

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Rationale:

- Bullying is a global term that describes a range of unacceptable behaviours ranging from name calling to violent physical assault. Bullying in schools is not a new phenomenon and has been identified as an issue of concern for students, teachers, parents and the wider community.
- Australian and overseas research confirms that bullying occurs in all schools but may vary according to the organisational structures and culture of the school. Rather than being able to identify clear categories of 'bullies;' or 'victims' current research suggests that bullying behaviour can be most usefully seen as a continuum of mild to extreme behaviours which have involved most students at some time during their schooling.

Aims:

- To reduce incidents of bullying.
- To provide strategies and responses that addresses the needs of both the victim(s) and perpetrator(s).

Definitions:

- The definitions of bullying listed below are from a range of sources including Australian and overseas research. Common elements in these definitions suggest that bullying involves the inappropriate use of *power* by one or more persons over another less powerful person or group and is generally an act that is *repeated* over time. Bullying has been described by researchers as taking many forms which are often interrelated and include:
 - **Verbal** (name calling, put downs, threats)
 - **Physical** (hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting)
 - **Social** (ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating)
 - **Psychological** (spreading rumours, stalking, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions)
- Bullying is the *"repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons."* (Rigby, K 1996)
- Bullying is *"a repetitive attack which causes distress not only at the time of attack but also by the threat of future attack. It may be verbal, physical, social or psychological."* (Griffiths 1997)
- *"When we talk about 'bullying' we do not mean those casual occurrences in the corridor, or that sudden flare-up and fight which suddenly happens.....There is a pre-meditated element to it. Bullying is about a planned assault, be it verbal or physical, upon another person. For most cases of bullying the one word that you may wish to add to the definition offered about is persistent."* (Dewyn and Eva Tattum 1994)

Implementation:

- Where an incident or incidents occur as defined above, the school will do the following:
 - Using the above definitions, the victim(s) and perpetrator(s) will be spoken with to ensure that this is a bullying issue.
 - The victim(s) will be offered strategies to deal with the bullying issue.
 - The victim(s) will be spoken to regarding the bullying behaviour. If deemed appropriate, restorative justice practice will be used.
 - Staff will follow the steps below when perpetrator(s) are identified:
 - Step 1. Verbal warning or sanction of an isolated incident in line with the severity of the incident.
 - Step 2. Ongoing incidents will be followed up by administration. Parents of children involved will be alerted. Perpetrator(s) recorded in a school incident

register (Sentral). A Red Slip will be issued. (A Red Slip informs parents of the misdemeanour and process to be followed. A second incident that requires a Red Slip results in the convening of the Student Support Group. A third Red Slip in any one term will result in suspension.)

- Step 3. Suspension as deemed appropriate by school administration.

NB. If the behaviour is deemed as severe, then students may be referred immediately to Administration and a step 2 or 3 sanction applied.

NB2. Counselling for victims or perpetrators by staff or school-employed professionals may form part of the process at any stage in the above steps.

- Further Action
 - If a perpetrator continues to infringe the rights and dignity of others and reject the help offered on this program, the following may happen:
 - The perpetrator may be suspended in school. This means he/she will work in the assistant principal's or principal's office and have separate recess times from the rest of the school.
 - The perpetrator may be suspended from school. (According to DEECD guidelines)
 - The perpetrator may be expelled from school. (According to DEECD guidelines)

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

- This policy was last ratified by School Council in 2016.