



# Lyndoch Primary School

## Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policy

Lyndoch Primary School is committed to providing 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.

Our Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policy links with our school values of Respect, Resiliency, Collaboration and Self-respect and the core principles of our behaviour code which are:

**Think First - individuals will be responsible and accountable for their own behaviour.**

**Be Respectful of Others - students will behave in a manner that demonstrates respect not only for themselves, but also others and property.**

**Play by the Rules - all members of our school will be able to work and play in a safe school environment.**

Lyndoch Primary School students, through close association with the school community and other service providers, will be supported to become responsible and productive members of this community.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES of the Students, Bystanders, Parents, Staff and Principal**

Students will:

- be respectful towards other students, staff and members of the school community
- participate in sessions regarding the school's anti-bullying policy, the Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum, being an effective bystander, and other sessions regarding behavioural expectations
- communicate with an appropriate adult if bullied or harassed or if they are aware that someone else is being bullied or harassed
- fill out a Harassment Incident Report Sheet
- learn how to resolve conflict by making 'I statements' to the person inflicting the harassment (eg I don't like it when you... It makes me feel... I want you to stop it now)
- learn to be an effective bystander, so that bullying and harassment are discouraged through peer influence.

Bystanders will:

- tell the student / students acting inappropriately to stop if they feel able.
- encourage the student being affected by the behaviour to safely leave the situation by walking away with them.
- encourage and if necessary go with the student affected by the behaviour to report the incidents.
- seek teacher assistance if needed.

Bystanders have a duty and responsibility to report bullying.

- support the person being affected by the behaviour – if they feel able
- help clarify situations if requested by staff.

Parents will:

- keep the school informed of concerns about behaviour, their student's health issues or other matters of relevance
- communicate in a respectful manner with the school staff about issues of concern soon after these concerns arise
- follow up on these concerns and, if necessary, follow DECD Parent Complaint Policy to address unresolved issues.
- Complete a Harassment Incident Report Sheet – available from the Front office.

Parents who witness bullying should:

- not take matters into their own hands
- inform school staff and not approach the students concerned.

School staff members will:

- develop and foster positive relationships with students and families
- communicate and interact effectively with students and engage in cooperative problem-solving relationships to address issues of bullying
- participate in developing, implementing and reviewing the school's anti-bullying policy, curriculum and in-service offerings, and the procedures for managing incidents of bullying
- critically reflect on practices and develop the knowledge and skills needed to manage incidents of bullying successfully based on the principles of Restorative Practices.
- establish, maintain, make explicit and model the school's expectations relating to bullying – including
  - being observant to signs of bullying
  - be available to listen to and act upon reports of bullying
  - communicate information about bullying incidents with leadership personnel
  - document bullying incidents and
  - communicate with parents.
- participate in training and development related to decreasing bullying in schools
- support students to be effective bystanders.

The principal will:

- develop and review annually the school's anti-bullying policy, involving staff, parents and students
- monitor a range of student support programs
- survey regularly all or a random selection of students, parents and teachers, in line with the review schedule for the school's policy
- provide the Governing Council with updates each term in relation to school bullying data and trends
- ensure that new staff and new students and their families are aware of the school community's negotiated anti-bullying policy and the decision-making procedures open to them if they wish to influence school practice
- ensure the inclusion, as part of the school's enrolment process, a requirement for parents and/or students to annually acknowledge/agree to the school's Behaviour Management Policy
- respond to incidents of bullying in a timely manner. This will include communicating effectively with the parents of the student acting inappropriately as well as the person who has been affected by the behaviour.
- ensure ongoing training and development of teachers, induction of students and the provision of information to parents
- manage a whole-school-change approach to ensure the Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum is implemented in all year levels

- ensure that all parents have access to the school's anti-bullying policy, the DECD *Bullying and harassment at school: Advice for parents and caregivers* leaflet, and information about the Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum and related documents
- complete appropriate documentation of all incidents of bullying
- provide access to the reports to Governing Council each term, via the newsletter and on the school's website
- be aware of rights to advocacy and of avenues open to them should they have grievances relating to the school's management of an incident of bullying.
- refer student/s to Regional Support Services to access additional support for the student to address behaviour concerns if the behaviour becomes violent, wilful or persistent
- access SAPOL intervention in certain circumstances

## **REPORTING OF A BULLYING INCIDENT**

### ***Who to report to?***

Parents and students may choose to report incidents of bullying, including cyber bullying, to their class teacher in the first instance and, if the incident is serious or unresolved, to the principal, or to someone on the school's staff they have confidence in. It is difficult for the school to follow up on an incident if it is unaware of it and, therefore, reporting of incidents should be made easy and encouraged. We have Harassment Incident Report Sheets in classrooms and the office for parents and students to use.

### ***How to report?***

Parents and students may find it helpful to write down the details of the incident as a first step. A Harassment Incident Report Sheet may be useful. They are in all classrooms as well as the Front Office. A face-to-face discussion is usually the best way of reporting an incident and, if they are dissatisfied with the outcome, they can follow up with a written statement with the request for a further meeting. If seriously concerned about the manner in which the school is dealing with an incident, a parent can contact his/her local Regional Office for support.

### ***When to report?***

Reporting of an incident should occur as soon after the incident as possible. This gives the school the best opportunity to follow up the incident and intervene.

### ***At Lyndoch Primary School***

The Lyndoch Primary School staff have a shared understanding that incidents of bullying will be dealt with on an individual basis, depending on, for example, the nature, severity and extent of the bullying. Accommodations will also be made in regards to the age of the student, students with disabilities as well as other contextual influences.

Individual student responses will also be different depending on their age and the range of coping strategies that they have developed.

The staff will be responsible for ensuring that incidences of bullying/harassment are dealt with as soon as possible after it is reported or observed and in a manner consistent with both this policy and the school's behaviour policy.

Some of the response types may include:

- Talking to the person acting inappropriately and remind him / her that such behaviour is not acceptable. After discussion with the person who has been affected by the behaviour, determine how they would like to proceed. If they indicate their willingness, act as a mediator so that the person who has been affected by the behaviour is able to tell their story thus embracing Restorative Practices.

- Establish a plan to help the student acting inappropriately to evaluate their progress with acting respectfully. Social stories are a useful resource.
- Develop specific behaviour goals and a behaviour plan that addresses the skills that the student affected by the behaviour needs and to practice and the interventions that are in place.
- Discussing with bystanders may also be needed so that they too can feel supported to take positive action in given situations.
- Informing other staff of the incident, tabling for information sharing at staff meetings, as appropriate, and recording all incidents.
- Reminding the person acting inappropriately of the consequences of further incidences.
- Removing the person acting inappropriately if the aggression is repeated or considered severe.
- Reporting to both the parent of the student who acted inappropriately and the student affected by the behaviour.
- Withdrawing – either from the playground or from the classroom for a period of time if none of the actions succeed in stopping the child from being aggressive.

Staff at Lyndoch Primary School will encourage students to

- ignore
- respond firmly and assertively, through the use of an ‘I’ statement.
- Report either verbally or through the use of the Harassment Incident Report Sheet

## **HOW TO RECOGNISE A STUDENT BEING BULLIED: Information about the signs of bullying**

Students who are being bullied or harassed may not talk about it with their teachers, friends or with the school’s counsellors. They may be afraid that it will only make things worse or they may feel that it is wrong to ‘tell tales’. This is why parents and teachers have an important part to play in helping the school and the student deal with bullying. A change in behaviour in students may be a signal that they are being bullied or they have some other concern.

### **Signs**

Some signs that a student is being bullied may be:

- unexplained cuts, bruises or scratches
- damaged or ripped clothing
- vague headaches or stomach aches
- refusal to go to school
- asking for extra pocket money or food
- tearfulness, anxiety or difficulty sleeping
- ‘hiding’ information on mobile phones, emails or in comments on their social networking pages

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Bullying** is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyberbullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying.

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those affected by the bullying behaviour.

**Cyberbullying** is a term used to describe bullying that is carried out through internet or mobile phone technologies. It is often combined with off-line bullying. It may include a combination of behaviours

such as pranking (i.e. hang-up calls), sending insulting text messages, publishing someone's private information, creating hate sites or implementing social exclusion campaigns in social networking sites.

It is also cyberbullying when a student(s) uses technology to run a multi-step campaign to bully another student, e.g. setting another student up to be assaulted, video-recording their humiliation, posting the video-recording online and then sending the website address to others.

**Discrimination** occurs when people are treated less favourably than others because of their race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability. Discrimination is often ongoing and commonly involves exclusion or rejection.

**Harassment** is behaviour that targets 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 and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment.

Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour. It may be directed randomly or towards the same person(s). It may be intentional or unintentional, i.e. words or actions that offend and distress one person may be genuinely regarded by the person doing them as minor or harmless.

Harassment is unacceptable and needs to be addressed as part of creating a safe school but it would not be considered bullying if any one or more of the following three features were present:

- it occurred only once and was not part of a repeated pattern
- it (genuinely) was not intended to offend, demean, annoy, alarm or abuse
- it was not directed towards the same person(s) each time.

**Sexual harassment** is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature that makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended. Sexual harassment can take many different forms and may include physical contact, verbal comments, jokes, propositions, the display of offensive material or other behaviour that creates a hostile environment. (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010)

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