



SAFE SCHOOL POLICY STATEMENT

Our school is committed to providing a safe and caring environment and culture, which enables positive relationships to be formed amongst all students, staff and community members and which encourages self-esteem, co-operation, personal and a positive attitude to learning and teaching. A clear policy on bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment will inform the community that **bullying and harassment in any of its forms is not acceptable at East Bentleigh Primary School.**

Why do we have a policy on these?

All persons have a legal right to protection from harassment under the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act and the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act.

Bullying and harassment may have a detrimental effect on people, both in the present and in the future.

The possible effects of harassment or bullying include:

- Embarrassment
- Fear and humiliation
- Poor health – anxiety, depression
- Lower self esteem
- Reduced study performance
- Missed classes, social withdrawal
- Reduced career prospects

GUIDELINES

- To reinforce within the school community that no form of bullying is acceptable
- Everyone within the school community is alerted to evidence and signs of bullying and has a responsibility to report to staff, whether as an observer, or as the person harmed
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up and that support is given to both the person who has been harmed and the person harming
- To seek parental and peer group support and co-operation



DEFINITION

What bullying is:

Bullying is defined as unwanted, repeated negative behaviour; physical, verbal, emotional/psychological, social, cyber, or sexual, by an individual or group, either directly or indirectly, towards a less powerful person or group, that is intended to cause harm, distress or fear.

What bullying is not:

There are also some behaviours, which, although they might be unpleasant or distressing, are not bullying:

- Mutual conflict - which involves a disagreement, but not an imbalance of power. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.
- Single-episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression, or intimidation, or aggression directed towards many different people, is not bullying
- Social rejection or dislike is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

While these behaviours would not be considered bullying they need to be addressed in the same way as other inappropriate student behaviour. Such behaviours may develop into bullying if they continue over time and with repetition.

Harassment

Harassment is any verbal, physical, or sexual conduct (including gestures), which is uninvited, unwelcome, or offensive to a person.

Cyberbullying

Is a form of bullying, which is carried out through electronic mediums, such as email, chat room, discussion group, online social networking, instant messaging, web pages or apps. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as SMS. It may involve text, or images (photos, drawings). This includes when individuals take on different characters.

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Parents, teachers, students and the community will be aware of the school's position on bullying.
- The school will adopt a four-phase approach to bullying: Primary Prevention, Early Intervention, Intervention and Restoring Wellbeing



Primary Prevention:

- Professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment and proven countermeasures
- Community awareness and input relating to bullying, its characteristics and the school's programs and response
- Provision of programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving. (The programs used by East Bentleigh are Positive Education and Bounceback)
- A bullying survey and yard survey to be administered and acted upon twice annually
- At the beginning of each year each classroom teacher to clarify the school policy on bullying with both their students and parents
- At the beginning of each term the teacher will review with their class, bullying behaviours, their impact, consequences and appropriate responses
- The curriculum to include anti-bullying messages and strategies eg: 'No Blame Approach to Bullying'
- Student Representative Council, peer support delegates, staff and students to promote the philosophy of 'No Put Downs'
- Structured activities available to students at some recess and lunch breaks.
- Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems
- Promotion of designated areas within the playground as 'FriendStops,' an area students can utilize for companionship and activities

Early Intervention:

- Promote to students and parents the importance of reporting bullying incidents.
- Classroom teachers and principal to remind students, on a regular basis, to report incidents of bullying.
- Parents encouraged to contact the class teacher if they become aware of a bullying issue.

Intervention

- Those identified by others as displaying bullying behaviour will be informed of allegations
- Once bullying behaviour has been identified accused, harmed and witnesses will be spoken with and all incidents, or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented.
- Parent consultation to determine possible motivation/underlying issues that may be contributing to bullying behaviour
- Individual behaviour plans developed for those harmed, when required and those harming.
- Accused and harmed will be offered guidance and support
- Where many students are involved a group plan will be developed

Restoring Wellbeing:



Consequences for students will be individually based and may involve-

- Restorative circle
- Reinforcement of positive behaviours.
- Classroom Meetings.
- Support Structures.
- Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies.
- Rewards for positive behaviour
- Specific Room – a designated safe and quiet place for children to access at recess and lunch times.
- Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution
- Exclusion from class
- Exclusion from yard
- School suspension
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Ongoing counselling from appropriate personnel agency for both harmed and bully

‘Restoring Wellbeing’ may also include:

EVALUATION

- Decrease in bullying incidents recorded in yard data
- Improvement in Kismatter baseline data
- Increase in percentile scores in Attitudes to school (student) Survey- variable Student Safety and Student Connectedness
- Decrease in percentile scores in Parent Opinion Survey- variable Student Misbehaviour
- Decrease in percentile score in Staff Opinion Survey- variables Student Misbehaviour
- Increase percentile score in Staff Opinion survey – variable Effective Discipline Policy

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis.

This Policy was ratified by School Council in ...

June 2017

APPENDICES:

- A. Further information about bullying**
- B. Staff Response to Bullying**
- C. Bullying Notification Form**
- D. Bullying report form**
- E. Student Notification Form**
- F. Student Bullying Report Form**
- G. Notification of Incident**
- H. Interview Notes**



APPENDIX - A

FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT BULLYING: REMINDER BULLYING BEHAVIOUR IS REPETITIVE BEHAVIOUR.

Types of bullying behaviour

There are some specific types of bullying behaviour:

- Verbal or written abuse - such as targeted name-calling or jokes, or displaying offensive posters
- Violence - including threats of violence
- Sexual harassment - unwelcome or unreciprocated conduct of a sexual nature, which could reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation
- Homophobia and other hostile behaviour towards students relating to gender and sexuality
- Discrimination including racial discrimination - treating people differently because of their identity
- Cyberbullying - either online or via mobile phone

Examples of Bullying Behaviour - Please note, this list is by no means comprehensive

Types	Aggressive	Passive
<i>Physical</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitting, poking, pushing, punching, kicking, tripping, spitting • Invading personal space e.g. purposely brushing up against another person's body • Stand-over tactics • Unwanted patting, touching, embracing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forcing others to do things e.g.; give them lollies, money, steal from others • Taking, hiding, damaging belongings • Circulating offensive notes • Non-verbal signs and offensive gestures e.g.; dirty looks, designed to intimidate
<i>Verbal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name calling, using insults, verbal threats • Using sarcasm, using put-downs, teasing, taunting, smutty or racist remarks or jokes • Persistent comments about a person's private life or family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading rumours • Blaming others for something they haven't done • Lying about someone
<i>Emotional</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influencing others not to like or associate with a specific person



<i>Sexual</i>	<p>Pressuring others to act against their will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Belittling others abilities and achievements• Taunts about body parts and developments• Teasing about sexual orientations or identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Controlling or dominating someone by withdrawing or threatening to withdraw friendship• Showing or drawing pictures depicting sexual content
<i>Cyber bullying</i>	See Below	See Below

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that is carried out through the internet or mobile phones.

Types of cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying using digital technologies including mobile phones, email and social media tools. Cyberbullying includes:

- Pranking
- Repeated hang ups, anonymous, mocking or threatening phone calls.
- Unauthorised image sharing
- Forwarding or sharing unflattering or private images without permission.
- Sexually explicit images
- People of any age, who forward or share images of a sexual nature of a person under 18 need to be aware that this is a criminal offence (child pornography) that may result in prosecution.
- Offensive texts and emails
- Sending insulting or threatening text messages or emails.
- Unauthorised sharing of personal online information
- Publishing online someone's private, personal or embarrassing information without permission, or spreading rumours online.
- Identity theft
- Assuming someone's identity online and negatively representing them in a way that damages their reputation or relationships.
- Hate sites
- Creating hate sites or implementing social exclusion campaigns on social networking sites



Other types of cyberbullying

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

Cyberbullying vs bullying

While cyberbullying is similar to bullying in some ways, there are also differences.

Differences:

- Cyberbullying is invasive
- Cyberbullying can be difficult to escape and is incredibly invasive. It is more likely to occur outside of school, including while at home, and can happen at any time.
- Cyberbullying can involve a large audience
- Cyberbullying can involve harmful material being widely and rapidly shared to a large audience, for example, rumours and images can be posted on public forums or sent to many people at once. This material can also continue to be available and harmful long after the cyberbullying has ceased.
- Cyberbullies have a sense of anonymity
- Cyberbullying can provide the bully with a sense of relative anonymity and distance from the target, so there is a lack of immediate feedback or consequences.

Similarities:

Power imbalance- Power imbalance may be due to positional power differences e.g. one student is more popular than the other, emotional maturity or age differences, size differences

- The power imbalance between the ‘person causing harm’ and ‘the person harmed’, the repetitive nature of the bullying behaviour and the intent to harm, humiliate, embarrass, ostracise, or isolate can occur in bullying and cyberbullying.

Types of behaviour

- Types of behaviour including spreading rumours and making threats or insults, can occur in bullying and cyberbullying.

Reasons for behaving in a bullying way

- People often engage in cyberbullying for the same reasons they engage in bullying.

Bullying roles

People in a bullying scenario may take on one of the following roles:



- A person who engages in bullying behaviour
- A person who is harmed by the bullying behaviour
- An assistant who assists the bullying behaviour and actively joins in
- A supporter who encourages and gives silent approval to the bullying, by smiling, laughing or making comments
- A silent bystander who sees or knows about someone being bullied but is passive and does nothing, this may be an adult bystander
- A defender who supports the student who is being bullied by intervening, getting teacher support or comforting them.

All adults, including teachers, school staff and parents, should model positive bystander behaviour and intervene if they observe bullying behaviour occurring between students. Standing by and doing nothing, or leaving students to 'sort it out' themselves, sends the message to the whole school community that the bullying behaviour is being condoned.

Young people are still learning and practicing social skills. Everyone has the capacity to change their behaviour but being given a label can stick and make these changes much harder.

Changes in mood, behaviour and physical appearance can all be warning signs of being bullied, however, some students may not display any warning signs at all.

Warning signs at school

If a student is being bullied at school they may:

- Become aggressive and unreasonable
- Start to get into fights
- Refuse to talk about what is wrong
- Have unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches, particularly those appearing after recess or lunch
- Have missing or damaged belongings or clothes
- Have falling school grades
- Be alone often or excluded from friendship groups at school
- Show a change in their ability or willingness to speak up in class
- Appear insecure or frightened
- Be a frequent target for teasing, mimicking or ridicule.

Warning signs at home

A parent may observe changes in their child's behaviour at home which they can report to the school. Their child may:

- Have trouble getting out of bed



- Not want to go to school
- Change their method or route to school or become frightened of walking to school
- Change their sleeping or eating patterns
- Have frequent tears, anger, mood swings and anxiety
- Have unexplained bruises, cuts and scratches
- Have stomach aches or unexplained pain
- Have missing or damaged belongings or clothes
- Ask for extra pocket money or food
- Arrive home hungry
- Show an unwillingness to discuss, or secrecy about, their online communication.

It might not be bullying

Some changes in behaviour may also be a result of other student issues such as depression or substance abuse, which may require a different response.

Whether it involves bullying or other student issues, schools can help out, for example by involving student wellbeing staff.

The Impact of Bullying

Bullying has a negative impact on everyone.

Impact on students who are bullied

Students who are bullied are more likely to:

- Feel disconnected from school and not like school
- Have lower academic outcomes, including lower attendance and completion rates
- Lack quality friendships at school
- Display high levels of emotion that indicate vulnerability and low levels of resilience
- Be less well accepted by peers, avoid conflict and be socially withdrawn
- Have low self-esteem
- Have depression, anxiety, feelings of loneliness and isolation
- Have nightmares
- Feel wary or suspicious of others
- Have an increased risk of depression and substance abuse
- In extreme cases, have a higher risk of suicide, however, the reasons why a person may be at risk of suicide are extremely complicated.

Contributing factors to being bullied may include:



- Depression
- Family problems
- History of trauma
- Belonging to a minority group, where isolation or lack of community support is an issue.
- Impact on bullies

Students who frequently bully others are more likely to:

- Feel disconnected from school and dislike school
- Get into fights, vandalise property and leave school early.

Impact on bystanders

Students who witness bullying may:

- Be reluctant to attend school
- Feel fearful or powerless to act and guilty for not acting
- Have increased mental health problems, including depression and anxiety
- Have increased use of tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs.

The Racism. No way! project aims to assist Australian school communities and education systems to recognise and address racism in the learning environment. The Racism. No way! website includes a school planning document, lesson ideas, activities, e-challenges, fact sheets and stimulus materials to assist students to engage positively with other peoples and cultures and to better understand Australia's cultural diversity and history.



APPENDIX B

Staff Response to Bullying Behaviour

Bullying behaviour can be complex. The strategies implemented by the school may vary according to individual circumstances. Bullying behaviour differs in severity, frequency and impact. The age of the students involved must also be considered when responding to bullying behaviour.

When bullying behaviour is raised by a child, parent, staff member or other, the staff member to whom the report is made will take the report seriously.

Class teachers will be informed of any child's harmful behaviour. Class teachers will often be the person most appropriate to deal with initial interventions regarding bullying behaviour.

If teachers have any difficulty with any part of the process aimed at managing bullying behaviour, they may consult with the Principal, the Assistant Principal, Student Well-being Co-ordinator, Guidance Officer, other staff member, or outside agencies e.g. CHYMHS, private psychologists.

In response to bullying behaviour being raised, the staff member will:

Ensure a Bullying Notification Notice has been completed and a copy forwarded to the Principal:

Identify Concerns

The staff member will identify concerns, such as:

- Is the student distressed?
- Has there been a breach of the school's Bullying Prevention Policy or the Student engagement Policy?

Ensure the student's safety

To ensure the student is safe a staff member may:

- Provide alternative activities, or space during recess and lunch breaks
- Ensure they have a friend to play with
- Advise other staff particularly those on yard duty
- Change classroom seating

Investigate the Incident

Following a notification a staff member will investigate the incident. This may involve one or more of the following actions;



- Interview the person who has been harmed
- Interview the alleged harmer
- Interview any identified witnesses
- Consult with parents
- Conduct classroom and/or yard observations

When an incident has been substantiated

When a report of bullying behaviour has been substantiated, a staff member will:

- Notify parents of students involved
- Maintain open communication with parents throughout the process
- Inform and regularly up-date the Principal and Assistant Principal
- Develop an Individual Behaviour Support Plan for the harmer
- Develop a support plan for the person who has been harmed, if required
- Engage wellbeing support, SSO referral

The Principal or Assistant Principal will:

- Seek to be regularly informed of bullying behaviours and investigations
- Consult with and support staff involved e.g. offer advice, meet with parents or students if requested, seek outside support if required, assist in the development of support plans if requested
- Manage the response to bullying behaviour where the behaviour is serious e.g. violence with significant injury
- Manage bullying interventions where initial intervention has been unsuccessful

Parents or Carers will:

- Report concerns about bullying behaviour to the teacher
- Notify the teacher of any circumstance in the child's life that may adversely affect their child's behaviour
- Notify the teacher of any information that may bring a better understanding to a given situation
- Co-operate with the school's processes

Consequences for Bullying Behaviour to be Considered:

In responding to bullying behaviour a staff member may do one or more of the following

- Consult with parents regarding possible underlying causes or motivations for the bullying behaviour/s
- Conduct a restorative circle if all involved agree to participate
- Conference agreement developed and sent home for formal conferences
- Removal of harmer's privileges
- Removal of special duties



- Removal from the yard for a specific period

The Principal or the Assistant Principal may do one or more of the following in response to very serious bullying behaviour where significant harm or injury has taken place:

- After school detention
- In-house suspension
- Suspension

Staff will monitor the situation

Staff will monitor the situation through one or more of the following:

- Checking in regularly with students involved
- Conducting follow up meeting

The Principal or Assistant Principal will monitor the situation through one or more of the following:

- Checking in regularly with staff/students involved
- Conducting follow up meetings teachers/students/parents as necessary

When the bullying behaviour is not substantiated

When bullying behaviour is not substantiated a staff member will

- Notify parents of students involved
- Notify the Principal and Assistant Principal
- Deal with any inappropriate behaviour according to school policy
- Offer support to the student who believes they were being bullied



APPENDIX C (Complete this form when you are notified of bullying)

BULLYING NOTIFICATION FORM

Person Taking Report: _____

Date: ____/____/____ **Day:** _____

Time: _____

➤ **Means of communication:**

In person	<input type="checkbox"/>
Letter or note	<input type="checkbox"/>
Telephone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Person making report: _____

Name of Person Harmed: _____

➤ **Role of person making the report:**

Person harmed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friend of person harmed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bystander	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friend of person accused of bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent or carer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff member	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Details:

Name of the person/s accused of engaging in bullying behaviour:

Name/s of those who may have witnessed this behaviour:



Where does the bullying behaviour generally occur? e.g. in the classroom, on the oval, in specialist class :

What does the bullying behaviour involve? e.g. physical (pushing, hitting, etc) verbal harassment (put downs, name calling, teasing) :



APPENDIX D

BULLYING INVESTIGATION FORM

Following a notification a staff member will investigate the incident.

Name of Person Investigating: _____

Date: ____/____/____ **Day:** _____

Name of Person Harmed: _____

The investigation has involved the following actions (circle)

Interview/s with the person who has been harmed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interview/s with the alleged harmer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interview/s with any identified witnesses	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consultation/s with parents of the person being harmed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consultation with parents of the person accused of harming	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom observations	<input type="checkbox"/>
Whole Class No Blame Conference	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yard Observations	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>

NB: Please keep notes of all interviews

Other sources of information e.g. other parent reports, specialist teacher reports:

Outcome/s of Investigation

Bullying Substantiated

Yes No



APPENDIX E (In conjunction with Appendix B)

WHEN BULLYING HAS BEEN SUBSTANTIATED

When teachers have conducted an investigation and bullying has been substantiated, it is important the following steps are taken.

<input type="checkbox"/> Notify parents of student harmed to arrange time for an appointment	Appointment time for parent/s of student harmed
<input type="checkbox"/> Notify parents of Student/s harming to arrange time for an appointment	Appointment time for parent/s of student harmed
<input type="checkbox"/> Inform and regularly up-date the Principal and Assistant Principal	Principal Class Initially Notified (date)
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop an Individual Behaviour Support Plan for the harmer Individual Behaviour Plan developed on _____ in _____ consultation with _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop a support plan for the person who has been harmed <i>if required</i>. Individual Support Plan developed on _____ consultation with - _____	

➤ **Restorative Practice response :**

<input type="checkbox"/> Restorative Conference (students involved and support people)	Date of Student conference
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Conference (whole class)	Date of Whole class conference
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Conference – to be organized in conjunction with Principal Class (Students and parents of students involved)	Date of Community Conference

- **Other possible wellbeing support (Please specify)**



APPENDIX F

Student Bullying Report Form



My Name: _____

I feel I am being bullied because:

The people I feel are bullying me are:

➤ **Where:** (please tick)

Deck Basketball Court Oval Infinity

3-4 Play Equipment Prep Area Junior area

Other _____

➤ **When:** (please tick)

Play time Lunch time Class time After School

APPENDIX G



Notification of Incident

Dear _____,

An incident occurred at school today _____ that has affected your child.

Incident Description: _____

Please have a chat with them tonight about what has occurred. The incident has been dealt with at school in the following way:

Thank you for your support,

(Name of Teacher) _____



APPENDIX H

Parents' Interview Notes:

Date: _____

Present: _____

Notes: _____

Suggested Action *(if required):*
