

Wooragee Primary School Bullying & Harassment Policy October 2016

Rationale:

Our school is committed to providing a safe and caring environment and culture which enables positive relationships to be formed amongst all students, parents and staff and which encourages self-esteem, cooperation, personal growth and a positive attitude to learning and teaching. A clear policy on bullying (including cyber-bullying) and harassment will inform the community that **bullying and harassment in any of its forms will not be tolerated.**

The school supports a culture (values, expectations and standards) and shared commitment to zero tolerance of child abuse, and arrangements that allow it to occur will not be tolerated. The school takes into consideration the diversity of the children attending the school, and their particular vulnerabilities. e.g. children with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Aims:

- To reinforce within the school community that no form of bullying is acceptable.
- Everyone within the school community is alerted to signs and evidence of bullying and has a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up and that support is given to both victim and perpetrator.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

Definition:

What are bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment?

Bullying is repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group. A person is bullied when one or more other people expose them regularly and over time to negative or harmful actions. Bullies are people who deliberately set out to intimidate, exclude, threaten and/or hurt others repeatedly.

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 etc. It is verbal (over the telephone or mobile phone), or written (inflaming, threats, racial, sexual or homophobic harassment) using the various mediums available.

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

Our school will actively promote a positive and welcoming personal environment for all members of the school community. When people are bullied or harassed some effects might be anger, embarrassment, fear and humiliation, loss of self-confidence and reduced function and potential. Bullying and harassment will be addressed, individual differences will be respected and students and staff will be enabled and supported in their pursuit of learning and teaching.

Guidelines:

A school-wide approach will be taken to deal with bullying (including cyber-bullying) and harassment in a consistent and systematic way.

- All new students and staff will be informed of the anti-harassment policy and practices at the commencement of their time at the school.
- All complaints of harassment will be heard in confidence and taken seriously.
- Our school will organise preventative curriculum programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- Staff programs will occur periodically to keep staff informed of current issues/strategies for dealing with these issues.
- Disciplinary consequences will be determined by the principal and may involve loss of privileges, suspension, report to police, DET enquiry.

Program:

- 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.
- The Principal will work with teachers, students and parents 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 professional duty to ensure the student is safe and inform the Principal in order to ensure appropriate support for the student is attained.
- The school's social skills programs (such Bounce Back, Being Me, Friends for Life) as well as participation in the eSmart program will raise student awareness about bullying (including cyber-bullying) and harassment and provide a forum for discussion and management strategies.
- Disciplinary consequences for bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment will comply with the school's Welfare and Discipline Policy. The principal or their nominee will provide disciplinary consequences including suspension in accordance with Department of Education and Training (DET) guidelines.

Links which are connected with this policy are:

- DET's [Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines](#)
- DET's [Safe Schools are Effective School's](#)
- DET's [Student Engagement Policy Guidelines](#)
- The school's eSmart & ICT policy

Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier as required.

Ratified: 19th October 2016

Review Date: October.2019