

Valkstone Primary School, No. 4778



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Anti-Bullying Policy

Basic Belief

All children have the right to attend school and feel happy and safe. This policy focuses on the processes that are to be followed to ensure that this fundamental right is observed and respected by all members of the Valkstone school community.

Purpose

Valkstone Primary School believes in providing a safe and happy environment for all children. The school is committed to ensuring that all individuals are responsible for promoting a caring environment for everyone.

If anyone is subjected to behaviour that is hurtful, threatening or frightening and this behaviour is repeated over time, then bullying or harassment has occurred. Bullying behaviour is defined by Rigby (1996) as 'repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons.' Bullying can take many forms.

- **Victimisation/Exclusion:** may include repeated exclusion from activities, being 'frozen out' where the victim is treated as though they don't exist, stand over tactics, picking on others, threats to 'get' people.
- **Physical:** may include invasion of personal space, fighting, pushing, shoving and gestures.
- **Visual:** may include damaging other people's possessions, offensive notes or material, graffiti, non-verbal signals used to silence or intimidate victims.
- **Verbal:** may include offensive language, putting people down behind their backs, name calling, picking on people because of their race, gender or religious creed.
- **Sexual:** may include touching or brushing against one in a sexual manner, sexually oriented jokes, drawings of, or writing about someone's body, using offensive names or commenting on someone's morals, unwanted invitations of a sexual nature, asking about someone's private life.
- **Extortion:** may include physically stronger and more powerful students bullying other students into giving up possessions, buying food or drink, doing school work for them, or in some instances, committing minor offences for them.
- **Cyber:** Bullying that is carried out through an internet service, such as email, chat room, discussion group or instant messaging. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as short messaging service (SMS). Examples of cyber bullying include teasing, spreading rumors online, ending unwanted messages, or defamation.

Guidelines

Prevention

The Student Engagement Policy and the Student Code of Conduct need to be read in conjunction with this policy. They set out clear guidelines for the implementation of programs to promote positive self-esteem, a strong values program and social skills. All teachers are expected to follow assertive discipline procedures and to implement programs to their classes throughout the year.

Throughout the year teachers are expected to discuss and raise issues with students about bullying and to be proactive in their approach to developing coping strategies with all students. Activities should be undertaken whereby teachers work on issues of inclusive play, using appropriate language, cooperative play in games, playing by the rules and how to sort out disagreements in play/games. This action forms the link between the positive social skills program and the anti-bullying intervention measures.

Buddy systems and support programs are set up at the start of the year between different grade levels to link groups and individuals so that there is a positive support network set up in the playground for students who need support.

The school will consult with parents when appropriate and organise information to help parents work through issues, analyse problems and improve their child's self esteem.

Intervention

Students from years five and six will be surveyed each year. From the survey the school can determine the extent of the bullying or related matters, within the school and the areas that need to be addressed. The surveys will be analysed and discussed with the staff and School Council.

Ongoing professional development for teachers and information sessions for parents will be organised as the need arises.

Children will be involved in anti-bullying and resilience programs throughout the year. Continuous monitoring across the school to ensure incidents are reported and dealt with as they occur.

Class teacher, section coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal will be involved with incidents of bullying, depending on the nature. Parents will be notified if incidents continue to be of concern.

Procedures to be implemented may include:

- Counselling
- Development of a contract
- Restricted yard access
- Detention
- Interview with parents

Formal discipline procedures (as set out by DEECD) may be instigated at the Principal's discretion.

Information, current programs and planned parent and student sessions relating to bullying and feedback will be published in the school newsletter when appropriate.

Evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy will be evaluated by

- Number and seriousness of incidents about the school
- Results gained from the student survey
- Anecdotal evidence of children's ability to solve disputes
- Parent opinion from the Annual survey
- Analysis of all information

Reviewed and Accepted: 2014

To be Reviewed: 2018