

**Mallala Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy**  
**12<sup>th</sup> June, 2012 (To be reviewed before 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2013)**

***Bullying and harassment are not acceptable in any form, by any person, at Mallala Primary School.***

**Rationale**

The DECD School Discipline Policy states that:

DECS, school communities, services and agencies will work together to create learning communities which are:

- safe
- inclusive
- conducive to learning
- free from harassment and bullying

**Definitions**

***Bullying*** is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyberbullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

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.

***Bystanders*** are aware of something happening but do not act to stop it. Bystanders do not actually need to be present. Groups and communities, such as schools, can even be said to show bystander behaviour.

Bystander behaviour includes:

- watching an argument on the street
- gathering to watch a playground fight
- knowing that someone is being hurt but not intervening or seeking help
- failing to investigate and be proactive about the bullying in your school.

Although we might not be directly involved, our behaviours can contribute significantly to what takes place.

Some behaviours can make the problem worse:

- giving 'silent approval' by not becoming involved
- assisting by joining in
- reinforcing by encouraging, cheering and laughing, even if not actively participating.

Alternatively, some behaviours can be helpful:

- trying to stop the bullying behaviour by defending the person being bullied, reporting the behaviour
- challenging and positively influencing individual and group attitudes and beliefs
- learning and teaching about the deeper issues which underlie bullying behaviour.

***Harassment*** is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment.

Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act. It may be directed randomly or towards the same person(s). It may be intentional or unintentional, i.e. words or actions that offend and distress one person may be genuinely regarded by the person doing them as minor or harmless.

**Bullying behaviour**

Deliberately and repeatedly name-calling, making sexist or racist remarks, spreading rumours, texting abusive messages, threatening someone or excluding someone from games and groups are all examples of bullying or harassment.

*Not all distressing or hurtful behaviour is bullying. For example: a single incident of malicious or aggressive behaviour.*

Bullying and harassment are repeated actions. A single incident will still be responded to as part of the school's behaviour management processes as unacceptable behaviour.

Cyber-bullying can occur from a single act when the message or picture is sent to more than one person. For example, a bully may only press 'send' once, but the choice to send the message to multiple addresses, makes the action more than a single incident.

**Dislike**

Although social rejection can be hurtful, it is not bullying unless accompanied by repeated and deliberate attempts to distress or hurt.

**Conflict**

Arguments can be distressing but it is not bullying when two people are both upset and neither one is misusing power over the other. Conflict may still give rise to unacceptable behaviour which will be responded to as part of the school's behaviour management processes.

## **STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH BULLYING**

### ***At Mallala Primary School we will:***

- Openly talk about bullying – what it is, how it affects us and what we can do about it.
- Teach our children the skills which will build their self-esteem, teach them skills to be assertive problem solvers and give them the opportunity to practise these skills regularly.
- Implement the policy which clearly states what actions we will take to deal with bullying behaviour.

### ***Responsibilities of staff:***

- Be role models in word and action at all times
- Ensure that our classroom management practices support respect for others
- Be observant to signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying
- Deal with all reported and observed incidents of bullying as set out in this policy
- Ensure that children are supervised at all times
- During yard duty make efforts to remove occasions for bullying by actively patrolling
- Report incidents of bullying to the Principal
- Embrace Restorative Practices when dealing with harassment and conflict
- Explicitly teach Grievance Procedures and empower students to make “I statements” to resolve conflict.

### ***Responsibilities of children:***

- To tell a responsible adult (eg. a parent, teacher, staff member) if they are being bullied or if they see someone else being bullied
- To help someone who is being bullied
- To not bully others and not be a bystander
- Record bullying or harassment incidents on the “Harassment Incident Report Sheet.”

### ***Responsibilities of parents***

- To act in a way which models positive behaviour
- To watch for signs that their child may be being bullied eg. unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged clothes or bruising
- To speak to someone on staff (classroom teacher first) at Mallala Primary School if their child is being bullied, or they suspect that this is happening
- To encourage their child to report to a staff member if they are bullied or harassed.

## **Response to Bullying**

*In order to prevent bullying from occurring, a social skills programme, including restorative practices, will be taught to*

- Individuals involved,
- Whole class,
- Whole school.

*Should a bullying incident occur, the following steps will be taken to address the situation:*

- Both the parents of the person affected by the behaviour and the parents of the person responsible for the behaviour will be notified
- A range of strategies will be used to ensure the behaviour stops and the person affected feels safe. These include;
  - Separate play times
  - Conflict and anger counselling
  - Restricted play
  - Behaviour checklists
  - Acceptable ways of dealing with problems will be taught to the person demonstrating the behaviour
  - Further monitoring
- Should the behaviour continue, more serious consequences will follow
  - Parent meeting
  - Take home
  - Suspension
  - Exclusion
  - Referral to Regional Support Services
- Support and strategies will be provided on an ongoing basis for the person affected by the behaviour and the person demonstrating the behaviour.
  - Counselling
  - Monitoring of well-being
  - Referral to other agencies such as CAMHS.
- Students who have bullied others will be supported to change their behaviour.

**Everyone has the right to feel safe. Anyone who has experienced bullying and harassment have had that right violated. If this happens, Police intervention may occur.**

### **Signs a Child is Being Bullied**

Look for changes in the child, however, be aware that not all children who are bullied exhibit warning signs. Some signs that may point to a bullying problem are:

- Unexplainable injuries
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewelry
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
- Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating. Kids may come home from school hungry because they did not eat lunch.
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
- Declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to go to school
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Feelings of helplessness or decreased self esteem
- Self-destructive behaviors such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide

***If you know someone in serious distress or danger, don't ignore the problem. Get help right away.***

### **Signs a Child is Bullying Others**

Students may be bullying others if they:

- Get into physical or verbal fights
- Have friends who bully others
- Are increasingly aggressive
- Get sent to the office frequently
- Have unexplained extra money or new belongings
- Blame others for their problems
- Don't accept responsibility for their actions
- Are competitive and worry about their reputation or popularity

### **How to Report Bullying – *these strategies to be discussed with all students regularly in the classroom.***

- Tell someone you trust – eg a member of staff, the Principal, a parent. Students should be aware that telling a friend may not help to solve the problem.
- Use an "Incident Report." Get a trusted adult to help.
- Hand the report to any member of staff.

***Staff are required to provide any Incident Report to the Principal or the Principal's line manager and are entitled to be informed about the outcome.***

If a child completes an Incident Report at home, parents should ask their child to hand the report to the office or a member of staff or may choose to hand it in themselves.

Students who complete an Incident Report will have the incident discussed with them in order to clarify any details.

Parents of students who complete an incident report will be informed of the circumstances and the outcome.

# Mallala Primary School INCIDENT REPORT

Name: ..... Year level: .....

When did it happen? .....

Who was involved? .....

Where did it happen? .....

Did anyone else see what happened? ..... Who? .....

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What Happened?

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