2	Reviewed and ratified by SC 2017	2020

Approved by School Council: June 2017   *Review*: 2020