



Bullying & Harassment Policy

2019

POLICY STATEMENT

Miners Rest Primary School is committed to providing a safe and respectful teaching and learning environment where bullying and harassment is not tolerated. Miners Rest Primary School believes that all students have the right to learn in a school environment in which they feel safe and secure.

This Bullying and Harassment Policy should be read in conjunction with the Miners Rest Primary School Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy/Safe and Respectful School Communities document.

AIMS

- To explain what bullying and harassment are, and the fact that they are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- To ask that everyone in the school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying is when a person, or a group of people, repeatedly upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance. Bullying may be direct physical, direct verbal, indirect or cyberbullying. Bullying is not a one-off disagreement between two or more people or a situation of mutual dislike.

Bullying can be:

1. **Direct physical bullying** - e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
2. **Direct verbal bullying** - e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
3. **Indirect bullying** - e.g. spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude a person, damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance, or cyberbullying.

Cyber-bullying is direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology. For example via a mobile phone, chat rooms or social media. It could involve setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces. It can be verbal or written.



Harassment is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome and which is reasonably likely to humiliate, offend, intimidate or distress a person. For example, teasing a student because of their speech impediment.

Bystander is a witness who sees or knows about bullying happening to someone else.

GUIDELINES

Miners Rest Primary School will not tolerate bullying (including cyberbullying), bystander behaviour or harassment.

A school-wide approach will be taken to deal with bullying and harassment in a consistent and systematic way, with a focus on student safety and wellbeing.

Disciplinary measures will apply to students in breach of the behaviour expectations established by the school and communicated through this Bullying and Harassment Policy (see Safe and Respectful School Communities/Student Inclusion and Engagement Policy)

All complaints of bullying or harassment will be taken seriously and treated sensitively. This policy will be clearly communicated to students, parents and staff on the school's website and periodically in the school newsletter.

Miners Rest Primary school will:

- Organise preventative curriculum programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, tolerance, conflict resolution and problem solving. These include CAST, YOU Can Do It, Friendly Kids, Friendly Classrooms, Confident Kids, Illy Up, Better Buddies and Tuning In To Kids program for parents/carers.
- Student programs will be organised to raise student awareness about bullying and harassment, to provide a forum for discussion and to aid development of attitudes. Some matters will be dealt with formally in the curriculum and in peer support programs, leadership programs, extra-curricular programs, classroom discussions and occasional activities run by outside experts. The curriculum will include anti-bullying messages and strategies in line with DET materials e.g. Bully Stoppers: Make a Stand, Lend a Hand and 'No Blame Approach to Bullying'.
- Staff professional development programs will occur periodically to keep staff informed of current issues/strategies for dealing with bullying and/or harassment issues.
- An annual confidential bullying survey of the student body will be run and de-identified information will be used at staff and/or parent meetings]

If students believe they are being bullied they may contact the Assistant Principal or Principal in the first instance, or a staff member that they would prefer to discuss the matter with.

This policy will be reviewed annually by Miners Rest Primary School to ensure it reflects current practices and refers to up-to-date policy.

STUDENT SUPPORT

If any staff member feels a student is at risk from bullying and harassing behaviours they should discuss their concerns with the Assistant Principal or Principal in order to ensure appropriate



support for the student. It is important that staff document fully any actions taken in response to student bullying and/or harassment (see Appendix B).

Some strategies that might be used by the school to assist the student may include participation in a preventative program such as Friendly Kids, friendly Classrooms, counselling with the schools wellbeing officer, education in coping strategies within the classroom through You Can Do It strategies, mentoring, referral to external service providers such as Connecting Minds and peer support.

LINKS AND APPENDICES

Links, which are connected with this policy, are:

- DET's Student Engagement Guidance
- The school's Acceptable ICT Use Agreement (re: cyber-bullying)
- DET's Bully Stoppers: Make a Stand, Lend a Hand
- DET's Vulnerable Students

Supporting links:

- Bully Free World: Special Needs Anti-bullying Toolkit
- Australian Human Rights Commission - Human rights in the school classroom
- Safe Schools Coalition Victoria
- Racism. No way! anti-racism education for Australian schools

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed annually.