



BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

RATIONALE

Patterson Lakes Primary School emphasises that all members of the school community operate in an environment that is both safe and supportive, free from physical, emotional, cyber and social harassment and where individual rights are respected.

AIM

To support students through providing a safe and respectful school environment and to prevent bullying, cyberbullying and other unacceptable behaviours.

GUIDELINES

Definition – Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, deliberately upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying with the bully or bullies having more power at the time due to age, size, status or other reasons.

Rights and responsibilities of the individual – At Patterson Lakes Primary School students, staff, parents and visitors to the school have the right to be treated with respect as worthwhile individuals. Every student at Patterson Lakes Primary School has the right to an education in a safe environment free from bullying and harassment. With these benefits and individual freedom comes a duty of the individual to act responsibly to others and within the school community. It is the responsibility of all individuals to refrain from indulging in bullying behaviours.

IMPLEMENTATION

Strategy to deal with bullying

- An Emotional Intelligence program is implemented from Foundation to Year 6. This program draws on a variety of resources designed to provide students and teachers with strategies to deal with bullying behaviours. This program aims to build resilience.
- All students and parents will sign and agree to the Internet Acceptable Use Policy.
- In the case of a bullying incident the following steps will be taken (Support Group Approach):
 1. Information about the bullying situation is collected.
 2. The victim meets to obtain more information.
 3. Empathy is expressed for the victim's situation.
 4. The victim's permission is sought to hold a support group meeting (using the restorative practices script and/or Circle Time) with the students involved. It may also be appropriate to have bystanders and supportive classmates involved in this meeting.
 5. The victim's situation is described in order to elicit an empathic response from the group. Everyone is asked to make suggestions for improving the situation for the victim.
 6. Parents will be contacted to inform them of the outcome, where appropriate.
 7. A follow up (or sooner/more regularly if required) meeting will be held to review progress:
 - The victim (formally or informally) meets again to see if there have been any changes.
 - Each student in the support group informally meets about what they have been able to do.
- If the bullying situation continues and the bully/bullies choose not to change, then a Values Reflection Sheet will be completed and the following consequences will take place:
 - Having 're-think'.
 - Internal suspension.
 - External suspension (in line with Department of Education and Training Guidelines).It may also be relevant to involve Student Support Services Officers, such as social worker or psychologist.
- In order to ensure that bullying and harassment are not tolerated, we must all speak up and report cases, even at risk to ourselves.

This requires staff to:

- Be role models in word and action.
- Be observant of signs of distress, suspected incidents of bullying or bullying behaviours.
- Take immediate steps to help victims without placing the victim at further risk.

- Report suspected incidents to the appropriate staff member who will follow up to ensure that the bullying ceases. This process may involve the classroom teacher, Year Level Coordinator, Wellbeing Officer or Assistant Principal. The Assistant Principal will consult with the Principal for serious breaches of the behaviour code.
- Inform students that the situation has been dealt with.
- Based on teacher discretion, inform parents that the situation has been dealt with.
*Note: If a situation is of a medium – serious breach of school rules, initial contact will be made before the end of the school day, to inform parents that the situation is being dealt with.
When the situation has been dealt with, follow up contact will be made within 24 hour, where practicable.*

This requires students to:

- Refuse to be involved in any bullying situation. If present when bullying occurs he/she should take some form of preventative action and report the incident.
- Avoid retaliation. It is important to take other action such as asking the bully to stop, laughing it off or telling someone who will support you.
- Refrain from bullying behaviours.

This requires parents to:

- Be role models in word and action.
- Watch for signs of distress in your child.
- Encourage your child to not retaliate.
- Be watchful of your child exhibiting bullying behaviours.
- Let your child know regularly and firmly that you disapprove of bullying. Students who come from families that oppose bullying are less likely to bully others.
- Avoid any type of bullying at home. Deal firmly with siblings who attempt to bully one another.
- Encourage your child to see the positive side to other students, rather than express contempt and superiority.
- Model and encourage respect for others. Emphasise seeing things from another's point of view.
- Encourage your child to act courageously and support any other student that is being bullied.
- Develop resilient social skills in your child, such as speaking assertively, negotiating, expressing their own opinion and using a confident voice.
- Talk to your child about the qualities associated with developing true, caring friendships and assist them to build and maintain these friendships.
- Be willing to attend meetings at school about the incident.
- Support the school's approach and work closely with the school to prevent bullying.

When an incident does occur families are encouraged to follow the recommended procedures:

1. Parents are encouraged to listen to their child and approach the classroom teacher to discuss the matter and to establish all the facts.
2. The next step is to speak with the Year Level Coordinator if the classroom teacher is unavailable.
3. In the absence of the Year Level Coordinator please refer the matter to the Wellbeing Officer.
4. The final stage when working through an incident is with the Assistant Principal. The Assistant Principal will refer the matter to the Principal, if required.

Upon completion of the above procedure, an appointment can be arranged with the Principal if concerns still exist.

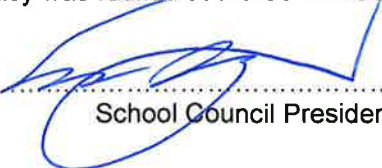
This policy should be read in conjunction with the 'Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy' where procedures are outlined. When teachers, students and parents work together on bullying, we can create a school environment that allows the student to maximise his/her potential without interference from others.

EVALUATION

Guidelines are updated annually and/or as per DE&T recommendations.

CERTIFICATION

This policy was ratified at the School Council Meeting held at Patterson Lakes Primary School, December, 2018.

Signed 
School Council President

Signed 
Principal