



Bullying and Harassment (including cyber-bullying) Prevention Policy

Policy Statement

Carlton North Primary School is committed to providing a safe and respectful teaching and learning environment where bullying and harassment is not tolerated. Carlton North Primary School believes that all students have the right to learn in a school environment in which they feel safe and secure. This Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy should be read in conjunction with the Carlton North Primary School Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy. This policy is to read and implemented in conjunction with the Carlton North Primary School Schoolwide Positive Behaviour System.

Aim

- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.
- To use digital technology for communication and learning responsibly.
- To explain what bullying and harassment are, and the fact that they are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- To ask that everyone in the school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.

Definitions

Bullying is when a person, or a group of people, **repeatedly** upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance. Bullying may be direct physical, direct verbal, indirect or cyberbullying. **Bullying is not a one-off** disagreement between two or more people or a situation of mutual dislike.

Bullying can be **repeated**:

1. **Direct physical assault** – e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
2. **Direct verbal assault** – e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
3. **Indirect assault** – e.g. spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude a person, damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance, or cyberbullying.

Cyber-bullying is direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology. For example via electronic mediums such as cell-phones, web-logs and web-sites, on-line chat rooms, 'MUD' rooms (multi-user domains where individuals take on different characters) and Xangas (on-line personal profiles where some adolescents create lists of people they do not like). It can be verbal or written.

Harassment is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome and which is reasonably likely to humiliate, offend, intimidate or distress a person. For example, teasing a student because of their speech impediment.

Guidelines

- 4.1 A school-wide approach will be taken to deal with bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment in a consistent and systematic way.
- 4.2 All new students and staff will be informed of the anti-harassment policy and practices at the commencement of their time at the school.
- 4.3 All complaints of harassment will be heard in confidence and taken seriously.
- 4.4 The School will organise preventative curriculum programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- 4.5 Staff programs will occur periodically to keep staff informed of current issues/strategies for dealing with these issues.
- 4.6 There will be disciplinary consequences, covering a range of strategies, for those in breach of the Anti-Bullying (including cyber bullying) and Anti- Harassment Policy, guidelines and procedures (see Appendix A).

Program

- 5.1 Constructive strategies to deal with harassment will include: education in coping strategies; assertiveness training; problem solving and social skills; counselling and behaviour modification. These strategies will be employed in preference to punitive sanctions and negative consequences.
 - 5.2.1 The Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment Policy of the school will be widely promoted to students, staff, parents/carers and the local community.
 - 5.2.2 A summary of the policy will be included in the Student Enrolment Package while new staff will receive extensive documentation as part of the school's induction process.
 - 5.3 The school leadership team and the teachers will work together to ensure the safety of all school members in situations of bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment, by thoroughly investigating all complaints while respecting the need for confidentiality, notifying parents/carers and planning interventions.
- If a teacher feels a student is at serious and imminent risk from bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment then it is their duty of care to pass on the information to an appropriate person in order to ensure appropriate support for the student. It is important that teachers document fully their interaction with the student and to verify the actions taken.
- 5.4 Student programs will be organised to raise student awareness about bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment, to provide a forum for discussion of matters and to aid development of attitudes. Some matters will be dealt with formally in the curriculum and in peer support programs, leadership programs, extra-curricular programs and occasional activities run by outside experts and workers. The curriculum will include anti-bullying messages and strategies in line with current DET materials e.g. 'The Friendly Schools' and 'No Blame Approach to Bullying' programs.
 - 5.5.1 Professional development will be provided for staff relating to bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment and proven strategies to address these issues in classrooms will be shared with all staff.
 - 5.5.2 The school will provide specialist resources such as books, videos, kits and off site in-service activities to assist staff in responding appropriately to bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment issues.

5.6 Disciplinary consequences for bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment will comply with the school's Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy. The principal or their nominee will provide disciplinary consequences including suspension in accordance with Department of Education and Training (DET) guidelines.

Links and Appendices (including processes related to this policy)

Links and Appendices

Links which are connected with this policy are:

- DET's [Student Engagement Guidance](#)
- The school's Acceptable ICT Use Agreement (re: cyber-bullying)
- DET's [Bully Stoppers: Make a Stand, Lend a Hand](#)
- DET's [Vulnerable Students](#)

Supporting links:

- [Bully Free World: Special Needs Anti-bullying Toolkit](#)
- Australian Human Rights Commission - [Human rights in the school classroom](#)

- [Safe Schools Coalition Victoria](#)
- [Racism. No way!](#) anti-racism education for Australian schools

Appendices which are connected with this policy are:

- **Appendix A:** Anti-Bullying (including cyberbullying) and Anti-Harassment Procedures
- **Appendix B:** Reporting on Incident of Bullying / Harassment – Template

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually or more often if necessary.

This policy was ratified by School Council in March 2017.

Appendix A – Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment Procedures

How will a student's bullying complaint be dealt with?

Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and treated sensitively. School procedures for responding to a student who bullies or harasses others are set out below.

Note: If at any time bullying or harassment persists or is sufficiently serious, the Principal may contact parents/carers and commence formal disciplinary action in accordance with the School's Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and DET's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance.

1. What are Bullying, Cyber Bullying and Harassment?

Bullying

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, who have more power at the time, deliberately upset or hurt another person, their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion.

Types of Bullying

There are three broad categories of bullying:

1. Direct physical bullying – e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
2. Direct verbal bullying – e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
3. 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.

Indirect bullying 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 electronic means to humiliate and distress.

What Bullying is Not

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management. There are three socially unpleasant situations that are often confused with bullying:

Mutual Conflict

In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

Social Rejection or Dislike

Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.

Single-episode acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation

Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied.

Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying.

1.2 Cyber-bullying

Consists of covert, psychological bullying, conveyed through the electronic mediums such as cell-phones, web-logs and web-sites, on-line chat rooms, 'MUD' rooms (multi-user domains where individuals take on different characters) and Xangas (on-line personal profiles where some adolescents create lists of people they do not like). It is verbal (over the telephone or mobile phone), or written (flaming, threats, racial, sexual or homophobic harassment) using the various mediums available.

1.3 Harassment

Is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

2. Why do we have a Policy on these?

To provide a safe and friendly school environment for students and staff and to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others. All persons have a legal right to protection from harassment under the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act and the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act.

3. What are the effects of Bullying and Harassment?

Poor health – anxiety, depression, lower self-esteem, reduced study performance, missed classes, social withdrawal, reduced career prospects.

3.1 Am I bullying or harassing someone?

If you are not sure about your behaviour you can:

- Check it out by asking if it is offensive or inappropriate.
- Stop it.
- Apologise.
- Take it seriously if someone says they are feeling uncomfortable.
- Talk it over with an adviser or somebody who has an understanding of the issues.

3.2 What are some of the feelings victims of bullying or harassment may experience?

· “I will ignore it and it will go away.” - If anything it will make things worse - you will give the impression that you agree with the situation.

· “I don’t want to cause trouble.” - Most causes of harassment are sorted out quite simply. By speaking up, action can be taken to address the problem.

· “Am I to blame?” - Victims of harassment or bullying sometimes feel that it is their fault. Victims are made to feel guilty by the offender and often blame themselves. It is your right to have a safe environment free from harassment or bullying.

· “Am I imagining things?” - Often our hunches are correct. Rather than put up with nagging doubts, talk to someone about your feelings.

3.3 Bullying or harassment can often make people feel:

- Embarrassed or ashamed.
- Offended or humiliated.
- Intimidated or frightened.
- Uncomfortable.

4. What should you do if you see another person being bullied or harassed?

Tell the person that you witnessed the incident and advise them to report it to an appropriate person. However, if your friend is harassing another person, let them know that their behaviour is unacceptable.

Bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully.

4.1 Bullying can involve

- Grabbing, aggressive staring, hitting, pinching kicking, pushing and shoving.
- Publicly excluding a person from your group.
- Knocking a person’s books or belongings out of their hands or off their desk.
- Teasing a person because of their looks.

4.2 Cyber-bullying can involve

- Flaming – online fights using electronic messages with angry or vulgar messages.
- Harassment – repeatedly sending nasty, mean and insulting messages.
- Denigration – posting or sending gossip or rumours about a person to damage his/her reputation or friendships.
- Outing – sharing someone’s secrets or embarrassing information or images online.
- Exclusion – intentionally and cruelly excluding someone from an online group.
- Cyber-stalking – repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear.

4.3 Harassment is usually directed at a person because of their gender, race, creed or abilities

Subtle (the most common) they include:

- Offensive staring and leering.
- Unwanted comments about physical appearance and sexual preference.
- Racist or smutty comments or jokes.
- Questions about another’s sexual activity.
- Persistent comments about a person’s private life or family.
- Physical contact e.g. purposely brushing up against another’s body.
- Offensive name calling.

Explicit (obvious) they include:

- Grabbing, aggressive hitting, pinching and shoving, etc.
- Unwelcome patting, touching, embracing.

- Repeated requests for dates, especially after refusal.
- Offensive gestures, jokes, comments, letters, phone calls or e-mail.
- Sexually and/or racially provocative remarks.
- Displays of sexually graphic material – pornography.
- Requests for sexual favours.
- Extreme forms of sexual harassment will lead to criminal prosecution.

5. What do you do if you are being bullied or harassed?

- Tell the person you don't like what they are doing and you want them to stop.
- Discuss the matter with a Coordinator, Student Welfare Coordinator or peer mediator, peer support leader or a teacher that you feel comfortable with.
- The school will take your concerns seriously – all complaints will be treated confidentially.

5.1 How will your complaint be dealt with?

Your concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated confidentially.

School procedures for responding to a student who bullies or harasses others are set out below.

Level 1

If the bullying or harassment incident is minor or first time occurrence, teachers may elect to use one or more anti-bullying practices:

- Refer to the Schoolwide Positive Behaviour – schoolwide consequences flowchart and reflection sheet.
- Stopping the bullying/re-statement of rules and consequences reminder of Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy.
- Restorative questioning.
- Think time reflection.
- Private conference.
- Shared control discussion.

If the student does not take control over his/her behaviour, the Principal/Assistant Principal will be informed.

Level 2

If the bullying or harassment continues or in instances of severe bullying or harassing, a referral should be made to the Principal or Assistant Principal.

Here, the Principal or Assistant Principal (or another who has responsibility for student welfare) may:

- Provide counselling support to the victim.
- Meet with the perpetrator to develop a Behaviour Support Plan/other type of behaviour modification strategy document and meet with parents of the student to discuss strategies.
- Provide discussion/mentoring of different social and emotional learning competencies including structured learning activities.
- Conduct a restorative conference separately with the perpetrator and “target”.

Level 3

For ‘at risk’ students (many risk factors, few protective factors) whose bullying or harassing behaviour is severe and for other non-at risk students whose bullying or harassing and other aggressive behaviour is resistant to change, an individual ‘strength building’ plan should be developed by the Principal or Assistant Principal in consultation with student, parents/carers and teachers. Individual strength-building plans and associated interventions help connect the student to positive people, programs and actions in the community, school and home as well as develop the student’s inner social and emotional strengths (skills, values).

Level 4

Students whose severe bullying or harassing behaviour resists school efforts and represents a significant threat to the safety and wellbeing should be referred to outside agencies for evaluation. The Principal or

Assistant Principal will need to be familiar with those community agencies and organisations that can offer more intensive services to the student and student's family.

Appendix B

Reporting on Incident of Bullying / Harassment

Staff member recording incident:

Date: / /

Name of student(s) who appears to have instigated bullying

Year/Class:

Name(s) of target(s):

Name(s) of witnesses:

Did you observe the incident? YES · NO ·

If 'NO' who reported the incident to you?

Brief description of incident (what was allegedly said or done to the student who appears to have been bullied?)

What form(s) of bullying took place? Verbal · Physical · Indirect · Cyber ·

Other · Please detail:

Describe how you responded (Did you use a school anti-bullying practice?):

Describe how student responded to your intervention:

Where / when / time incident took place:

Location:

When: before school · recess · lunch · in class · after school ·

Time: : am/pm

Date incident took place: / /

Additional comments: