

# Flemington Primary School

## Bullying and Harassment Policy



### 1. PURPOSE AND RATIONALE:

Every child has the right to feel safe and secure at school. Bullying or harassment of any sort will not be tolerated.

### 2. POLICY STATEMENT:

It is important for the school to provide a safe and friendly environment for students and staff and to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others. Everyone at Flemington Primary School is expected to treat others respectfully and to feel safe themselves.

### 3. DEFINITIONS:

#### What is bullying?

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. Types of bullying are:

- Direct physical bullying - hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property.
- Direct verbal bullying - name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.
- Indirect bullying - action designed to harm someone's social reputation and / or cause humiliation.

Indirect bullying includes:

- Lying and spreading rumours,
  - Playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate,
  - Mimicking,
  - Encouraging others to socially exclude someone, or
  - Damaging someone's social reputation or acceptance by the larger group.
- Cyberbullying - direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technologies. This includes harassment via a mobile phone, setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces.

#### Behaviours that are not bullying

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management.

Mutual conflict involves an argument or disagreement between people but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

Social rejection or dislike is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Single-episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion, they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. However, this does not mean that single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression should be ignored or condoned as these are unacceptable behaviours.

#### **4. ACTION GUIDELINES:**

Should a child experience bullying or harassment they are to name the behaviour to a trusted adult within the school community, ideally a teacher or parent. A parent will report the matter to the school and not attempt to deal with it themselves in the playground. The child will be encouraged to use school wide strategies such as NAME IT, THREE PARTS OF SORRY and RECEIVING A SORRY. If possible, with the assistance of a member of the school staff, the perpetrator and victim will resolve the situation and work out a solution that is acceptable to both parties. This will be monitored over the coming weeks to ensure the bullying behaviour does not re-occur. Should the situation continue or not be possible to resolve as stated above, school management will become involved, and parents will be asked to attend a meeting with the Assistant Principal and Student Engagement / Inclusion Leading Teacher. The Assistant Principal will monitor the situation from this point.

All students are reminded that a key factor in many bullying incidents is the actions of bystanders. If a student witnesses another student being bullied they must tell a member of staff or their parents.

All staff will take reports of bullying seriously and follow up with the students involved and their parents.

Parents will inform the school if they suspect bullying is occurring.

#### **5. MONITORING, REPORTING AND REVIEW:**

Flemington Primary School will:

- Promote and support safe and respectful learning culture where bullying is not tolerated;
- Put in place whole-school strategies and initiatives as outlined above;
- Ensure its Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy includes processes and strategies to promptly prevent and respond to incidents of bullying and other forms of unacceptable behaviour;
- Involve students, staff and parents in updating the Bullying and Harassment Policy and also the Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy;
- Work in partnership with parents to reduce and manage bullying; and
- Take a whole school approach focusing on safety and wellbeing.

#### **6. RELATED POLICIES:**

- Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy

#### **7. REFERENCES:**

- Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984

## **8. REVISION HISTORY:**

This policy was ratified by School Council in on October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

It will be reviewed as determined by School Council or every 3 years.