



Anti-Bullying Policy

At Sheidow Park School all members of the school community have the right to feel safe, supported and cared for. Our school values of Respect, Responsibility and Persistence underpin this and it is EVERYONE'S responsibility to ensure this happens. Bullying and harassment are issues which are treated very seriously as they can adversely affect a person's ability to work and learn. Evidence suggests that the development of resilience and positive self-esteem can help protect people from the harmful effects of bullying, as well as help them build positive peer relationships.

What is bullying?

Bullying is an **ongoing** misuse of power in relationships through **repeated** verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical or psychological harm. *Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying.* Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Types of bullying:

- Harassment occurs when someone is made to feel intimidated, insulted or humiliated because of their: identity, race, culture or ethnic origin, religion, physical characteristics, gender, sexual orientation/identity, marital, parenting or economic status, age, ability or disability.
- Discrimination occurs when people are treated less favourably than others because of their race, culture or ethnic origin, religion, physical characteristics, gender, sexual orientation, marital, parenting or economic status, age, ability or disability. Discrimination commonly involves exclusion or rejection.
- Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. Violence may involve provoked acts, a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.
- Cyber bullying is a term used to describe bullying that is carried out through internet or mobile phone technologies. It is often combined with offline bullying and may include a combination of behaviours such as pranking, sending insulting text messages, publishing someone's private information, creating hate sites or implementing social exclusion campaigns in social networking sites. It is also cyber bullying when student(s) use technology to run a multi-step campaign to bully another student, e.g. setting another student up to be assaulted, video-recording their humiliation, posting the recording online and then sending the website to others.

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What you can do about bullying?

- **Who to report it to** – a teacher or another adult within the school, a parent or caregiver, or the front office staff, who will then direct your concerns to the appropriate person.
- **How to report it** – tell the trusted adult where the bullying happened, how often it has happened and what you have done to try and stop it.
- **When to report** – report bullying in the early stages. Do not leave it too long. When bullying is ignored it may get worse.

How do I recognise a student who is being bullied?

Students affected by bullying and harassment may not talk about it with their teachers or school leadership. They may be afraid that it will only make things worse, or that it is wrong to tell tales or 'dob-on' other students. When people are bullied or harassed they may feel angry, embarrassed, frightened, humiliated, uncomfortable, scared or unsafe. Some signs a child or young person is being bullied or harassed may be:

- Reduced ability to concentrate and learn.
- Refusal to attend school, excuses not to go.
- Unexplained cuts, bruises or scratches.
- Stolen or damaged possessions/clothing.
- Acting out, tearful, sadness, lack of interest in usual activities.
- Unwillingness to discuss (or secrecy about) their online communications.

You believe your child is being bullied...

- Listen calmly to your child.
- Discourage any planned retaliation, either physical or verbal.
- Let your child know that telling you about the bullying or harassment is the right thing to do.
- If necessary, assist your child in discussing the problem with a teacher or member of the school leadership team. Encourage positive strategies such as:
 - Using a strong, confident voice.
 - Staying away from the place where the bullying is occurring.
 - Don't react; just walk away.
 - Don't show that you are scared, even though you might be.
 - Tell the bully "It hasn't affected me" and walk away confidently.

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Responsibilities of leadership team, teachers, students and parents

A range of consequences may be used for students who bully and harass, including time spent out of the classroom or playground. We will initiate a *Behaviour Support Plan* in response to unacceptable behaviour of students. Principals can suspend and/or exclude students from school, and police may also need to be contacted if the behaviour is considered illegal (e.g. sexting).

Staff may also talk with students involved and help them to solve the problem, teach students about dealing with conflict and anger and teach students about care and respect for themselves and others.

When dealing with bullying and harassment incidents, we use flexibility and consider all needs of the students involved, including (but not restricted to) students with disabilities, students with different learning abilities, ATSI students, students under Guardianship of the Minister, students of same sex attraction.

We do not use a 'one size fits all' approach, as each incident and the students involved are different. The approach may vary depending on the nature, severity and the extent of the bullying.

What do we do about incidents of bullying?

- We will listen and talk to the person who has been bullied and the person who has bullied.
- We will actively work to repair and prevent the repetition of bullying and harassment by using Restorative Practices.
- We will put appropriate consequences in place, if required. Consequences will allow for flexibility depending on the nature, severity and extent of the bullying, and may include time out, suspension or exclusion.

Staff may also:

- Support students to deal with conflict.
- Counsel students who have been bullied.
- Counsel and support students who bully others to deal with conflict appropriately.
- Talk with parents and caregivers about the situation.
- Set up processes to monitor the situation. Bullying and harassment are issues which are treated very seriously. We deal with unacceptable behaviour and work hard to find solutions to stop the bullying and ensure students know how to deal with such incidents.

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Prevention and intervention strategies

Prevention strategies include:

- Using the curriculum to teach students about respectful relationships, civics and citizenship. This includes the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum.
- Developing programs to help students participate and have a say in their learning.
- Teaching students about conflict resolution, anger management and problem solving.
- Teaching students around diversity and tolerance.
- Providing professional learning for staff in collaboration with local agencies. Some of these include The Berry Street Education Model, school values education and social skills programs such as “What’s the Buzz”.

Intervention strategies include:

- Counselling students who have been bullied.
- Talking with parents or caregivers about the situation.
- Putting consequences in place for those who bully others.
- Teaching students not to be bystanders and to seek an adult to intervene if needed.

Post-intervention strategies include:

- Monitoring the situation between students to ensure their safety and wellbeing are maintained.
- Talking with parents or caregivers about ongoing strategies.
- Reviewing our yard duty procedures to make sure they are effective and dealing with ‘areas of concern’ in the yard.
- Reviewing and evaluating Behaviour Education policy.

Documented processes

- EDSAS recording, IRMS report (if required)
- Reflection Room notice
- Leadership discussion with students
- Advice to parents

Valuable resources

- www.bullyingnoway.com.au
- DECD Parent Help Line: 1800 222 696
- Kids Help Line: 1800 551 800
- Child and Youth Health Parent Help Line: 1300 364 100
- www.kidshelp.com.au

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