

## PARKHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

### **POLICY: Anti-bullying Policy**

**PROGRAM LEADER: Rodney McKinlay**

**DATE RATIFIED BY SCHOOL COUNCIL: June 2014**

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#### RATIONALE

At Parkhill Primary School every student, staff member, parent and visitor has the right to feel safe, both physically and psychologically. We are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all students where bullying in any form is not tolerated. At Parkhill Primary School we recognise the negative effect that bullying and aggression has on the learning environment, student attendance and student wellbeing. The Principal and staff at the school will therefore act swiftly and decisively when bullying is indicated. At this school, diversity is valued and everyone is treated with respect, fairness and dignity.

#### AIMS

- To clarify what constitutes bullying in the school context
- To identify proactive measures to minimise bullying in the school
- Provide guidance to the school community (school leadership, teachers, staff and parents) on the school's responses to bullying incidents
- Inform the school community of the appropriate pathways to assist children who they suspect might be being bullied
- Provide a framework for moving forward after a bullying incident for both recipient, perpetrator, and others impacted.

#### WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, deliberately upset or hurt another person, their property, reputation or social acceptance on an **ongoing** basis. Bullying can be either direct or indirect and includes but is not limited to: teasing, name-calling, blaming, sneering, gossiping, cyber bullying, excluding, threats, put-downs, joking put-downs, bossing and intimidation or any aggressive contact such as: pushing, hitting, punching or kicking.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

- Bullying behaviour will be addressed as part of our *Duty of Care* to promote a safe and supportive school environment, in which bullying is not tolerated.
  - Parkhill Primary School has an established set of procedures for dealing with bullying as outlined in the *Student Code of Conduct*. Staff work in partnership with parents in this process.
  - The Principal of Parkhill Primary School will ensure that all students and their families are aware of the school policy on admission.
  - All staff will have access to appropriate professional learning opportunities to develop and refresh skills in creating and maintaining a safe, caring, respectful and supportive school culture.
- To effectively prevent bullying, our school takes a 'whole school approach' that focuses on the safety and wellbeing of all students at all times.
  - The school curriculum will incorporate programs and strategies that aim to promote positive student behaviour, prevent anti-social behaviour and promote values of respect, compassion and co-operation.
  - The school will endeavour to provide a supportive environment, aiming to increase students' self-esteem, confidence and ability to deal appropriately with others.
  - Staff will endeavour to empower and encourage all students to reject or challenge inappropriate behaviours in a positive manner if safe to do so or seek adult assistance.
  - Additional programs and co-curricular activities will be provided to promote positive peer relationships.
- The Parkhill Primary School '*Student Code of Conduct*' identifies the goals and standards for student behaviour. It is an integral component of all sectors of school life and it includes safe school and specific anti-bullying strategies, including how the school will address victimisation, physical, verbal, visual, and cyber bullying.
- Staff will employ Restorative Practices in conflict situations.
  - Staff members on yard duty will assist students who need support in observing our 'Student Code of Conduct' and will focus on the target's needs and offenders' responsibility for repairing harm.

- Staff members will adhere to processes and procedures in regard to students displaying bullying behaviours and where appropriate will access referral processes.
- Staff, parents and visitors are expected to model safe, caring, respectful, supportive and inclusive behaviours in all their interactions which sends a clear message that bullying in all forms is unacceptable.
- Parkhill Primary School is guided by all relevant Government legislation and DEECD policies and guidelines.

## **GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING BULLYING**

Parkhill Primary School does not tolerate bullying in any form. All members of the Parkhill Community are committed to ensuring a safe and caring environment, which promotes personal growth and positive self-esteem. We believe bullying is an act of aggression causing embarrassment, pain, or discomfort to another:

- It can take a number of forms: physical, verbal, gesture, extortion and exclusion
- It is an abuse of power
- It can be planned and organised or it may be unintentional
- Individuals or groups may be involved

### **Some examples of bullying may include**

- Any form of physical violence such as hitting, pushing, or spitting on others
- Interfering with another's property by stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying it
- Using offensive names, teasing or spreading rumours about others or their families
- Using put-downs, belittling the abilities and achievements of others
- Making degrading comments about another's culture, religion or social background
- Excluding others from a group
- Making suggestive comments or other forms of sexual abuse
- Ridiculing another's appearance
- Forcing others to act against their will
- Cyberbullying

### **If we are bullied**

- We may feel frightened, unsafe, embarrassed, angry or unfairly treated
- Our work, sleep and ability to concentrate may suffer
- Our relationships with our family and friends may deteriorate
- We may feel confused and not know what to do about the problem

## **What we do to prevent bullying at Parkhill**

### **The School will:**

- Foster a supportive environment, which encourages positive relationships
- Provide a safe and fair environment for students, staff and visitors
- Make efforts to remove opportunities for bullying by active patrol of playground and appropriate supervision of children
- Where bullying does occur, develop strategies to support the victim and to change the behaviour of the perpetrator

### **Staff will:**

- Remove opportunities for bullying to occur by actively supervising high risk areas
- Be role models in word and actions.
- Be observant for signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying
- Build awareness and understanding of general issues related to tolerance, fair-play and bullying through classroom discussions and the curriculum
- Ensure children are aware of their rights and responsibilities, and are aware that they will be supported in dealing with individual problems
- Assist children to develop strategies for dealing with bullying

- Take action with bystanders or “urgers”
- Direct positive responses towards the recipient which communication “You are important. I believe this is a problem for you”
- Respond to suspected incidents of bullying in accordance with school procedures outlined in *Student Code of Conduct*

**Students will be encouraged to:**

- Treat others the way they would like to be treated
- Develop an understanding that they can have a positive influence on the behaviour of those around them
- Look after those around them, especially younger children
- Intervene and tell other students what they think or let a teacher or parent know if they feel a student is being hurt by others
- Try to work out the problem themselves by asking the person to stop what they are doing and telling the person how they are feeling
- Talk to and get help from a staff member if the above steps don’t work or if they are feeling unsafe at any time
- Refuse to be involved in any bullying situation and if they are present when it occurs take some form of preventative action (if appropriate) or report the incident to an adult

**Parents can:**

- Be alert to any signs that your child has been bullied
- Teach your child positive values of honesty, tolerance, right and wrong
- Encourage your child to talk to you about any problems or concerns

**If your child has been the victim of ongoing bullying:**

- Advise your child to tell a staff member
- Inform the school if bullying is suspected even if your own child is not involved
- Do not encourage your child to retaliate, but make it clear that the school will deal with the situation

**If your child has been involved in the bullying of another child:**

- Let them know that it’s okay to tell you what has been going on and that you will support them (separate the action from the child)
- Discuss the situation with the school

**Procedures for dealing with complaints of bullying at Parkhill Primary School**

All complaints of bullying will be handled as promptly as possible, noting that it is important to provide all those involved with an opportunity to discuss the issue and be informed of the school’s course of action. The Principal/Assistant Principal will be notified of all formal complaints of bullying and will be kept informed of progress in dealing with these.

1. When a student or parent raises a complaint of bullying with a teacher, the teacher will explain to them the procedures and ensure that they are kept informed of what action the school takes.
2. Any student accused of bullying (as a result of a complaint) or suspected of bullying by a teacher will be interviewed by their class teacher in the first instance. Where the case involves serious bullying or ongoing, the Principal/Assistant Principal will also be involved.
3. The teacher or Principal/Assistant Principal will also interview the child who has been bullied.
4. The teacher or Principal/Assistant Principal may also request an interview with the parents of the offending child.
5. The teacher or Principal/Assistant Principal will inform the parents of the child who has been bullied and take action, as appropriate, to provide support/counselling for the child.
6. Where a case of bullying has been confirmed, the teacher will, in consultation with the Principal/Assistant Principal, determine appropriate action. Depending on the seriousness of the case, they may involve; timeout, strict supervision, counselling and/or suspension
7. Once a formal complaint is received, all discussions should be documented.

## **EVALUATION**

This policy will be reviewed initially during the 2014 school year and then as part of the school's four year review cycle or as required.

## **APPENDICIES**

- Nil

## **REFERENCES**

- DEECD - School Policy and Advisory Guide:  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/Pages/azindex.aspx>
- DEECD - School Policy and Advisory Guide – Duty of Care  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/dutyofcare.aspx>
- DEECD – Effective School's Model  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/curriculum/Pages/effmodel.aspx>
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006  
[http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web\\_Notes/LDMS/PubStatbook.nsf/f932b66241ecf1b7ca256e92000e23be/575C47EA02890DA4CA25717000217213/\\$FILE/06-024a.pdf](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubStatbook.nsf/f932b66241ecf1b7ca256e92000e23be/575C47EA02890DA4CA25717000217213/$FILE/06-024a.pdf)