



Elwood Primary School No 3942

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Bullying Prevention

PURPOSE

To provide a safe and compassionate school environment where all children treat each other with care and respect. Elwood Primary School is committed to providing this in line with its Student Engagement policy and Student Code of Conduct.

To promote the development of a respectful learning environment through classroom programs and behaviour management processes in alignment with our school values and our student Code of Conduct.

To develop a shared understanding across the school community that all forms of bullying are unacceptable and that we have a collective responsibility to prevent bullying from occurring.

BROAD GUIDELINES

1. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is an act causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to another;

- It can take a number of forms, both active and passive, in person or via electronic media, and can be physical, verbal, gesture, extortion and exclusion.
- It is typically repeated over time.
- It is an abuse of power.
- It can be planned or it may be unintentional.
- Individuals or groups may be involved.

Some examples of bullying:

- Any form of physical violence such as hitting, pushing shoving, spitting or invasion of personal space.
- Interfering with another's property by stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying it.
- Name calling, teasing or spreading rumours about others or their families.
- Using put downs or belittling other's abilities and achievements.
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about others.
- Making degrading comments about another's culture, religious or social background, or physical appearance.
- Hurtfully excluding others from a group.

- Making suggestive comments or other forms of sexual harassment.
- Use of electronic devices such as mobile phones to cause distress to others.
- Forcing others to act against their will.

Possible effects of bullying

Bullying can:

- Have immediate, short-term and long term effects; and can cause physical, emotional, academic and social injuries
- Cause a child to feel frightened, unsafe, embarrassed, angry and unfairly treated.
- Result in learning, sleep and the ability to concentrate becoming difficult
- Result in the loss of self-esteem, depression, social isolation, poor general health and absenteeism
- Cause deterioration in a child's relationships with friends and family.
- Result in a sense of powerlessness and confusion about how to solve the problem

Definition of Cyberbullying

Direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technologies. This includes harassment via a mobile phone, setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces.

Definition of Harassment

Harassment covers a wide range of behaviours of an offensive nature. It is commonly understood as behaviour that disturbs or upsets, and it is characteristically repetitive. In the legal sense, it is behaviour that appears to be disturbing or threatening.

2. Rights and Responsibilities of students with respect to bullying

- Students have the right to learn and develop their capacities to their fullest potential in a safe and supportive environment.
- Students have the responsibility and the right to report bullying without fear of ramification may be prevented.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Staff Role

- Be role models in word and action at all times in dealing with students, fellow staff and members of the school community.
- Be observant of and act upon signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying.

- Remain well informed about the issue of bullying and be familiar with the school's policy, implement bullying prevention programs, develop strategies for coping with bullying and help create a climate where bullying is not tolerated.
- Be pro-active in preventing bullying by establishing a respectful and compassionate classroom environment and developing class behaviour agreements which have clear expectations and consequences for any breach of the agreement.
- Implement bullying prevention programs which could include, the You Can Do It Program, Manners Matters and eSmart Cyber safe School Program.
- Lessen opportunities for bullying by vigilant supervision of the school environment. Record incidents which occur in the playground in the Yard Duty Folders which will be monitored by the Assistant Principals to identify concerning patterns of behaviour, who will respond as appropriate.
- Report suspected incidents and share information with the appropriate staff members such as the principal, class teacher, Student Welfare Co-ordinator, Level coordinator, so the issue is addressed and the best possible response is developed.
- Take steps to support the victims of bullying and their families and ensure that the no one is placed at further risk.
- Ensure that a 'restorative' approach is taken when addressing bullying issues so that all parties involved in a bullying situation are supported in developing appropriate social, emotional and coping strategies and responses.
- Issues involving negative interactions between children will be tracked and monitored, and efforts will be made to monitor and track the 'health' of the playground on a regular basis.
- Communicate the school's policy and processes related to bullying prevention to parents, children and the community on an annual basis through the school newsletter, information nights and ongoing classroom education.

2. Student Role

- Be role models in word and action at all times in their interactions with each other
- Be observant of and act upon signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying.
- Behave in accordance with the school's Code of Conduct and classroom agreements.
- Refuse to participate in any bullying situation.
- If present when bullying occurs, take some form of preventative action if appropriate.
- Report any instance of bullying either as the recipient or as a witness.
- Do not support or encourage bullying behaviour, but help the person being bullied to do something about it.

3. Parent Role

- Be informed about what is and is not bullying and seek advice about how to best

support your child eg *"Parenting Ideas"* by Michael Grose

- Watch for signs of distress or changes in your child's behaviour such as unwillingness to attend school, anxiety about any aspect of school life, a pattern of headaches, damaged clothes or property or bruising.
- Encourage your child to report the bullying behaviour to a staff member.
- Notify the school if your child is unwilling or unable to take action.
- Let your child know that parental involvement is appropriate.
- Be willing to attend a meeting at the school if necessary if your child is involved in a bullying incident, whether they have been bullied or have bullied another child
- Watch for signs that their child is bullying others and seek assistance if they suspect that they are.
- Be willing to inform the school of any bullying incidents even if your child is not involved.
- Be aware that bullying which takes place at home (eg via electronic media) can have a significant impact on children's lives at school and will therefore be responded to at school.
- Be willing to support the school in implementing this policy.
- Be patient with the school as procedures take time.

When students, staff and parents work together resolutions are more positive.

4. Advice to students if they are bullied or have witnessed bullying - self-protective strategies

- Report the incident to the class teacher, other staff member, principal who will take the appropriate action
- Report the incident to a parent or other trusted adult who can then inform the school
- Respond appropriately using strategies such as:
 - Walking away
 - Telling an adult
 - Saying 'stop it, I don't like that'
 - Staying with a group or your friends
 - Seeking help from an adult to find a solution

5. Action for dealing with Bullying

- Action is taken to ensure that the bullying stops.
- Following a report, issues of concern are investigated and monitored by the appropriate people.
- Discussion, consultation and a problem solving approach takes place with those involved.

- There is regular monitoring of how things are going.
- Parents are notified if appropriate, and are involved in seeking resolution of the issue.

RESOURCES

1. Student Engagement Policy
2. Student Code of Conduct and Classroom Agreements
3. Classroom Teachers
4. Student Welfare Coordinator Guidance Officer
5. Outside support personnel: eSmart www.esmartschools.org.au , 'Bully Busters' Evelyn Field
DET resources: www.bullying.com.au
6. Victoria Police Youth Resource Officer
7. Kids Helpline: 18005511800 / <http://www.kidshelp.com.au/>
8. DET School Policy and Advisory Guide 2017

POLICY HISTORY

Version Approval Date:	Summary of changes:	Next Review:
March 2017	Policy Created, council approved	3 year cycle or as needed