

# Flemington Primary School

## POLICY FOLDER



### Student Wellbeing Addressing Bullying Behaviour

#### OVERVIEW

Flemington Primary School endeavours to be a place where everyone; students, staff, parents and caregivers, has the right to be part of a safe and supportive environment that values diversity – an environment free from bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence.

Everyone in our school community has the right to be treated with fairness and dignity and also a responsibility to keep others safe and to treat them in the same way – with fairness, dignity and respect.

#### AIMS

- To minimise incidents of bullying and harassment, discrimination and violence
- To educate students about the seriousness, nature and behaviours associated with bullying and harassment
- To educate teachers in identifying, dealing with and modifying bullying behaviour
- To include practices which modify behaviour and enable students to be resilient and confident when confronting bullying behaviour

#### *Bullying and Harassment Behaviour*

Bullying and harassment are often thought of separately; however both involve a more powerful person or group oppressing a less powerful person or group, often on the grounds of 'difference'.

These differences can be related to culture, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, sexual orientation, ability or disability, religion, body size and physical appearance, age, marital status, parenting status or economic status.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Types of bullying*

There are three broad categories of bullying.

- Direct physical bullying
- Direct verbal bullying
- Indirect bullying

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/what.htm>

## **Bullying and harassment:**

May take the form of:

1. physical (hitting, kicking, pinching),
2. verbal (name-calling, teasing),
3. psychological (standover tactics, gestures),
4. social (social exclusion, rumours, putdowns) or
5. sexual (physical, verbal or non-verbal sexual conduct)
6. Indirect bullying {This form of bullying is harder to recognise and often carried out behind the bullied student's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. This includes: lying and spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude someone, damaging someone's social reputation and social acceptance, cyber-bullying, which involves the use of email, text messages or chat rooms to humiliate and distress.

Bullying may be motivated by jealousy, distrust, fear, misunderstanding or lack of knowledge and

- may take the form of Cyber Bullying<sup>2</sup>
- have an element of threat
- continue over time
- are often hidden from adults
- will be sustained if adults or peers do not take action

### ***Discrimination***

Discrimination is treating one person or group less fairly or less well than others. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and based on factors such as ability, culture, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, sexual orientation, disability - physical, cognitive, language or other, physical appearance, age, religion, marital status, parenting status or economic status. Individuals or groups can discriminate, so can an organisation's policies and practices.

### ***Violence***

Violence is the damaging and destructive use of force. Violence is often used to assert power over individuals. Violence:

- is not just physical – it takes many forms
- may affect the safety, rights and freedom of others
- may be a one-off incident between individuals or groups
- may involve an ongoing relationship between parties
- may involve provoked or unprovoked acts
- may be used by those victimised by bullying to redress the imbalance of power

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<sup>2</sup> Cyberbullying is Bullying which is carried out through an Internet service such as [email](#), [chat room](#), [discussion group](#) or [instant messaging](#). It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as short messaging service (SMS).

[http://www.netalert.gov.au/advice/risks/cyberbullying/What\\_is\\_cyber\\_bullying.html](http://www.netalert.gov.au/advice/risks/cyberbullying/What_is_cyber_bullying.html)

### ***Behavioural approaches***

Flemington Primary School will develop consistent, positively focused behavioural approaches as highlighted in the DEECD Student Code of Conduct by:

- Establishing shared statements of rights, responsibilities and acceptable behaviour
- Recognising bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence when they occur and responding quickly and appropriately
- Modelling, teaching and reinforcing socially constructive behaviour
- Adopting the Friendly Schools and Families program.<sup>3</sup>

### ***Individual approaches***

Additional assistance to support individuals or groups who are perpetuating bullying or harassment or who are targets, will include:

- Encouraging a range of positive social relationships through supported skills training, practice and networks within and beyond the peer group and school
- Resolving specific personal and interpersonal issues, for example, through mediation and problem solving, counselling, protective behaviour and the management of emotions
- Providing additional assistance to understand and influence the beliefs that perpetuate discriminatory behaviour in school and community life

### ***Logical consequences***

A key component of the school's program is teaching about and using *logical consequences* to address behavioural problems.<sup>4</sup> A logical consequence is based on goodwill not retaliation. It is concerned with present and future behaviour and differs from punishment in that logical consequences are:

- Related to the behaviour
- Aligned with school rules, values and the You Can Do It program
- Agreeable to all parties
- Include reasonable expectations
- Contain an element of relationship-building

***Ongoing Behaviour of a more serious nature*** will involve the use of a range of strategies which may include:

- Discussing the behaviour with the student and their parents and reaching an agreement for future behaviour
- Monitoring and providing feedback to students on their behaviour
- Allowing the student a "cooling off" period
- Providing counselling and training sessions for individuals to modify inappropriate behaviour including referral to external agencies
- Involving parents/caregivers in regular meetings to assist with modifying behaviour
- Seeking support and guidance from relevant departments and agencies

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.friendlyschools.com.au/>

<sup>4</sup>

[http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/Responding\\_to\\_Students\\_who\\_Bully-May\\_2008.pdf](http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/Responding_to_Students_who_Bully-May_2008.pdf)

### ***Continued and unresolved Bullying Behaviour***

Should all the above measures fail and the bullying behaviour continue, DEECD and school discipline measures will be implementing according to procedures set out in DEECD guidelines. These incorporate Discipline Procedures 1994 and Ministerial Order No. 1, Discipline of Students

### **Occupational Health and Safety**

Section 23 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (2004), provides that an employer must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that persons other than employees are not exposed to risks to their health or safety arising from the conduct of the undertaking of the employer. 'Other persons' in the workplace includes students.

The Occupational Health and Safety Act (2004) is available from the [Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary Documents](#)<sup>5</sup>

### **Disability**

Part 8.3 of the [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#) (made under the [Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)), provides that a school must specifically develop and implement strategies and programs to prevent harassment or victimisation of students with disabilities.

*Referred to the School Council Policy Sub Committee for ratification – June 2008*

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.dms.dpc.vic.gov.au>