



Port Wakefield Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy

**For the whole school community staff, students and parents.
We value working in a physically and emotionally safe environment**

Learning Respect Honesty Teamwork

The school will provide a safe, inclusive, supportive and ordered learning environment free from bullying, harassment and violence. Bullying, including cyber bullying, harassment and violence, is not acceptable in this school and will be dealt with seriously and expediently.

Bullying, harassment and violence are hurtful and destructive. Physical bullying *can be seen*. Cyber bullying happens *behind the screens*. Bullying, harassment and violence continue to be issues of concern for staff, students and their parents/guardians.

The school will work with the school community and other services and agencies to support its students in being responsible and productive members of this community.

Aim:

To ensure a bullying-free environment for all members of the school community.

Objectives:

- Develop positive relationships **between all members of the school community**.
- Use socially just practices
- Develop success oriented classrooms and yards
- Practise peaceful conflict resolution
- Teach the school community skills to prevent and/or respond appropriately to harassment & bullying including Anti-Bullying Policy.

Definitions

Bullying: is an **ongoing misuse of power** in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved including bystanders.

Harassment: is behaviour that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment by targeting an individual or group due to their: identity, race, culture or ethnic origin, religion, physical characteristics, gender, sexual orientation, marital, parenting or economic status, age, ability or disability.

Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour or a single act, directed towards an individual or group. Harassment may be intentional or unintentional and use specific words or actions that offend and distress another person.

Harassment may be regarded as minor or harmless by some, but has the potential to cause significant harm to individuals or groups affected or targeted.

Violence: is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person that results in psychological harm or physical injury. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.

Violence and harassment can occur as part of bullying, but can also occur in one-off conflicts or between strangers.

Discrimination: is treating, or proposing to treat, someone unfavourably than another person or group because of their background or certain personal characteristics.

Aggressor: refers to the student who engages in bullying behaviour. We avoid the word 'bully' as it is believed most, if not all, people bully at some stage in their lives. To label a child as a 'bully' is unfair. Young people may engage in bullying behaviour, but especially while they are young, they deserve the opportunity to learn social and emotional skills and make a choice to change their ways.

Target: refers to the person being bullied. It is more empowering for the young person to think of it in terms of being a target, as opposed to being a 'victim'.

Bystanders: a witness who sees or knows about bullying happening to someone else. Bystanders usually fall into one of the four groups

Reinforcer – behaviours include laughing, cheering and encouraging

Assistant – behaviours include actively helping, such as blocking exits

Outsider – behaviours include silent observation that could be interpreted as approval

Upstander – behaviours include active support of the person being affected by bullying behaviours. They take action or stand up when they witness someone being affected by bullying behaviour.

Types of bullying behaviour

PHYSICAL: Pushing, letters, drawings, touching, invasion of personal space, taking/damaging possessions. Extortion: demanding money for food or favours.

VERBAL: Comments/gestures, nicknames, put downs, name calling, laughing, threats, slander. Spreading rumours

SEXUAL: Deliberate and repeated touching, fondling or physical contact, smutty jokes or comments, provocative or insulting remarks, leering and ogling, persistent questioning about someone's private life.

RACIAL: Racist comments, religious comments, picking on people because of their race or religion, ridicule, name calling, put downs, physical violence.

EMOTIONAL: Snubbing, ganging up, ignoring, putting down, deliberately excluding a person (can also be part of all areas above.)

CYBER BULLYING; such as sending offensive text, emails videos or comments via the internet and mobile phones and electronic media, can also be part of all areas above.

Reporting bullying behaviour at Port Wakefield Primary School

Responsibilities of the principal, staff, students, parents

Who	Responsibilities
Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handle major bullying behaviours • Support staff as required with handling of bullying behaviours • Collate and disseminate data from Bullying Audit to class teachers in week 8, each term, Governing Council and newsletter • Meet with students, named by three or more students in the Bullying Audit, after interviews have been conducted. Anti-Bullying Pledge is to be agreed upon and signed by student, parents, class teacher and principal. • Letter is sent home in week 7 to students who have been affected by bullying behaviour, after interviews have been conducted
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document notifications of bullying behaviour • Decide on the appropriate 'Method of Intervention' for the situation • Follow up notifications • Inform principal of all incident/s • Follow up with parents, as required • Conduct Bullying Audits in week 5 of each term for all students • Conduct follow up interviews with students who have said 'Yes' to being bullied in the term, by the end of week 6, each term • Give surveys and follow up interviews to principal by end of week 6 each term
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand what bullying is and is not • Inform staff as soon as possible, when bullying behaviour occurs • Fill out the Bullying Audit honestly • Be honest about their involvement in incident/s <p>As a bystander, if you see someone being affected by bullying behaviour you can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell the person bullying to stop. • Be a friend to the person being bullied. • Remove yourself and the person being bullied from where the bullying is happening. • Locate a student mentor and advise them • Seek help.
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand what bullying is and is not • Let staff deal with the situation/s <p>If your child is being affected by bullying behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage talking; it may be difficult but be patient. Let your child know it is ok to tell. • Try not to overreact, listen calmly and try to work out the facts. • Assure your child that it happens to most people at some time. That we all need to learn and respond to it, confront it and cope with it. • Contact the school and work together to resolve the problem within a reasonable time frame. <p>**** Using social media to discuss school issues is not acceptable and illegal. The Education Department and SAPOL may be contacted by the school for further action to be taken if deemed necessary. ***</p> <p>Explain to your child that physical or verbal retaliation is NOT the answer.</p>

If your child is exhibiting bullying behaviour towards others:

- Make it clear that bullying because of revenge, for annoyance or fun is unacceptable.
- Help your child to understand the difference between assertive and aggressive behaviour.
- Make it clear that hurting or distressing another person unable to defend him or herself, is a form of weakness on the bully's part.
- Explore the possibility that the child is seeking attention and love. Are there home, community or school situations that are contributing to the bullying? Sensitive discussion may indicate that the person bullying may also be being bullied.
- Explore the need for development of self-confidence. Acknowledge successes in other areas to counter this poor self-esteem.
- **If your child is involved in bullying behaviour, he or she needs your confidence, understanding and support.**

Talk with your child's teacher and share ideas and experiences.

Reporting Bullying Behaviour outside of the Bullying Audit times for students and parents

If incidents of bullying behaviour occur outside of the Bullying Audit times, it is important it is reported to the school so it can be followed up.

- Who to report to – Class teacher
- How to report – ask for a meeting
- When to report – as soon as you know about the incident/s

Signs of bullying

Each individual student who has been the target of, or is the aggressor will respond and act differently. A student's behaviours and moods can also change for a variety of reasons. However, the following are some signs that may indicate a student is the target of bullying behaviour:

Signs staff at school may notice:

- Becomes aggressive and unreasonable
- Starts getting into fights
- Refuses to talk about what is wrong
- School grades begin to fall.

Sometimes bullying behaviour can be less obvious. Signs can include:

- Student is often alone or excluded from friendship groups at school
- Student is a frequent target for teasing, mimicking or ridicule at school
- Change in the student's ability or willingness to speak up in class and appears insecure or frightened.

Signs a parent may report:

- Doesn't want to go to school
- Changes their method or route to school or are frightened of walking to school
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Changes in eating patterns
- Frequent tears, anger, mood swings
- Unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches
- Missing or damaged belongings or clothes
- Arriving home hungry.

Students who are more likely to be the target of bullying behaviour are also more likely to:

- Feel disconnected from school and not like school
- Lack quality friendships at school
- Display high levels of emotionality that indicate vulnerability and low levels of resilience
- Be less well accepted by peers, avoid conflict and be socially withdrawn
- Have low self-esteem
- Be relatively non-assertive
- Be different in some way.

A student who is the aggressor may:

- Repeatedly tease, imitate or make fun of the same targets
- Feel the need to dominate or control others
- Show no compassion for someone who's experiencing bullying
- Repeatedly exclude or ignore the same target
- Whisper behind the back of the target on a frequent basis.

Students who frequently are the aggressor are more likely to:

- Feel disconnected from school and dislike school
- Demonstrate good leadership skills
- Demonstrate good verbal skills and ability to talk themselves out of trouble.

Strategies for prevention, intervention and coping

We will prevent harassment and bullying behaviour through use of:

- Behaviour Development Structures, class/yard rules and Grievance Procedures
- A Bullying audit conducted Week 5 of each term and the community informed via the newsletter, the results of these audits. The results of the audits will identify students who may have been the target of bullying behaviour or identified as the aggressor in their behaviour towards others. These students will be counselled and a support plan devised for students in consultation with the child, parent, class teacher and principal. These plans will then be reviewed every five weeks.
- Restorative Justice procedures
- Appropriate teaching methodology including: teacher modelling, collaborative classrooms, acceptable codes of behaviour, catering for individual differences, access to resources for all, positive relationships, good listening, success oriented environment
- Mandatory reporting
- Specialised teaching/learning programmes e.g. Child Protection Curriculum, Class meetings, Values lessons, Parent workshops.
 - Specific Skills teaching e.g. Identifying feelings, communication, what harassment/bullying is, problem solving, effects of harassment/bullying on education, self-esteem, assertiveness, mediating and negotiating, understanding and using the Whole School Grievance and Relationship Guidelines, awareness and responsibility for own behaviour, mutual respect.

Methods of Intervention

There are six major approaches that may be applied in cases of bullying, as assessed by Prof Ken Rigby (Rigby 2010). Each may be considered appropriate *in some situations*. These may be briefly described as follows:

The traditional disciplinary approach. Punishment, sanctions or 'consequences' are applied to a person identified as having engaged in bullying someone.

Strengthening the victim. The person being targeted is instructed or trained so as to cope more effectively with bullying behaviour; for example, through assertiveness training or the use of 'fogging'.¹

Mediation. Individuals involved in bully/victim problems are invited to meet with a trained mediator (adult or student) to explore ways of resolving the situation in a way that is acceptable to all parties.

Restorative practice. A meeting is arranged at which the person/s engaged in bullying are instructed to listen to how their 'target' feels about the treatment. They are required to reflect upon what has been happening and to act restoratively (e.g. by making an acceptable apology to those offended).

The support group method. The targeted person is interviewed and an account of the distress that has been experienced is communicated to those identified as the bullies. This is done at a meeting of the bullies attended also by selected students who are supportive of the target person. All present at the meeting are required to say how they will help to resolve the problem. The outcome is then carefully monitored.

Fogging

Fogging is a technique that can be used by children when they are being verbally teased or taunted in an unpleasant way. It would not be used with physical or group bullying. The idea with 'fogging' is to acknowledge that what the bully says may be true or seem true to him or her, without getting defensive and upset. Getting practically no expected reaction, the bully is often discouraged. To use this technique effectively children commonly need assistance from a teacher or counsellor who can help them to think about what they can say or do when they are verbally harassed - all the time remaining calm and self-possessed. Here is an example:

Bully: You have a great big nose

Target: *True, it is large*

Bully: It looks like a beak

Target: *True, it does stand out*

Bully: You are the ugliest kid in the school

Target: *That's your opinion*

Bully: You are wearing pov shoes

Target: You are not wrong

With growing confidence, the target might start asking the bully to explain. This can come as a surprise and put the bully on the back foot. Whatever the bully says, the target just listen.

Bully: You are such an idiot.

Target: *Why do you think so? (Wait for the answer)*

Bully: Everybody hates you.

Target: *That's interesting. Why do you think that? (Wait for the answer)*

Bully: You are always in the library at lunch time

Target: *That's right. Why does that concern you? (Wait for an answer)*

Bully: All those kids in the library are nerds

Target: *It may seem like that to you.*

Bully: You have no friends

Target: Well, that's what you think.

From: Rigby, K (2010) *Bullying Interventions: in schools: Six major methods*. Camberwell: ACER.

Also published in the United States by Wiley in 2012.

The method of shared concern. The practitioner meets individually with the person/s suspected of the bullying and shares a concern over what has been happening to the target person. Each of the suspected perpetrators is asked to suggest ways in which they can help, and to agree to act accordingly. After discussing the situation with the target person, the practitioner convenes a meeting of all the suspected bullies to formulate an agreed plan to resolve the problem. At a final meeting, a solution is negotiated between the suspected bullies and the target person who has now been invited to join them. Refer to the book by Prof Rigby: *The method of shared concern: A positive approach to school bullying* (2011, Camberwell, ACER) for an in depth examination of this method.

Strategies for coping with bullying behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Ignoring the person bullying. Showing them that it does not upset you. TELLING YOURSELF that it is not your fault, and that it is the person who is bullying who needs to change – NOT YOU!
- Telling the person bullying in an assertive manner that their actions are unwanted.
- Going to a safe place. DO NOT retaliate with physical or verbal bullying.
- Speaking to a staff member/adult or a student mentor you trust and giving them full details of the events. The student mentor will pass on the information to a selected staff member

Persist until the problem is resolved. Share your feeling and confide in someone who you think can help.

Bullying will not be tolerated and in the event of any incident taking place, positive action for correction will occur.

Need more information?

The following internet websites can provide support and useful information about bullying.

Kids Helpline – www.kidshelp.com.au

Child and Youth Health Parent Helpline – www.cyh.com.au

Bullying No Way – www.bullyingnoway.com.au

Net Alert – www.netalert.net.au