



# Bullying Policy

## 1. Rationale

We have a vision statement which challenges us to create a learning community based on values. Each person is recognised as a unique individual bringing special qualities and gifts to share and so we all have a right to be respected and responsibility to respect each other.

Therefore, we do not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form. All members of our community are committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment which promotes personal growth and fosters positive self-esteem for all. We aim to maintain a setting in which everyone feels valued and respected and where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted.

## Definitions

### **Bullying is:**

- A repeated and unjustifiable behaviour (repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour)
- Ongoing misuse of power in relationships – individual or group over one or more persons.
- Intended to cause fear, distress and/or harm to another
- May be physical, verbal or indirect/relational
- Conducted by a powerful individual or group
- Against a less powerful individual who is unable to effectively resist.
- Bullying can happen in person or online, and can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert)

### **Cyber Bullying is:**

- The use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, text messages, instant messaging and websites to engage in the bullying of other individuals or groups.
- It includes abusive texts and emails, hurtful messages, images or videos, imitating, excluding or humiliating others online, nasty online gossip and chat.
- When this technology provides an alternative means for verbal, relational and psychological forms of bullying.

### **Harassment is**

- Any unwanted, unwelcome, or uninvited behaviour which makes a person feel humiliated or offended
- Seen as one form of bullying.

### **Physical Bullying is**

- Repetitive low level hitting, kicking, pinching, pushing, tripping, “ganging up”, unwanted physical or sexual touching, and damage to personal property.
- High levels of physical assault may be classified as violence.

### **Psychological Bullying is**

- Repeated stalking, threats or implied threats, unwanted email or text messaging, abusive websites, threatening gestures, manipulation, emotional black-mail, and threats to an individual’s reputation and sense of safety.

### **Relational Bullying is**

- Repeatedly ostracising others by leaving them out or convincing others to exclude or reject another individual or group from their social connections, making up or spreading rumours and sharing or threatening to share others personal information.

## **Verbal Bullying is**

- Repeated use of words to hurt or humiliate another individual or group.
- Using put-downs, insulting language, name-calling, swearing, insulting someone about the way they look or behave, nasty notes and homophobic, racist or sexist comments.

## **Violence is**

- Incidents where a person is intimidated, threatened, physically assaulted or where property is deliberately damaged by another individual.
- It is an extreme use of force often resulting in injury or destruction.
- Violence does not necessarily involve an imbalance of power and can be a one-off incident.

## **Bystanders are**

- Those who are aware of, or witnesses to, the bullying situation.
- Those who encourage the bullying and do not assist the person / group being bullied.
- A **supportive bystander** will use words and/or actions to support someone who is being bullied by intervening, getting teacher support or comforting them.

## **Terminology**

- The Department of Education promotes the use of affirmative language that supports the values of the *Western Australian Curriculum* (i.e. Health and Physical Education curriculum).
- The terms 'bullies' and 'victims' are not recommended as appropriate terminology to use when identifying, reporting, recording and responding to bullying incidents. It is important that bullying is seen as a behaviour. It is more appropriate to identify and label the unacceptable behaviour such as 'students who are bullied', 'students who bully others' and 'students who engage in bullying behaviour'. This will ensure that the unacceptable behaviours are addressed in a manner that supports the individuals involved to learn and demonstrate more acceptable social behaviours without the impact of enduring labels

## **Objectives**

The objectives of our whole-school bullying policy are:

- To raise awareness among staff, students and parents about bullying;
- To actively counter bullying at the school;
- To provide strategies to resolve conflict and respect differences;
- To create a school environment where all students, staff and parents feel safe and welcome;
- To create a climate where it is okay to talk about bullying and ask for help
- To promote positive mental health.

## **2. Rights, Responsibilities & Rules**

### **Rights**

*At Belmont Primary school*

- All students, staff and community members have the right to be treated courteously and with respect.
- All students have the right to learn to the best of their ability without being disrupted by others.
- All students, staff and community members have the right to work in a safe environment.

### **Responsibilities**

*At Belmont Primary School*

- All students, staff and community members treat one another with courtesy and respect.
- Students should not interfere with other students' learning.
- All students, staff and community members strive to keep the school and its grounds safe.
- We all need to care about ourselves, other students, parents, staff, belongings, our school and equipment.

## **Rules**

*At Belmont Primary School we abide by the following rules .....*

- We greet one another in a friendly manner.
- We use manners e.g. 'please' 'thankyou' 'excuse me' and use hands up.
- We avoid hurtful language.
- We listen to instructions carefully and follow them straight away.
- We stay on task and complete work on our own.
- We solve problems in a friendly, fair manner.
- We respond to whistles and school bell immediately, walking quickly and quietly.
- We remain in specified areas when eating or playing.
- We walk safely and sensibly around all buildings.
- We do not leave the school grounds or class room without permission from a teacher.
- We enter the classroom only when a teacher is present.
- We walk our bicycles in the school grounds.
- We leave valuables at home.
- We wear a hat when outside.
- We proudly wear the school uniform and appropriate footwear.

## **3. Management of Bullying Incidents**

All parties are expected to treat each other with respect and dignity, and ensure the confidentiality of any issues that may arise.

### **Teacher' Responsibilities**

- Teachers to be familiar with the school's bullying policy and procedures.
- Teachers to be models of caring and tolerant behaviour.
- In the first weeks of each year the non-acceptance of bullying is to be discussed in class.
- Teachers to make students aware of their responsibilities with regard to the bullying policy.
- Implement lessons to develop resilience to Bullying. Health lessons for year K-6 term 1.
- Teach relevant strategies.
- Attend to reported instances of bullying behaviour.
- Treat information regarding bullying confidentially.

### **Action**

1. Protect the bullied child from further harm.
2. Note the name/s of bullied child, who reported the incident and the bystander/s.
3. Interview bullied child to find out what happened.
4. Suggest strategies that the bullied students might use to avoid being bullied in the future.
5. Individually interview bystander/s. Discuss strategies these students might use to avoid bullying in the future.
6. Inform Deputy or Principal. Hand over any recorded notes.

### **Challenging Incidents**

#### **Physical violence or Intimidation**

- Immediate notification of assistance from an administrator or colleague.
- Move student onlookers away.
- Separate students with minimal physical contact.
- Apply Behaviour Management Plan guidelines.
- Apply shared concern – students involved in the incident are questioned separately.
- Report of incident to be written up on Integris.

#### **Challenging Students.**

- Collaborative case management of students with persistent aggression or continued victimisation. Develop a collaborative action plan with specified outcomes (School psych, parents and teacher)
- Problem-solving strategies for dealing with disclosures.
- Use of sanctions in BMP policy for violent incidents.

#### **4. School strategies to reduce and prevent bullying.**

Our strategy has two aspects: prevention and management. Prevention strategies assist students to become resilient. The management strategy we apply is the Student Support and 'Shared Concern' approach. Although this approach is not based on sanctions or punishments, the school has a range of such measures available, up to and including suspension or exclusion which are in accord with our Behaviour Management Plan, and which may be used in response to bullying.

#### **Prevention Programs**

##### **Whole-school Approach**

- Compose a school policy for 'bullying'.
- All staff made aware of bullying issues, student's attitudes, the need to take action and of their roles in implementing the policy.
- The bullying policy clearly articulated to staff, students and parents.
- All staff to provide careful supervision.
- Discuss the issues of bullying regularly at staff meeting and provide training to all staff.
- Anti-bullying material included in Health learning area.
- Teachers to run a universal program in the classroom as a prevention model. A cross-curriculum content is utilised to provide practice in conflict resolution and protective behaviours.
- Class meetings to discuss problem-solving measures. Focus on behaviours not punishments.
- Self-protective behaviours – ignoring verbal putdowns, enlisting adult or peer support, learn to assist in making the school safer by reporting incidents and assisting students who may be targets of bullying.
- Whole class group workshops for ongoing problems as needed.
- Intensive small group work for students who bully (conflict resolution, anger managements) and students who are bullied (assertiveness training and self-protection behaviours).
- Teachers to be assisted in difficult cases by administrator and school psychologist.
- Implementing strategies from resources such as Cyber Savvy and the Office of the eSafety Commissioner to promote cyber safety and positive digital citizenship.

##### **Rewarding positive action and appropriate behaviour: (suggestions)**

- Friendly Student award at assemblies.
- Faction tokens for good behaviour. Winning faction at end of term get a reward.
- Merit certificates.
- Class reward systems
- Inform the students about opportunities for incidents to be reported confidentially in a verbal or written form to staff, the Principal, parents and student leaders.
- Bucket filling – if students are bucket fillers they get a "full bucket".
- New students arriving later in the school year to be advised of the policy.

##### **Schoolyard strategies: (suggestions)**

- Teacher/Students led games.
- Teachers reinforce faction tokens and use verbal praise for students who display correct behaviours.
- Teachers listen to grievances and take appropriate action.
- Play equipment labelling for each room.
- Duty teacher to remain on duty when whistle has been blown to mark the end of breaks, and ensure all students have returned to class by the time the bell is rung.
- Year 6 class running lunchtime games and competitions.
- Follow the school BMP policy – more serious offences.
- Implement a highly visible and active approach to playground supervision.

<b>MEMBERS</b>	<b>RIGHTS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b>
<b>All students, teachers, parents, wider school community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are safe and supported in the school environment</li> <li>are included</li> <li>are treated with respect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>participate and contribute to school positive behaviour programs</li> <li>build positive relationships</li> <li>demonstrate respect and tolerance towards others</li> </ul>
<b>School leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is supported in developing the school's plan to prevent and effectively manage bullying</li> <li>is supported in implementing the strategies and programs under the school's plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provides leadership in resourcing the school's plan</li> <li>ensures the school community is informed of the plan</li> <li>implements the plan</li> <li>supports staff to implement the strategies and programs under the plan</li> </ul>
<b>Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>feel safe and supported in the workplace</li> <li>are informed of the school's plan on bullying</li> <li>have access to professional learning in preventing and effectively managing bullying</li> <li>have access to curriculum resources suitable for supporting students in building positive relationships, resiliency, safety and bullying prevention (including social/ emotional learning)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>promote and model positive relationships</li> <li>participate in developing the school plan</li> <li>identify and respond to bullying incidents</li> <li>deliver the strategies and programs to students in responding to bullying effectively</li> <li>promote effective bystander behaviour</li> <li>promote social problem-solving</li> <li>use appropriate terminology when referring to bullying and the students involved</li> </ul>
<b>Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have access to curriculum that supports the building of resiliency and social skills</li> <li>are informed of the school's plan on bullying</li> <li>are provided with supports to stop bullying</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understand and value the concepts of inclusion and tolerance</li> <li>identify and respond effectively to bullying</li> <li>are aware of themselves as bystanders</li> <li>seek help for themselves and others as needed</li> </ul>
<b>Parents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are treated with respect</li> <li>are confident their children are provided with a safe and supportive school environment</li> <li>are provided with access to information on the prevention and management of bullying</li> <li>are informed of the school's plan and opportunities to participate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>support and encourage children to treat others with respect and tolerance</li> <li>act in accordance with the school plan if they observe/ know about bullying</li> <li>encourage children to report bullying incidents</li> <li>work effectively with the school in responding to bullying</li> </ul>
<b>Wider community: including other professionals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are strategically included in prevention and bullying management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide support and input into the school's approach to preventing and managing bullying</li> </ul>