Shepparton East Primary School

Policy: BULLYING & HARASSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES (Including cyber bullying)

Approved at School Council Meeting: Sept 2018 **Review: 2020**

POLICY STATEMENT

Our school is committed to providing a safe and caring environment and culture which enables positive relationships to be formed amongst all students and staff and which encourages self-esteem, cooperation, personal growth and a positive attitude to learning and teaching through PBS (Positive Behaviour Support). Our school is a recognised eSmart school A clear bullying (including cyberbullying and harassment) prevention policy will inform the community that **bullying and harassment in any of its forms will not be tolerated.**

Aims:

- To provide clear definitions of what is and what is not bullying and harrassment
- To reinforce within the school community that no form of bullying or harrassment is acceptable.
- To provide clear advice on the roles and responsibilities of the whole school community, including students, parents, caregivers and teachers for preventing and responding to bullying behaviour
- To provide clear procedures for everyone to report incidents of bullying to the school
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up and that support is given to any person who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour
- To seek the support and co-operation of the whole-school community at all times.

What is bullying, cyber bullying and harassment?

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, who have more power at the time, deliberately upset or hurt another person, their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion.

Types of Bullying
There are three broad categories of bullying:

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** – this form of bullying is harder to recognise and often carried out behind the bullied student's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation.

Indirect bullying includes:

- lying and spreading rumours
- playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
- mimicking
- encouraging others to socially exclude someone
- damaging someone's social reputation and social acceptance
- cyber-bullying, which involves the use of electronic means to humiliate and distress

Cyber-bullying bullying (as defined above) that occurs either online or via a mobile phone or electronic device. This may include electronic mediums such as cell-phones, web-logs and web-sites, on-line chat rooms, 'MUD' rooms (multi-user domains where individuals take on different characters) and Xangas (on-line personal profiles where some adolescents create lists of people they do not like). It is verbal (over the telephone or mobile phone), or written (flaming, threats, racial, sexual or homophobic harassment) using the various mediums available.

Harassment is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome which could reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation to a person.

Our school will actively promote a positive and welcoming personal environment for all members of the school community. When people are bullied or harassed some effects might be 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.

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:

<u>Mutual Conflict</u>
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.

<u>Social Rejection or Dislike</u>
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.

<u>Single-episode acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation</u>
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

A school-wide approach will be taken to deal with bullying (including cyberbullying) and harassment in a consistent and systematic way.

All new students and staff will be informed of the anti-harassment policy and practices at the commencement of their time at the school.

All complaints of harassment will be heard in confidence and taken seriously.

Our school will organise preventative curriculum programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.

Staff programs will occur periodically to keep staff informed of current issues/strategies for dealing with these issues.

There will be disciplinary consequences, covering a range of strategies, for those in breach of the Bullying (including cyberbullying) and Harassment Prevention Policy, guidelines and procedures (see Appendix A).

PROACTIVE APPROACH TO BULLYING

Constructive strategies to deal with harassment will include: education in coping strategies; assertiveness training; problem solving and social skills; counselling and behaviour modification. These strategies will be employed in preference to punitive sanctions and negative consequences.

The Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy of the school will be widely promoted to students, staff, parents/carers and the local community.

The school leadership team and the teachers will work together to ensure the safety of all school members in situations of bullying (including cyberbullying) and harassment, by thoroughly investigating all complaints while respecting the need for confidentiality, notifying parents/carers and planning interventions.

If a teacher feels a student is at serious and imminent risk from bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment then it is their professional duty to pass on the information to an appropriate person in order to ensure appropriate support for the student. It is important that teachers document fully their interaction with the student and to verify the actions taken.

Student programs will be organised to raise student awareness about bullying (including cyberbullying) and harassment, to provide a forum for discussion of matters and to aid development of 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 workers. The curriculum will include anti-bullying messages and strategies in line with current DET materials e.g. Bully Stoppers

Professional development will be provided for staff relating to bullying (including cyberbullying) and harassment and proven strategies to address these issues in classrooms will be shared with all staff.

The school will provide specialist resources such as books, videos, kits and off site in-service activities to assist staff in responding appropriately to bullying (including cyberbullying) and harassment issues.

Disciplinary consequences for bullying (including cyberbullying) and harassment will comply with the school's Student Engagement Policy. The principal or their nominee will provide disciplinary consequences including suspension in accordance with Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DET) guidelines

Level 1

If the bullying or harassment incident is minor or first time occurrence, teachers may elect to use one or more anti-bullying practices:

- stopping the bullying/re-statement of rules and consequences
- restorative questioning
- think time detention
- private conference
- shared control discussion

If the student does not take control over his/her behaviour, a SWPBS (Swiss Positive Behaviour Support Form should be completed and submitted to the student welfare coordinator or Principal.

Level 2

If the bullying or harassment continues, or in instances of severe bullying or harassing, a referral should be made to the Student Welfare Coordinator/Principal.

Here, the Student Welfare Coordinator/Principal may:

- meet with the student to develop a behaviour contract
- provide discussion/mentoring of different social and emotional learning competencies including structured learning activities
- conduct a restorative conference separately with the perpetrator and "target"

Level 3

For 'at risk' students (many risk factors, few protective factors) whose bullying or harassing behaviour is severe and for other non-at risk students whose bullying or harassing and other aggressive behaviour is resistant to change, an individual 'strength building' plan should be developed by the student welfare coordinator in consultation with student, parents/carers and teachers. Individual strength-building plans and associated interventions help connect the student to positive people, programs and actions in the community, school and home as well as develop the student's inner social and emotional strengths (skills, values).

Level 4

Students whose severe bullying or harassing behaviour resists school efforts and represents a significant threat to the safety and wellbeing should be referred to outside agencies for evaluation. Student Welfare Coordinators will need to be familiar with those community agencies and organisations that can offer more intensive services to the student and student's family.

Note: The school may choose, if bullying or harassment persists or the initial incident is of such magnitude, that parents/carers will be contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the school's Student Engagement Policy. Furthermore, the principal may commence formal disciplinary action in line with Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance 2014*' (DET)* at any stage in the process depending on contextual information relating to the severity of the bullying (including-cyberbullying) and harassment.

What do you do if you are being bullied or harassed?

- tell the person you don't like what they are doing and you want them to stop
- discuss the matter with a Coordinator, Student Welfare Coordinator or peer mediator, peer support leader or a teacher that you feel comfortable with
- the school will take your concerns seriously - all complaints will be treated confidentially

How will your complaint be dealt with?

Your concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated confidentially.
School procedures for responding to a student who bullies or harasses others are set out below.

What to do if I need help

Sometimes people don't always make a positive choice and it can make people feel sad, hurt and unsafe. At school, our teachers and staff want us to feel happy and safe at all times, so if we are having a problem with someone, this is what we can do.

TELL THEM TO STOP

If someone is not being nice, that's not ok.

Tell them to stop, that you do not like it, and move away from them.

If you are hurt go straight to a teacher

IF THEY DON'T STOP

If the person does not stop, then we need to ask for help. Go to a teacher and tell them what has happened

HOW THE TEACHER WILL HELP

The teacher will listen to you, and then speak to the other person/s.

When people don't make positive choices, the teacher will help to teach them the positive way to behave and act at school

WHAT IF IT HAPPENS AGAIN

If we have another problem with this person, we need to talk to a teacher again.

Sometimes people need extra help to learn how to make positive choices.

Our teachers want to help us, so we need to make sure we share our

problems with them so they can keep helping us.

Appendix A

Anti-Bullying (including cyberbullying) and Anti-Harassment Procedures

Why do we have a Policy on these?

To provide a safe and friendly school environment for students and staff and to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others. All persons have a legal right to protection from harassment under the *Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act* and the *Victorian Equal Opportunity Act*.

What are the potential consequences of Bullying and Harassment?

- poor health - anxiety, depression
- lower self esteem
- reduced study performance
- missed classes, social withdrawal
- reduced career prospects

Am I bullying or harassing someone?

If you are not sure about your behaviour you can:

- check it out by asking if it is offensive or inappropriate
- stop it
- apologise
- take it seriously if someone says they are feeling uncomfortable
- talk it over with an adviser or somebody who has an understanding of the issues

What are some of the feelings targets of bullying or harassment may experience?

- "*I will ignore it and it will go away*."

  At times, when a person is ignored they often lose interest in continuing the bullying. If this doesn't work or it is getting worse - tell someone and ask for their help.

- *"I don't want to cause trouble*."

  Most causes of harassment are sorted out quite simply. By speaking up, action can be taken to address the problem.

- "*Am I to blame?"*

  Targets of harassment or bullying sometimes feel that it is their fault. Targets are made to feel guilty by the perpetrator and often blame themselves. It is your right to have a safe environment free from harassment or bullying.

- "*Am I imagining things?"*

Often our hunches are correct. Rather than put up with nagging doubts, talk to someone about your feelings.

Bullying or harassment can often make people feel:

- embarrassed or ashamed
- offended or humiliated
- intimidated or frightened
- uncomfortable

What should you do if you see another person being bullied or harassed?

If you feel safe when you see the bullying happening, you could encourage the target to walk away and support them to find and teacher to help stop the bullying.

However, if it is your friend who is harassing another person, let them know that their behaviour is unacceptable.

Bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully.

Bullying can involve

- grabbing, aggressive staring, hitting, pinching kicking, pushing and shoving
- publicly excluding a person from your group
- knocking a person's books or belongings out of their hands or off their desk
- teasing a person because of their looks

Cyberbullying can involve

- *Flaming* – online fights using electronic messages with angry or vulgar messages
- *Harassment* – repeatedly sending nasty, mean and insulting messages
- *Denigration* – posting or sending gossip or rumours about a person to damage his/her reputation or friendships
- *Outing* – sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information or images online
- *Exclusion* – intentionally and cruelly excluding someone from an online group
- *Cyber-stalking* – repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear

Harassment is usually directed at a person because of their gender, race, creed or abilities – *it can be subtle or explicit*

Subtle (the most common) they include:

- offensive staring and leering
- unwanted comments about physical appearance and sexual preference
- racist or smutty comments or jokes
- questions about another's sexual activity
- persistent comments about a person's private life or family
- physical contact e.g. purposely brushing up against another's body
- offensive name calling

Explicit (obvious) they include:

- grabbing, aggressive hitting, pinching and shoving, etc
- unwelcome patting, touching, embracing
- repeated requests for dates, especially after refusal
- offensive gestures, jokes, comments, letters, phone calls or e-mail
- sexually and/or racially provocative remarks
- displays of sexually graphic material – pornography
- requests for sexual favours
- extreme forms of sexual harassment will lead to criminal prosecution

Appendix B

Classroom Behaviour Management

Preconditions

- Planned, engaging lessons that provide opportunity for personalised learning and success.
- PBS is implemented with consistent language used.
- Redirection of focus and learning has occurred.

1st Stage
(Classroom Management)

- Redirection of learning
- Student conference
- Moving seats

2nd Stage
(Buddy Class Support)

- Student conference
- Move rooms or safe space (10 mins)
- Outline expectations
- Consequence in own time (Teacher to deliver & follow up)
- Complete SWIS form (minor)

3rd Stage
(Leadership Support)

- Behaviour continues
- Leadership will find alternate space
- Phone call home by class teacher if behaviour is consistently reoccurring
- Student removed
- Consequence in own time (teacher to deliver & follow up)
- Student returned to class at the beginning of the next session
- Complete SWIS form (major)

4th Stage
(Principal)

- Withdrawn from class for rest of day
- Phone call home
- Possible suspension
- PSG Meeting for ongoing issues
- Complete SWIS form (major)

Consequences

- Stage 2 & 3 **must be** delivered and followed up by the teacher in charge of that student at that time.
- ***Certainty not severity!*** If you say it is going to happen, make sure it does and follow through.
- Should happen as soon as possible to the initial incident.
- Complete unfinished learning in own time.

Communication

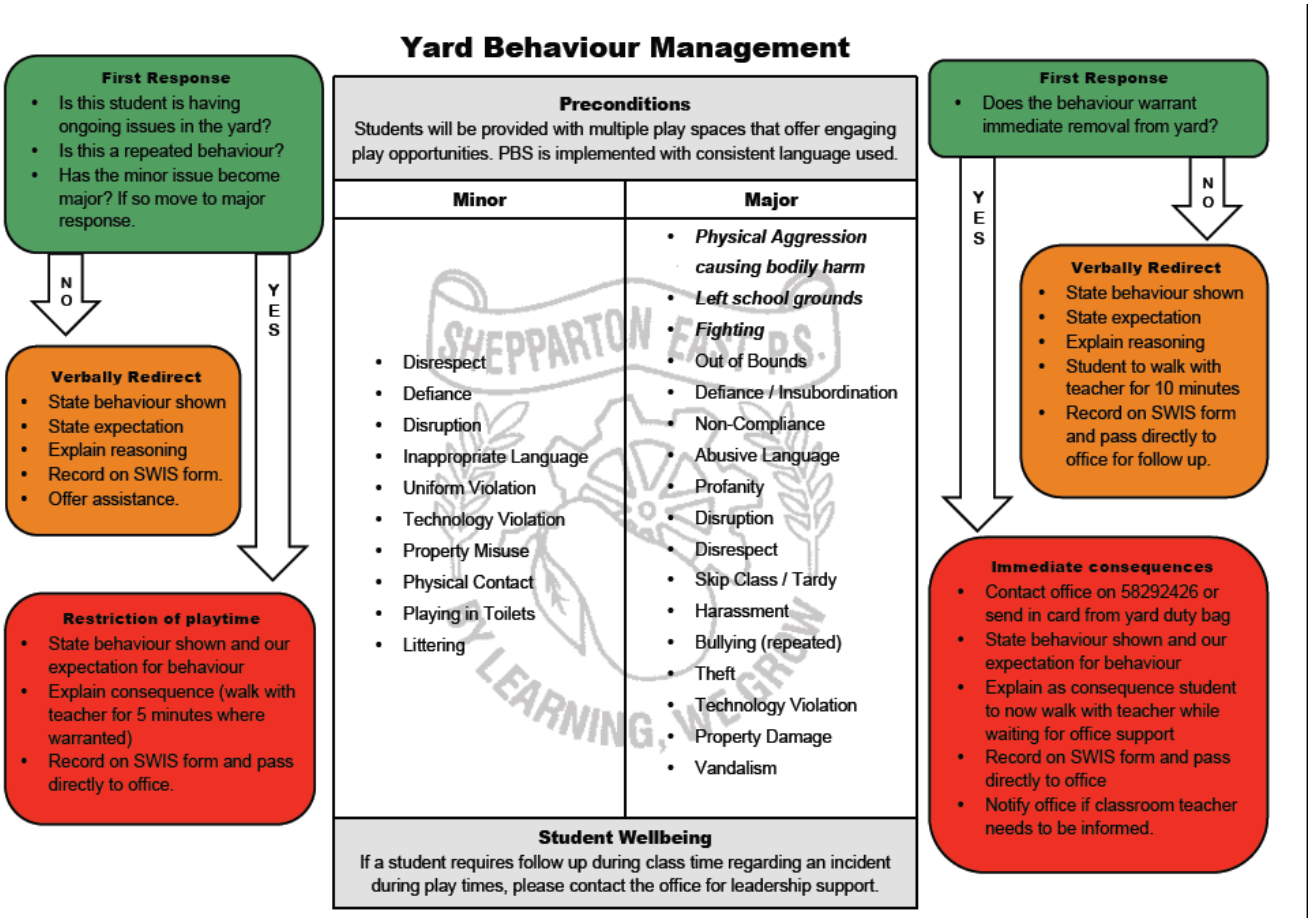
- All communication about students will take place as soon as practicable following the incident.
- Parents of students that have had two or more referrals in one day should receive communication from their child's teacher or the office depending on the stage of behaviour.

Note: Major behaviours may warrant immediate steps to stage 4.

Phone Extensions

Stage 3 Behaviour - Office 201
Stage 4 Behaviour - Trent 202
Mobile 0419 392 323

Appendix C


Yard Behaviour Management
First Response
Is this student is having ongoing issues in the yard?
Is this a repeated behaviour?
Has the minor issue become major? If so move to major response.
NO
YES
Verbally Redirect
State behaviour shown
State expectation
Explain reasoning
Record on SWIS form.
Offer assistance.
Restriction of playtime
State behaviour shown and our expectation for behaviour
Explain consequence (walk with teacher for 5 minutes where warranted)
Record on SWIS form and pass directly to office.
Preconditions
Students will be provided with multiple play spaces that offer engaging play opportunities. PBS is implemented with consistent language used.
Minor
Disrespect
Defiance
Disruption
Inappropriate Language
Uniform Violation
Technology Violation
Property Misuse
Physical Contact
Playing in Toilets
Littering
Major
Physical Aggression causing bodily harm
Left school grounds
Fighting
Out of Bounds
Defiance / Insubordination
Non-Compliance
Abusive Language
Profanity
Disruption
Disrespect
Skip Class / Tardy
Harassment
Bullying (repeated)
Theft
Technology Violation
Property Damage
Vandalism
Student Wellbeing
If a student requires follow up during class time regarding an incident during play times, please contact the office for leadership support.
First Response
Does the behaviour warrant immediate removal from yard?
YES
NO
Verbally Redirect
State behaviour shown
State expectation
Explain reasoning
Student to walk with teacher for 10 minutes
Record on SWIS form and pass directly to office for follow up.
Immediate consequences
Contact office on 58292426 or send in card from yard duty bag
State behaviour shown and our expectation for behaviour
Explain as consequence student to now walk with teacher while waiting for office support
Record on SWIS form and pass directly to office
Notify office if classroom teacher needs to be informed.