

Toora Primary School - Bullying Policy

Toora Primary School is committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which everyone feels valued and respected, and where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted. Therefore, we do not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying is:

- A repeated and unjustifiable behaviour
- Intended to cause fear, distress and/or harm to another
- May be physical, verbal or indirect/relational
- Conducted by a more powerful individual or group
- Against a less powerful individual who is unable to effectively resist.

Types of bullying

	Direct	Indirect
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitting, slapping, punching • Kicking • Pushing, strangling • Spitting, biting • Pinching, scratching • Throwing things e.g. stones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting another person to harm someone
Non-Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mean and hurtful name-calling • Hurtful teasing • Demanding money or possessions • Forcing another to do homework or commit offences such as stealing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading nasty rumours • Trying to get other students to not like someone
Non-Verbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threatening and/or obscene gestures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberate exclusion from a group or activity • Removing and hiding and/or damaging others' belongings

HARRASSMENT

Harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome, or uninvited behaviour which makes a person feel humiliated or offended. Harassment can be seen as one form of bullying. The terms are often used interchangeably.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

RIGHTS

- Every person has the right to feel safe. Any person who bullies another is denying them that right. This means we have to think about others (not just ourselves) in the classroom and in the playground. The right to feel safe means we have a responsibility to consider how we speak and act towards others. Bullying takes away a person's sense of security. The right to safety means that any bullying of any kind is unacceptable.
- Every person has the right to be treated with respect and fairness. This means we show respect to other people, and their property, in the class and in the playground. The right to receive respect and fair treatment requires from us the responsibility to show manners and courtesy towards each other.
- Every person has the right to learn. This means we do not adversely affect the learning of another student.

At school it is everyone's responsibility to take the necessary steps to stop bullying behaviour. Toora Primary School will not tolerate any action that undermines a person's right to feel safe, respected and to learn.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff, students and parents have the following responsibilities:

- **School Staff will:**
 - Support, promote, enact, maintain and review the bullying policy and procedures;
 - Be models of caring and tolerant behaviour;
 - Listen to reports of bullying;
 - Act upon these;
 - Protect the person being bullied from further harm;
 - Act to stop the behaviour recurring;
 - Record identified bullying incidents.
- **Students who are bullied need to communicate about it with:**
 - A staff member or student of trust and give full details of the event and/or their parents and give them full details of the event;
 - Write details about the event and provide to staff if requested.
- **Student witnesses to bullying should:**
 - Intervene if they are able;
 - Seek teacher assistance;
 - Document the incident if requested.
- **Parents should:**
 - Listen sympathetically to reports of bullying;

- Speak with the relevant school personnel (not the alleged student/s concerned);
- Work with the school in seeking a permanent solution.
- **Parent witnesses should:**
 - Be limited to verbal intervention;
 - Seek teacher assistance;
 - Document the incident if requested by school staff.

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.

ACTION

1. Protect the bullied child from further harm.
2. Write down name/s of the bullied child, who reported the incident and bystander/s.
3. Interview the bullied child to find out what happened.
4. Suggest strategies that the bullied student 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. Record what happened on the Bullying Incident Form.
7. Send a copy of the form to the Principal.
8. Monitor the situation over the following few days.
9. **Where necessary**, speak to class without using any names, circle time, small group meetings, class meeting box.
10. **Where appropriate and using discretion**, work with parents of the bullied child to assist their child to avoid being bullied in the future. Keep them informed about progress and the measures taken.
11. **If necessary, where appropriate and using discretion**, inform the parents of the child bullying and work with them to establish joint strategies for behaviour modification.

CHALLENGING STUDENTS

- Collaborative case management of students with persistent challenging behaviours or continued victimisation.
- Use of sanctions for violent incidents (refer Behaviour Management Plan policy).
- Problem-solving strategies for dealing with disclosures.

STRATEGIES TO REDUCE AND PREVENT BULLYING

At Toora Primary School we will:

- Openly talk about bullying – what it is, how it affects us and what we can do about it.
- Teach our children the skills that will build their resiliency and self-esteem; empower them to take the responsibility for themselves; and allow them the opportunity to practise these skills.
- The bullying policy clearly articulated to staff, students and parents; and fully implemented.

- All staff to provide careful supervision.
- Discuss the issue of bullying regularly at staff meetings and provide training to staff.
- Curriculum to focus on developing social competencies, building positive relationships and positive self-image (You Can Do It! Program, Catching on Early, Circle Time, Class Meetings).
- Self-protective behaviours – ignoring verbal put downs, enlisting adult or peer support, learn assertive responses, saying ‘no’ and walking away, helping others being bullied (5 finger plan). Report incidences to help (rather than ‘dob’ to get someone into trouble). Model and teach students to value and respect others.
- Preventative support systems – peer support (student leadership team / Buddies program) to assist in making the school safer by promoting ‘getting along’ and ‘helping each other’.
- School to be supported by specialists including School Support Services and Student Welfare Officer.
- Whole class, small group and one-on-one work as appropriate (for example, conflict resolution, anger management, assertiveness training).
- Reward positive action and appropriate behaviours (for example, house points, student of the week).
- Implement specific school yard strategies as needed: temporarily segregate the school yard into group areas; lunch-time clubs; student organised activities open to whole school; sandpit tools and sports equipment available for student borrowing, along with textas and paper, and chalk.

EVALUATION

It is important that the whole-school bullying policy is monitored, reviewed and modified accordingly.

The frequency or continuation of bullying will be formally monitored after six months and then after twelve months, along with the effectiveness of the policy. It will be evaluated by:

- Reviewing records of reported incidences to determine if there has been a reduction in reported or observed incidences of bullying.
- Feedback from school community members as to the effectiveness of the bullying policy.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY FEEDBACK REGARDING THIS DRAFT POLICY:
