

PURPOSE

A person is bullied when they are exposed over time to multiple negative actions on the part of one or more persons. These actions may impact on the emotional, social or physical wellbeing of the student/s involved. Bullies are people who deliberately set out to intimidate, exclude, threaten and or hurt others repeatedly and consistently. They can operate alone or as a group.

SCOPE

The school will provide a positive culture where bullying is not accepted, and in so doing, all will have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or to teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in the school environment.

- To reinforce within the school community that no form of bullying is acceptable.
- Everyone within the school community to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and to have 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 when necessary.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying occurs when someone, or a group of people, deliberately and repeatedly upset, harass, intimidate, threaten or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying, where the bully or bullies have more power than the victim due to their age, size, status or other reasons.

Bullying may be direct or indirect, physical or verbal, and includes cyberbullying. Bullying is not a one-off disagreement between two or more people or a situation of mutual dislike. In this policy any reference to 'bullying' includes all forms of bullying including cyberbullying.

Bullying can be:

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* – e.g. spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude a person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.

Harassment can also constitute bullying if it amounts to a pattern of behaviour or course of conduct towards another person that is demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person.

Cyberbullying is direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology. For example via a mobile phone, tablets, computers, chat rooms, email, social media, etc. It can be verbal, written or include use of images, video and/or audio.

Other distressing behaviours

Many distressing behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in or who witness any distressing behaviours should report their concerns to school staff and our school will follow the Student Behaviour Management Procedures, the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and the Student Code of Conduct.



Mutual conflict involves an argument or disagreement between people with no imbalance of power. In incidents of mutual conflict, generally, both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the issue. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

Social rejection or dislike is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Single-episode acts of harassment, nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion, they are not being bullied. Harassment, nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of harassment, nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school.

POLICY

A. Primary Prevention:

- To provide programs that promote resilience, life skills and protective factors e.g. Habits of the Mind, Project Rokit and the GEM program (Chaplain).
- All Levels to monitor any incidents throughout the year.
- Social Skills programs to develop resilience, conflict resolution, assertiveness and problem solving.
- Each classroom teacher to clarify at the start of each year the school policy on bullying.
- Each year will start with the implementation of classroom rules and playground rules that reinforce the expectations of behaviour in our school.
- Staff and students to promote the philosophy of 'No Put Downs'.
- Cyber safety is part of the ICT curriculum.
- The leadership team and classroom teachers will keep a record of any bullying incidents.

B. Early Intervention:

- Encourage children to report bullying incidents upon themselves or witnessed.
- Classroom teachers will on a regular basis remind students to report incidents, and that reporting is not 'dobbing'.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem.
- Students are made aware of safe places for children to access if all other avenues fail e.g. Principal's office.

C. Intervention:

- Those involved in bullying incidents may be counselled by staff, including the school Chaplain.
- Once identified; bully, victim and witnesses talked with, and all incidents fully investigated and documented.
- Both bully and victim/s are offered counselling and support.
- If bullying is ongoing, parents are contacted and consequences implemented consistent with school Student Code of Conduct.
- Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies.

D. Post Violation:

- Consequences may involve :
- exclusion from class
- exclusion from yard.
- withdrawal of privileges
- ongoing counselling from appropriate agencies for both victim and bully.
- school suspension

MONTPELLIER PRIMARY SCHOOL BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

REVIEW PERIOD

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

Ratified by School Council 2019

