

## Anti-Bullying Policy

Date: May 2008

### 1. Rationale

Williamstown North Primary School endeavours to provide an environment free from bullying. To ensure this, the school will adopt a whole-school approach to anti-bullying.

### 2. Aims

Every member of the Williamstown North Primary School community has the right to a safe and supportive work environment, where diversity is valued and everyone is treated with respect, fairness and dignity.

Williamstown North Primary School, in conjunction with the DECCD, will act to ensure that the safety, security, health and wellbeing of all students are protected.

All forms of Bullying behaviour will not be tolerated. A comprehensive education program in relation to bullying, will continue to be implemented at Williamstown North Primary School. The Anti-bullying program will be supported through a range of whole school preventative programs, including but not limited to YCDI!, Buddies and Values.

#### Definition of Bullying

'Bullying' is a form of aggressive behaviour which is usually hurtful and deliberate: it is often persistent, sometimes continuing for weeks, months or even years and it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Underlying most bullying behaviour is an abuse of power and a desire to intimidate and dominate.' (Sharp & Smith, 1994a, pg 1.)

Bullying comes in many forms including physical, verbal, visual, sexual and racial bullying as well as extortion and exclusion. Bullying may constitute a breach of the relevant Act which could have long term legal consequences.

### 3. Outcomes of Bullying

3.1 If children are bullied the following may occur:

3.1.1 **Physical Signs:** cuts and bruises, loss or damage to personal property or valuables, torn clothing.

3.1.2 **Psychological Signs:** mood swings, changes in usual behaviour, less approachable, nightmares and terrors, non-specific pain, destructive or self-destructive behaviour, bouts of apathy and depression, difficult to manage, over-sensitive/or being weepy.

3.1.3 **Social Signs:** doesn't seem to have any friends, putting in less effort, doing less well at school, giving up on hobbies, reluctance about going to school and secretive behaviours.

#### **4 Rights**

**4.1** All students are expected to act accordingly by supporting an environment free from bullying. The school recognises it has an obligation to take steps to prevent bullying and to assist those who may be subjected to forms of bullying.

#### **5 Responsibilities of those who witness bullying:**

**5.1** For the Williamstown North Primary School policy on Anti-Bullying to be effective, each member of the school community must be prepared to recognise that everyone has a role to play in its success. All members of the school community must actively oppose bullying by speaking up if they witness bullying occurring. In taking this position, the school recognises that for some, especially children, this in itself may be difficult.

**5.2** All staff are open to talking to individual children and groups of children who seek help in relation to problems, which may arise through bullying. Student welfare support can be accessed via the Assistant Principal.

**5.3** Parents are encouraged to discuss matters of suspected bullying at school, with the classroom teacher in the first instance.

#### **6 Preventative Measures for Bullying**

##### **6.1 Professional Learning Teams will:**

**6.1.1** Communicate the school's anti-bullying policy to all students as part of the 'Start Up Program'.

**6.1.2** Incorporate anti-bullying lessons within the classroom program.

**6.1.3** Regularly revisit anti-bullying strategies with students throughout the year.

##### **6.2 Staff will:**

**6.2.1** Model appropriate behaviours.

**6.2.2** Be astute to signs of a child being bullied.

**6.2.3** Be visible in all areas of the playground while on yard duty.

**6.2.4** Arrive to take classes on time and not leave groups of children unattended.

**6.2.5** Follow up any incidents brought to their attention, with due consideration for the welfare of the child.

**6.2.6** Where necessary, bring the matter to the attention of senior members of staff:  
Principal, Assistant Principal, Senior School and Junior School Manager

**6.2.7** Review anti-bullying strategies with their class on a regular basis:

- Active Bystander (intervene or report incident)
- Discussing types of bullying behaviour
- Responsible Reporting

##### **6.3 The School Administration will:**

**6.3.1** Organise Anti-bullying Incursions for students.

**6.3.2** Place regular updates in the school newsletter about anti-bullying.

**6.3.3** Place signs/prompts throughout the school about anti-bullying.

#### **6.4 Students are encouraged to:**

- 6.4.1 Talk to staff members and their parents about issues that concern them in relation to bullying at school.
- 6.4.2 Implement the '*Bystanders Code*' by e.g. assisting the victim and seeking a staff member's assistance if bullying situations occur at school.
- 6.4.3 Speak out against bullying as it may help themselves or others in the future.

#### **6.5 Parents are encouraged to:**

- 6.5.1 Watch for physical, psychological or social signs related to the outcomes of bullying.
- 6.5.2 Take an active interest in their child's friendships, meet their friends and encourage their children to socialise with their friends out of school hours.
- 6.5.3 Listen carefully to their child, giving the message that they are supported and that nobody deserves to be bullied.
- 6.5.4 Advise their child to report any incidents to a staff member or the welfare coordinator. Initially encourage the child to report the problem in order for it to be dealt with.
- 6.5.5 Inform the school administration or their child's teacher if bullying is suspected. **Always** allow the school to deal with the matter. Under no circumstances should parents approach the child that they suspect to be responsible for the bullying.
- 6.5.6 Refrain from advising their child to retaliate, as this will often cause additional problems.
- 6.5.7 Notify the school if you witness an act of bullying while at school, or going to and from school, even if it does not involve your child.

### **7 What can a child do if he/she is bullied:**

Depending on the circumstances at the time, one or more of the following strategies may be taken: -

- 7.1 Ignore the action, showing that you are not upset by it.
- 7.2 Stay calm and in control in a situation of conflict.
- 7.3 Visualise a safety shield in threatening and confronting situations.
- 7.4 Identify aggressive, passive and assertive behaviours.
- 7.5 Recognise the consequences of aggressive, passive and assertive behaviour.
- 7.6 Say 'no' like you mean it.
- 7.7 Use repetitive non-emotive responses and Fogging.
- 7.8 Develop positive 'self-talk'.
- 7.9 Indicate to the bully that you do not like the way they are treating you by making a strong 'I feel....' Statement.
- 7.10 Talk it over with a friend and your parents.
- 7.11 Let your teacher or another teacher know what has happened.

### **8 If an incident of bullying is reported, the established school processes will occur:**

- 8.1 Support and counsel the child. Contact the child's parents and inform them of what has taken place and how the school is dealing with it.

- 8.2** When students need a more specific vehicle for dealing with conflict and other difficulties related to bullying, one or more of the following strategies should be used:-
- 8.2.1** No Blame Approach
  - 8.2.2** Method of Shared Concern
  - 8.2.3** Restorative Practices Method
  - 8.2.4** Logical Consequences
  - 8.2.5** Time-Out
  - 8.2.6** Individual Student Management Plan
- 8.3** Discuss the matter with the student accused of bullying, allowing them to explain their actions and relay to them what has been reported. The student's parent/s to be contacted and informed of the relevant details.
- 8.4** If it is clear that an act of bullying has occurred the following action will occur.
- 8.4.1** Issue a warning on our green '*Behaviour Notification Slip*' and record the incident in the '*Class Behaviour Book*' and '*Yard Duty Behaviour Book*'.
  - 8.4.2** If the action is repeated possible consequences may include:
    - loss of privileges
    - parents contacted and the matter discussed with them
    - a detention issued
    - the student's name entered into the Consequences Book
    - referral to the school Psychologist
    - Suspension

**9 Proactive measures to be undertaken by Williamstown North Primary School to minimise *bullying*.**

The Anti-Bullying policy is underpinned by the following: -

- 9.1** The school will promote: -
- 9.1.1** Shared values, beliefs and attitudes in the school community
  - 9.1.2** An environment of mutual support and respect
  - 9.1.3** An established Student Welfare policy
  - 9.1.4** Avenues for students to voice concerns and formulate solutions
  - 9.1.5** Shared classroom strategies
  - 9.1.6** Shared playground strategies
  - 9.1.7** A curriculum that teaches conflict resolution, negotiation, problem-solving and assertiveness training.
- 9.2** Incorporate an annual Anti-Bullying Incursion for each Year Level.
- 9.3** Annual in-servicing of staff on the school's Anti-Bullying approach.
- 9.4** Provide a copy of the Anti-Bullying policy to all parents on enrolment.
- 9.5** A member of the school's '*Welfare and Safety Committee*' will be designated to oversee the implementation of the policy.
- 9.6** Include a copy of the Anti-Bullying policy on the school website.
- 9.7** Provide information in the school newsletter at least once a term.
- 9.8** Implement the You Can Do It! Program (YCDI!).
- 9.9** The school's Psychologist to provide suggestions to staff on the ways in which the children can work, play and mix in harmony with each other.
- 9.10** Reward positive behaviours.

## 10 Evaluation of the Policy on Anti-Bullying

*Williamstown North Primary School* undertakes to monitor and review the Policy on Anti-Bullying by: -

- 10.1 Asking staff to discuss the development of programs in their Professional Learning Teams and bring issues to the attention of the Leadership Team.
- 10.2 Asking children to provide information and feedback on the policy and programs through the Junior School Council.
- 10.3 Requesting parents provide feedback through such avenues as the *Annual Parent Opinion Survey*.
- 10.4 Evaluating school/classroom '*Behaviour Records*' (i.e. classroom and playground behaviour books and assess the level and type of incidents occurring across the school).
- 10.5 Conducting an evaluation of the policy as part of the School Review process.
- 10.6 Continuing to monitor feedback from the Year 5/6 students through the Student Attitude to School survey.
- 10.7 Continuing to monitor students' physical and psychological behaviour.

### *References:*

\*Suckling, A. and Temple C. (2001). *Bullying A Whole-School Approach*, ACER Press

\* *Field, Evelyn "Bullying"*

This policy has been ratified by School Council on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2008.