

Anti-Bullying Behaviour Policy

Introduction

As a school Child Side is committed to working with the School Community to resolve and eliminate any bullying Behaviour at School while recognising that Bullying (and the associated victimisation) behaviours are complex to identify and resolve.

Scope and Application

This policy applies to all employees, parents, children, volunteers and community members of Child Side School. This policy will be reviewed and amended in accordance with Child Side School Policy on Policies and Policy Guidelines and Procedures Contents Schedule.

The use of the word child/children in this policy refers to students in the context of the school environment.

Related Legislation/Guidelines

- Disability Discrimination Act
- Duty of Care
- School Education Act
- School Registration Standards
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA)
- Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984 (WA)
- Work Health & Safety Act 2020

Related Policies/Documents

- Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Child Code of Conduct Kindy – Year 6
- Young Adolescent Code of Conduct
- Child Seeking Solutions and Feedback Policy
- Child Safe and Friendly Organisation Framework
- Critical Incident and Crisis Management
- General Duty of Care Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Guiding Children's Behaviour Policy
- Intercultural Understanding Policy
- Internet and Mobile Phone Usage Policy
- Parent Code of Conduct
- Risk Management
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Volunteers Policy
- Workplace Health and Safety Policy
- Workplace Learning Policy

- Child Side Curriculum Map

Policy Statement

Child side School does not tolerate bullying behaviour and offers a supportive nurturing approach to its treatment.

What is bullying behaviour?

We consider bullying to be a set of repeated behaviours and attitudes rather than a person. We also consider victimisation to be a set of repeated behaviours and attitudes rather than a person. We see both of these behaviours and attitudes to be learned responses (which can become habitual). A person makes a conscious choice to adopt either of these behaviours or attitudes. This separates bullying from normal developmental behaviours such as rough and tumble 'horseplay' or emotional responses such as "I don't want to be your friend". Both of these attitudes and behaviours (of bullying and victimisation) can be found in children and adults and the personal history behind these attitudes and behaviours is critical to understand in order to respond appropriately. Dealing with these behaviours and attitudes is a long-term process which requires multiple perspectives from the home and school community.

Bullying behaviour arises from attitudes that involve one person/group having inappropriate power over another person or group. These attitudes give rise to repetitive bullying/victimisation behaviour which may target other random or specific individuals/groups over a period of time. Bullying is the wilful, conscious behaviour (stimulated by negative attitudes) designed to hurt, threaten or embarrass someone emotionally or physically over a sustained period of time. Victimisation is also a behaviour stimulated by negative attitudes that responds to the bullying behaviour/attitude in helpless ways and affects the quality of that person/group's life over a sustained period of time.

The National Council Against Bullying (Aust) definition states 'Bullying is when someone (or a group of people) with **more power** than you, **repeatedly** and **intentionally** uses negative words and/or actions against you, which causes you **distress** and **risks your wellbeing**.'

Bullying can take many forms but can be best categorised under the following headings:

Emotional bullying can be:

- being excluded from group conversations and activities;
- making up or spreading rumours to facilitate dislike for someone;
- being ignored repeatedly;
- purposeful misleading or being lied to;
- making stories up to get others into trouble.

Physical bullying can be:

- hitting, kicking, pinching, pushing, bumping, shoving, scratching, slapping, biting, punching or tripping someone repeatedly;
- unwanted physical or sexual touching;
- throwing objects with the intent to injure or annoy.

Threatening/Psychological bullying includes:

- stalking, threats or implied threats;
- dirty looks;
- manipulation – pressuring others to do things they don't want to do;
- intimidation – forcing students to do demeaning or embarrassing acts;
- extortion – forcing someone to give you money or material items.

Verbal bullying could be:

- constant teasing in a sarcastic and offensive manner;
- name-calling and offensive nicknames;
- swearing to unsettle or upset others;
- homophobic comments to cause distress;
- racist or sexist comments.

Property Abuse can be:

- stealing money repeatedly;
- interfering with someone's belongings;
- damaging other personal items;
- repeatedly hiding someone's possessions.

Cyber bullying includes:

- spreading gossip and rumours through email, phone and internet;
- sending offensive text/phone and email messages;
- abusive phone calls;
- posting personal information on internet sites without permission to cause distress and humiliate.

Other forms of conflict, including teasing and fighting amongst peers are not necessarily bullying. These may represent the normal dynamics of a particular friendship and children need to have the skills, and are taught and provided the opportunity to deal with these situations. Conflict between students of roughly equal physical strength and/or social status requires implementation of the school's 'guiding children's behaviour' policy. (refer to 'How we respond to Bullying/Victimisation Behaviours and Attitudes' in next section)

Maggie Dent (author, educator and parenting & resilience specialist) whom we are aligned with states that 'Children have always had moments when the choices they make when interacting with other children are unkind and hurtful. The odd shove, bite or name calling incident is how children learn how to make better social decisions with careful guidance by adults. It shows that emotional competence to manage impulses, delay gratification, manage emotions and develop empathy take time to grow. This is normal childhood nastiness and is different from bullying where there is a deliberate intent to hurt another by using an unacceptable use of power and it is often repeated.'

The school culture supports adults and children in recognising these long-term behaviours and attitudes and seeing them as inappropriate choices that will significantly affect the wellbeing of individuals and groups.

How we respond to bullying/victimisation behaviours and attitudes.

At Child Side School we see the attitudes behind these repeated behaviours as being the starting points to begin to see how, why, what... The personal histories of the individuals/groups often give insights into the attitudes and choices of behaviours and the resulting consequences. We try and raise awareness about these attitudes, behaviours, choices, consequences and discuss options and alternatives again and again.

We engage in using the habits of mind (Deborah Meier's "The Power Of Their Ideas...") asking those involved for their personal body of 'evidence' (their emotions, reasons why, previous experiences...), multiple perspectives (to jump into another's 'skin'.), to project "What if...? Or Supposing that..?" (conjecturing other possibilities), finding patterns and relationships between behaviours/attitudes/choices... and asking what does it all matter and to whom? We offer a range of strategies to try and raise awareness of what is happening and why and how we respond has an impact on the long-term outcomes. We revisit these again and again and again. Our 'Guiding Children's Behaviour' and 'Code of Conduct' policies are followed to deal with issues of bullying and victimisation. Any 'Critical incidents' are recorded and reported to DoE. within 48 hours. Critical

Incident reports are used to document and reflect on the many aspects of the incident or behaviour patterns. Families, staff and the children involved are included in this process when appropriate. In extreme cases the school will endeavour to find outside support in the form of school psychologist services or other appropriate services.

Parents, educators, all staff and children need to be aware about what bullying and victimisation is and to look at themselves to see how they respond to these repeated situations. We need to all recognise that we are dealing with unacceptable behaviours and attitudes rather than targeting the person as being unacceptable. Self-awareness and self-talk and looking behind the scenes and towards future scenes are essential to try and change attitudes and patterns of behaviour. This needs to happen at the time of a particular situation and in many other proactive situations when emotions are not heightened. There needs to be a realisation that bullying and victimisation are complex issues with substantial personal histories behind them.

We do not see reduction of these behaviours and attitudes as a simple matter or by adopting a single 'programme'. We see our approach as being embedded in the whole school culture and focuses on prevention and teaching appropriate behaviours and responses to behaviours and being multi-faceted in all that is said, done and expected. We see our school philosophy and culture as one that promotes diversity and accepts differences and similarities rather than promoting competitiveness that puts another down or excludes them for no reason. Personal challenges and co-operative behaviours are modelled, discussed and encouraged. It is widely recognised in literature and research on bullying that programs that address social and emotional learning are significant in preventing bullying, particularly as a universal approach to teach emotional regulation, empathy and appropriate social skills. Social skills are explicitly taught at Child Side and is included in the Child Side Curriculum Map which guides all teaching and learning. We have also adopted the 'Keeping Safe' Protective Behaviours Curriculum which is included in the Child Side Curriculum Map and explicitly taught across the whole school. Welcoming and inclusive attitudes and behaviours are constantly promoted. Words and actions are seen as something that people have control over and that choices can be made whether they are used as tools to help or weapons to harm. Emotions are acknowledged and respected, even if the behaviours are unacceptable. Any person displaying bullying or victimisation behaviours/attitudes are given opportunities to be heard from their 'skin' and are encouraged to be reflective and find their own strategies and consequences (if and when appropriate). Restorative Justice processes are used by the Educators with children. We do not wish children or adults to feel disempowered and rely on other adults (governments, agencies, schools, 'experts'...) to solve their issues, without first looking inside themselves. However, we acknowledge that children, their families and staff should feel supported and understood and that school should be an emotionally and physically safe environment for everyone! We have consciously thought about building and playground design to eliminate 'Hot Spots' which may have provided more opportunity for bullying to occur due to poor visibility. As a result, toilets are located inside each classroom rather than in external toilet blocks and this consideration will be made in any future building undertaken.

We do not wish for bullying and victimisation behaviours and attitudes to go underground because of a perceived attitude of children that these behaviours are okay as long as adults don't see them. We will not put aside these issues because they are too hard to deal with. We intend for our school to remain small and personal so that we can remain involved in children's lives.

Communication and updates

The school regularly communicates and provides information to parents, children, employees and volunteers, based on the National Child Safe Organisation key principles including; Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused and implementation of the principles is regularly reviewed and improved.

This information is contained in the Child Side School Child Safe Organisation Framework and various policies available on the school website, provided to parents, staff and volunteers at the time of engagement and regularly communicated via the Konnective app. All of these principles are woven into the curriculum, the Shape of the term, week, day and through processes detailed in the document.

Version Management

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