



MALVERN VALLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL **BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY**

WELLBEING

DEFINITION:

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological, aggressive behaviour by a person or group directed toward a less powerful person or group that is intended to cause harm, distress or fear. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'bullying' is inclusive of cyber-bullying.

RATIONALE:

At Malvern Valley Primary School we recognise the National Safe Schools Framework's Guiding Principles; we

- Affirm the rights of all members of the school community to feel safe and be safe at school.
- Acknowledge that being safe and supported at school is essential for student wellbeing and effective learning.
- Accept responsibility for developing and sustaining safe and supportive learning and teaching communities that also fulfil the school's child protection responsibilities.
- Encourage the active participation of all school community members in developing and maintaining a safe school community where diversity is valued.
- Actively support young people to develop understanding and skills to keep themselves and others safe.
- Commit to developing a safe school community through a whole-school and evidence-based approach.

Our school is committed to providing a safe and caring environment and culture that enables positive relationships to be formed amongst all students and staff and which encourages self-esteem, cooperation, personal growth and a positive attitude to teaching and learning. The school's Bullying Prevention Policy, in conjunction with the Cyber Safety and Student Engagement and Inclusion Policies, inform the community that bullying in any of its forms will not be tolerated and that all students have the right to learn.

AIMS:

- To provide a clear understanding to the community of what is and what is not bullying.
- To place significant emphasis on the prevention of bullying through various initiatives and educative processes.
- To reinforce within the school community that we take a zero tolerance approach to bullying.
- To provide clear advice on the roles and responsibilities of the whole school community in the prevention and response to bullying behaviour.
- To provide clear procedures to the school community on how to report bullying behaviour.
- To implement a Restorative Practices approach to dealing with incidences of bullying to ensure that the focus is on educating students and restoring the relationship between involved parties.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are dealt with appropriately, followed up and that support is given to any person who has been affected by the bullying behaviour.
- To seek the support and cooperation of the whole-school community in establishing a proactive and responsive approach to bullying.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Organisation

- 1.1 The Bullying Prevention Policy will be widely available to the school community on the school's website, in the Policy Book at the Main Office and in the Parent Handbook given to all parents upon enrolment.
- 1.2 New staff will receive detailed information and adequate training during the staff induction process to ensure a thorough and consistent understanding of this policy.
- 1.3 All staff will complete the Bully Stoppers online learning module (<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/bullystopmodules.aspx>)

) to ensure they are familiar with identifying students in distress and appropriate means for dealing with incidences of bullying.

- 1.4 Professional development opportunities will be made available for staff, particularly in the area of Restorative Practices, to ensure all staff are able to implement this policy fully.
- 1.5 The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's (DEECD) Expectations of Behaviour Document will be communicated to all new members of the school community to ensure that it is aware of desirable behaviours and ways of communicating.
- 1.6 The school leadership team, teachers and all support staff will work together to ensure the safety of all school members in situations of bullying by thoroughly investigating complaints, respecting the need for confidentiality, communicating (where appropriate) with parents/carers and planning interventions.
- 1.7 The school's policy will be updated to ensure it continues to comply with any Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) requirements.

2. Student Empowerment:

- 2.1 It is the expectation that all members of the school community, including students, uphold the school's values of respect, tolerance, cooperation, resilience, friendliness and confidence at all times. These values will be taught, recognised and celebrated and will form the basis for a consistent vocabulary throughout the school.
- 2.2 Malvern Valley Way, an educative social skills program that helps to develop resilience, conflict resolution, assertiveness and problem solving will be taught daily in all grades.
- 2.3 Students will also be explicitly taught and assessed against the Aus/VELS curriculum standards in the Physical, Social and Personal Learning Domains, which focus on the development of pro-social behaviours. References to pro-social behaviours will also be made throughout Inquiry Units and other curriculum areas (eg. sportsmanship in Physical Education).
- 2.4 At the beginning of each year and other appropriate times throughout the year, teachers will discuss with their students what bullying is and what it is not. They will outline the importance of communicating incidences of bullying to a trusted adult. They will also discuss effective ways of dealing with isolated incidences which do not fall under the definition of bullying.

3. Prevention:

- 3.1 The Cyber Smart Policy will complement the Bullying Prevention Policy and provide additional detail on cyber safe practices the school will implement to prevent incidences of bullying.
- 3.2 The Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy will further complement the Bullying Prevention Policy.
- 3.3 Each classroom teacher will reflect the school's Bullying Prevention Policy in their class agreement / classroom rules.
- 3.4 Each student is required to sign the Digital Technologies Acceptable Use Agreement, which promotes safe and responsible online behaviours before they are able to use technology at school.
- 3.5 All students in Grades 3 – 6 will complete the DEECD's Bully Stoppers 'Student Bullying Survey' (Appendix 4) annually. Data gathered from this survey will be analysed by the Assistant Principal and communicated to staff to assist them in being proactive in preventing and minimising incidences of bullying. The purpose of this survey is to provide an overview of bullying prevalence in the school, not as a means of eliciting information on specific incidences.
- 3.6 Staff are required to document any incidences of bullying into the Sentral database. Details of the incident and affected/involved students must also be noted.
- 3.7 Staff on Yard Duty are required to document any incidences deemed 'serious' or determined to be of a bullying nature into the Sentral database. Such incidences are also to be communicated in person to the classroom teachers of any students involved in incidences that are uploaded to Sentral.
- 3.8 Should incidences occur on school grounds when no staff are on scheduled yard duty (outside the hours of 8:45am – 3:45pm), parents are encouraged to prevent any imminent danger to any involved students and then to contact a staff member from the school to follow up at an appropriate time.

- 3.9 A 'Friendship Stop' will operate allowing students to have a place to go when they need additional support. This area will be monitored by the Yard Duty teacher in Area 1 and student leaders.
- 3.10 All Foundation students will receive a Grade 5/6 Buddy to assist them at the start of the year with finding friends and safe and responsible play and providing them with support throughout the year should they need it.

4. Communication

- 4.1 This policy's prevention measures will be actively promoted in school assemblies, newsletters, displays around the school and student reports.
- 4.2 Student Wellbeing will be an agenda item in staff and team meetings to ensure any issues are communicated to relevant staff.
- 4.3 The Engagement and Wellbeing Team will work to ensure that all staff within the school are aware of initiatives, processes and procedures that relate to bullying or the prevention of bullying.
- 4.4 The Bullying Prevention Policy and Cyber Smart Policy will form a part of the Parent Handbook, given to all new parents to the school.

5. Early Intervention:

- 5.1 Through all the mediums listed in the 'communication' section, the school will promote the responsible and timely reporting of bullying incidents.
- 5.2 Incidences of bullying, as defined in this policy, should be communicated by the student, or parent/carer of the involved student to their classroom teacher in the first instance. It may then be referred to the Assistant Principal or Principal (as per the Parent Concerns Policy).
- 5.3 At first awareness, the classroom teacher, Assistant Principal or Principal will thoroughly investigate incidences of bullying and utilise a Restorative Practices approach with involved parties. This process will be documented and uploaded to the Sentral database and communicated to relevant parties, maintaining an appropriate level of confidentiality.
- 5.4 Students that are recognised as being susceptible to provocation in particular circumstances will work with teachers to identify strategies to minimise such provocations.

6. Intervention:

- 6.1 Intervention will follow the Restorative Practices approach and guiding principles which are:
 - Inclusion of all people affected (stakeholders)
 - Respect for everyone involved
 - Consensus based decision-making focused on how to repair the harm and prevent future harm
 - Addresses obligations resulting from those harms
 - Using inclusive, collaborative processes
 - Expanding the capacity of the community to create a just and fair response
 - Seeking to put right the wrongs
- 6.2 The goals of any Restorative Practices intervention will be to:
 - Understand the harm and develop empathy
 - Listen and respond to the needs of everyone
 - Encourage accountability and responsibility through personal reflection
 - Reintegrate the wrongdoer into the community
 - Create a caring climate where we promote the school values
- 6.3 The process will follow the appropriate Restorative Practices structure (Appendix 1) given the level of the involved students.
- 6.4 Staff will utilise some or all of the Restorative Practices script (Appendix 1), WARRM conversation structure (What happened, Who was affected, reflecting, repairing and moving on), templates such as the Think Sheet (Appendix 2) and Apology Framework Template (Appendix 3) to facilitate the Restorative Process.
- 6.5 In the intervention stage, staff members may wish to draw upon other relevant strategies to deal with incidences of bullying such as the POOCH strategy (Appendix 5), SAFEMinds resources, Bully Stoppers resources or any other appropriate DEECD resources.

- 6.6 Should students feel the need to bring a support person along to a meeting, they are welcome to do so.
- 6.7 Consequences for repeated incidences of bullying may involve the Principal or Assistant Principal. They may include exclusion from areas or activities, loss of relevant privileges, or ongoing meetings/counselling.
- 6.8 For repeat incidences, parents may be requested to attend a meeting with the Principal and other relevant staff (eg. Assistant Principal, classroom teacher) where a Behaviour Management Plan will be implemented, clearly stating the strategies in place to prevent further indiscretions and the related consequences for further indiscretions.
- 6.9 In incidences of an extreme nature, a student may be suspended in accordance with the DEECD 'Grounds for Suspension' conditions.
- 6.10 All communication and intervention strategies implemented throughout dealing with an incidence of bullying will be documented into the Sentral database using the appropriate templates.

7. Post Incident:

- 7.1 The staff member who has been responsible for any intervention procedures will also be responsible for the ongoing monitoring of involved students.
- 7.2 Any relevant information throughout this period will be communicated to parents.
- 7.3 Any 'post-incident specific' actions outlined throughout the Restorative Practices (or other utilised) intervention will be followed through by the person responsible. This relates to both positive and negative behaviours.
- 7.4 Should a student be suspended, the correct DEECD processes for reintegration into the school community will be adhered to as per the Suspension Process Flowchart.
- 7.5 Ongoing support will be made available to all students involved, including access to a DEECD funded psychologist (with parent's permission)

APPENDICES

1. Restorative Practices Processes
2. Student Reflection Template
3. Apology Framework Template
4. Student Bullying Survey
5. POOCH template (SAFEMinds resource)

REFERENCES

- DEECD Bullying Resources and information, Accessed at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/Pages/bullying.aspx>
- Bullying No Way! resources. Accessed at www.bullyingnoway.com.au
- Bully Stoppers by DEECD. Accessed at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/default.aspx>
- SAFEMinds resources by DEECD. Accessed at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/Pages/safeminds.aspx>
- National Safe Schools Framework. Accessed at: <http://www.safeschoolshub.edu.au>
- Suspension Considerations by DEECD. Accessed at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/suspensionconsiderations.aspx>

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with DEECD requirements as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

RATIFIED BY SCHOOL COUNCIL: 2014

TO BE REVIEWED: 2017

STRUCTURE

Foundation – Grade 2

Understand: The teacher gathers information to gain an understanding of the problem.

Teach: The teacher gives a simple telling without judgement, focusing on the one social value or behaviour the child needs to understand.

Fix: Repairing the harm with teacher support, involving a relevant, fair and agreed upon consequence.

Grade 3 – 4: Introducing the Restorative Script, facilitator role and transfer from telling to talking.

Understand: Information gathering and understanding the problem.

Teach: The choices that were made and the affect these choices have on others.

Fix: Outcomes needed for the harm to be repaired including an appropriate, fair and agreed upon consequence and future preventative strategies put in place.

Grade 5 – 6

Understand: Information gathering so that all those involved understand the motivation and background and who has obligations and liabilities.

Teach: The choices that were made and the affect these choices have on the school community and on self.

Fix: Identify what needs to happen for the harm to be repaired including an appropriate, fair and agreed upon consequence, and plan future prevention and support.

SCRIPT

When challenging behaviour:	To help those affected:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What happened? <i>Tell the story</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were you thinking of at the time? • What have you thought about since? • What did you have control over? 2. Who do you think has been affected? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who else has been affected? • In what ways? • Was this fair or unfair? • Was this the right or wrong thing to do? 3. What do you think you need to do to make things right? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What else might need to happen? • How will this help? • When can this happen? • What exactly are you saying sorry for? 4. How can we make sure this doesn't happen again? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you need to stop / stay / start doing? • What are your goals to help move forward? • What are you going to do to reach the goals? • What other support do you need? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What did you think when you realized what had happened? 2. What impact has this incident had on you and others? 3. What has been the hardest thing for you? 4. What do you think needs to happen to make things right?



Think Sheet

Name:

Date:

<i>What happened?</i>	
<i>What was I thinking?</i>	
<i>Who was affected?</i>	<i>How?</i>
<i>How can I fix it?</i>	

Teacher: _____

Student: _____



My Restorative Apology

<p><i>To begin to make things right I would like to offer this apology to...</i></p>
<p><i>This is what I was responsible for (what I did or said to you)...</i></p>
<p><i>This is how it made you feel...</i></p>
<p><i>This is how I feel about what I did/said...</i></p>
<p><i>This is what I won't do again...</i></p>
<p><i>This is what I promise I will do so this doesn't happen again...</i></p>

Signed: _____



Data Collection Tool: Student Survey



Bullying at school

1. Name (You can put your name here, but you don't have to.)

2. What year level are you in?

3. Has there been a time at school, or on the way to or from school, when someone has bullied you in the manner described in the survey description?

- Yes
- No

4. How many times do you think you have been bullied in the past week and the past month? (Please tick in the appropriate boxes.)

	1 - 5 times	5 - 10 times	10 + times	N/A
In the past week	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In the past month	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. If you have been bullied in the past (more than a month ago), has it stopped?

- Yes
- No

6. If it has stopped; how recently did it stop? (Please tick one box.)

	Less than 1 month ago	Between 1 and 3 months ago	More than 3 months ago	N/A
It stopped	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



POOCH TEMPLATE



ESTABLISHING THE GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION

- The principal must first establish whether a suspension is an available option:
 - Did the behaviour occur whilst at school, travelling to or from school or at a school approved activity?
 - Does the behaviour meet one or more of the grounds for suspension?
- The principal must take into account whether a suspension is appropriate to the behaviour, the student's education needs and any other relevant circumstances.
- Before implementing a suspension, the principal must ensure that:
 - The student has had the opportunity to be heard
 - That any information or documentation provided by the student or their relevant person has been taken into account in making the decision regarding the suspension
 - Other forms of action to address the behaviour for which the student is being suspended have been considered and implemented.
- The principal must decide on the duration of the suspension bearing in mind that:
 - A student cannot be suspended for more than five consecutive school days and written approval from the Regional Director is required if the total number of days the student has been suspended in the year is more than 15 days
 - If the period of the suspension is longer than the days left in the term, the principal should consider the likely disruption to the student's learning before imposing a suspension that will continue into the following term.

SUSPENSION WITH AN IMMEDIATE EFFECT

- In some instances, the principal may consider that due to the severity of the situation and the possibility of immediate threat to another person, they may need to implement immediate action.
- Under these circumstances, the school must provide supervision until the student can be collected or until the end of the school day.
- When a suspension with an immediate effect is implemented on school camp or excursion and the student is unable to be collected, then they will need to be supervised until the end of the activity.

NOTIFICATION

- As soon as is practical, the principal must:
 - Give verbal notification to the student and their relevant person of the intention to suspend the student, the reason/s for the suspension, the schools days on which it will occur and where it will occur
 - Provide the student and their relevant person with the *Notice of Suspension* and the *Procedures for Suspension* brochure prior to the day on which the suspension occurs (or on the day a suspension is implemented, if it is a suspension with immediate effect)
 - Provide contact details for additional support services to the student and their relevant person.
- Where appropriate, or if requested, a Student Support Group or another meeting with the student and their relevant person can be convened.

DURING SUSPENSION

- Prior to the day on which the suspension occurs, or on the day a suspension is implemented with immediate effect:
 - If the student is suspended for three days or less, the school must arrange for appropriate school work to be supplied
 - If a student is being suspended for more than three days, a *Student Absence Learning Plan* and a *Return to School Plan* must be developed and provided to the student and their relevant person.

SUPPORT AND FOLLOW-UP

- Following the suspension, it may be appropriate to convene a meeting with the student and their relevant person to discuss the behaviour that led to the suspension. A relevant person can also request a meeting at any time during the suspension process.
- For students that have been suspended for five days or where they have received three or more suspensions in a year, then it is recommended that the school convene a Student Support Group meeting with the student, their relevant person and other personnel to discuss the behaviour that led to the suspension/s and the range of strategies to address the concerns.