



Hawthorn West Primary School

Bullying, Cyber Bullying and Harassment Policy

Rationale

The school will provide a positive culture where bullying, cyber bullying and harassment is not accepted, and in so doing, everyone will have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or to teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in their school environment at all times.

Program Objectives

- To reinforce within the school community what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable
- To alert everyone within the school community of the signs and evidence of bullying, cyber bullying and harassment and to ensure bullying is reported to staff whether a person is an observer or a victim
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying, cyber bullying and harassment are investigated and followed up appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators
- To seek parental and peer-group support and cooperation at all times.

Implementation:

- Bullying may consist of physical harm, harassment, verbal insults or hurtful remarks, or actions designed to hurt somebody's reputation, social standing or to cause humiliation. Bullying may be carried out directly or indirectly, and may include the use of digital technologies such as social network sites, websites or online chat rooms
- Our school has adopted a zero tolerance position on bullying, cyber bullying and harassment
- Our school will combat all types of bullying and harassment by providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment
- Parents, teachers, students and the community will be made aware of types of bullying, cyber bullying and harassment and its legal and hurtful ramifications
- Teachers will be regularly reminded of their duty of care regarding protection of students from all forms of bullying and harassment.

Primary Prevention:

- Professional learning for staff relating to bullying, cyber bullying and harassment and proven counter measures

School Policy and Advisory Guide:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/bullying.aspx>
www.bullyingnoway.com.au

- Every classroom teacher to clarify with students the types of bullying and harassment, as well as the consequences and impact of bullying
- Teachers will be trained in cybersafety. Cybersafety awareness programs will be provided for parents and cybersafety will form part of every student's ICT curriculum
- Implementation of the eSmart program
- All students will sign an ICT Agreement encompassing the Cyber Bullying Policies
- All students will be provided with class and confidential computer and network passwords. Processes will be put in place to ensure tracking of student activity on the school's network and intranet
- Educate the school community about the seriousness of cyber bullying, its impact on those being bullied, how cyber bullying occurs and the consequences of cyber bullying
- Community awareness and input relating to bullying, its characteristics and the school's programs and response, complemented by clear processes for reporting suspected bullying
- The provision of programs that promote inclusiveness, resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving will form an integral part of our curriculum. In particular, assertiveness training and bystander training that builds skills in children to challenge and / or report unacceptable behaviour will be central to our curriculum
- The use of mobile phones by students will be limited with consequences to be implemented for any students who use mobile phones inappropriately
- Electives and structured activities will be available to students at recess and lunch breaks.

Intervention:

- All instances of suspected bullying or inappropriate behaviour must be responded to by staff
- Once identified, each bully, victim and witnesses will be spoken with, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented
- Parents are encouraged to contact their class teacher if they suspect bullying, harassment or behaviour problems
- The school will reinforce with students the importance of appropriately reporting incidents of inappropriate behaviour involving themselves or others, and the imperative that staff respond appropriately and proportionally to each allegation consistent with the school's Student Code of Conduct, including the reporting and recording of the incident
- Students, parents and staff identified by others as bullies will be informed of allegations
- Parents are to be contacted if their child is alleged to have been bullied or experienced inappropriate behaviour, or if their child appears to have behaved inappropriately or bullied someone else
- Appropriate and proportional consequences may include a restorative chat, verbal apology, writing a letter of regret, loss of privileges etc.
- Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems will occur as appropriate.

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Repetitive or Serious Incidents:

- Serious incidents and / or repetitive incidents of bullying or unacceptable behaviour must be reported, responded to by staff and documented
- Serious incidents are those that include physical assault, sexual assault, criminal activity involving theft or serious damage of property, serious threats or homophobic bullying etc.
- All such incidents or allegations will be properly investigated and documented. Depending upon the nature of each incident, they may also be reported to and investigated by police, reported to the Student Critical Incident Advisory Unit, and / or reported to the DEECD's Emergency and Security Management Unit
- The school may contact support professional such as Welfare Officers, Welfare Coordinators or Counsellors and / or Student Support Officers for assistance and support
- All repetitive or serious incidents must be brought to the attention of the principal or assistant principal
- The most appropriate staff member will contact parents of the targeted student
- Consequences of repetitive or serious incidents may include criminal charges, suspension, expulsion, loss of privileges, counselling or conciliation
- A management strategy for all parties will be developed in consultation with the students and parents involved
- Parents or community members who bully, harass or abuse staff will be provided with official warnings, and if necessary referred to the police, and / or have trespass restrictions placed upon them by the principal consistent with the Summary Offences Act.

Post Incident:

It is important that appropriate strategies are put in place after the incident has been resolved for all students involved. These may include:

- Conciliation meeting between all parties
- Ongoing monitoring of students involved
- Identification of an agreed contact staff member for each student involved
- Follow-up meetings regarding each student's management strategy
- Ongoing communication with parents
- Counselling from appropriate agencies of support officers etc. for both parties
- Reinforcement of positive behaviours and appropriate behaviour strategies.

Links which are connected with this policy are:

- DEECD's [Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines](#)
- DEECD's [Safe Schools are Effective Schools](#)
- DEECD's [Student Engagement Policy Guidelines](#)
- The school's Internet Use Policy (re: cyber bullying)
- DEECD's [Respectful Schools](#)

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Definitions:**Bullying:**

- When someone, or a group of people, deliberately upsets or hurts another person or damages their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. There is an imbalance of power, the bully or bullies having more power at the time due to age, size, status or other reasons

Cyber Bullying:

- Direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technologies. Students can cyber bully one another in a number of ways
 - Abusive texts or emails
 - Hurtful messages, images or videos
 - Imitating others online
 - Excluding others online
 - Nasty online gossip or chat

Harassment:

- Any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person

School Community

- Comprises the principal, staff, students, parents, guardians, step-parents, relatives, friends, support-carers and invitees of the School, who attend at the School, or elsewhere, for the purposes of visiting, viewing, participating, supporting or being present for any official, sporting or social activity held by or for the benefit of the School and its students within the School premises.

Evaluation

This policy was ratified by the Hawthorn West Primary School Council at a committee meeting on 3rd December 2014 and will be reviewed as part of the school's annual review cycle.